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LIVES IN TRANSITION:
THE FT. MACKAY CASE

prepared for

The Office of
The Northeast Alberta Regional Commission

by

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with special assistance from
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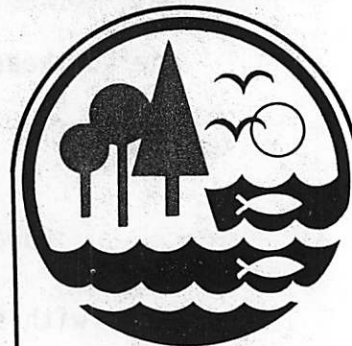
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FORT MACKAY CASE

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PREFACE

This document is based upon nine months field research conducted in residence at Ft. MacKay. The work was done for the Northeast Alberta Regional Commission as an attempt to understand and to respond to the problems and needs of a village which is experiencing increased encroachment by southern resource development. Consequently, the report is written with the intent that the Commission be the primary audience. The work is not presented as an academic community study. Its purpose is to address issues of significance to the community and to the sponsor, but above all, to allow the sponsor insight into the world as it is seen through the eyes of residents of the village.

Some very imposing ethical issues are involved in this type of work. The most basic question is: "What gives one the right to intervene in any manner in the lives of members of a community?" While such a question may sound academic, working day to day in a community tends to make this type of ethical issue extremely practical. If one did not have a valid perspective on this matter, interaction with community residents of necessity would remain somewhat tenuous. The real importance of confronting this question is that one must constantly be aware that one's very presence lends implicitly and explicitly to the direction of community affairs. In other words, one is an agent of change by virtue of one's presence. Affecting the lives of people in this manner must be recognized as an awesome responsibility. One's actions and decisions cannot be capricious, suggesting ignorance or thoughtlessness concerning the implications.

Personally, we feel that we have no right to impose ourselves upon the community. Thus, after explaining the purpose and nature of the work to community leaders, work is initiated only in response to their concurrence. We worked in Ft. MacKay because local leaders

requested our presence.

A variation on the same ethical theme raises the question, "Does the dominant (southern) society have the right to impose its presence upon a subordinate (native) society so that resource development destroys an entire life style in Ft. Mackay?"

Personally, we believe that what has happened historically to Ft. Mackay (and many other native communities) is wrong. We question the right of any society to force its will upon another. But this conviction is nicely theoretical. The reality is that encroachment due to resource development has occurred and will be escalated in the future. Historical wrongs cannot be made right. The contract process (between white and native cultures) cannot be reversed except in the fantasies of the idealist.

Therefore, the objective appropriately is to redirect the present and future contact situations (through the efforts and responsibility of both groups) so as to be less violently debilitating for individuals experiencing the stress and disorientation of external encroachment. There is no reason except ignorance or lack of concern for the process of contact to be so totally crippling for so many people.

The reason for our intervention in Ft. Mackay is not in pursuit of the illusion that a "cultural island" may be preserved as a "human museum" for the rest of mankind. On the contrary, the real issue is to find ways for people to live as "whole men" in the face of incredibly rapid change. This forum is a little too urgent to tolerate the wailing of the "bleeding heart do-gooder" or the dabbling of the academic.

Consequently, the key concept which forms the basis of our work is the establishment and nurturing of a process of development with, and not for, the community, if the residents desire this. The key is to apply in-depth, low profile research to community-initiated development. The community worker becomes primarily a motivator and resource person rather than a leader or one who has any personal vested interest in the outcome. The community must establish its own goals and pursue them on its own terms and at its own speed. Other-

wise, the "process" becomes one of educating the community worker, but nobody else.

To this type of work, the "community" or at least the lifestyle must be approached and understood as a whole. Anything which artificially destroys the integration of the whole (e.g. bureaucratic compartmentalization, inter-governmental jurisdictions, etc.) tends to be destructive or at least to lead to inaccurate or superficial understanding of, and involvement with, community residents.

It is impossible to overemphasize the difficulty one experiences in attaining a reflection of the village which is in any way "real"; to reconcile the extremes between how things look to the outsider, how they appear to the resident and how they are interpreted analytically and personally by the anthropologist. The anthropologist is an object of curiosity, a mystery, misled, feared, toyed with, accepted, and amazingly frequently made privy to viewpoints and information which one would never entrust to even the closest friend. We tried ultimately to see and to understand "the world" through the eyes of the people of Ft. MacKay. To the extent that we have succeeded, we move on to attempt to communicate these insights to those whose decisions will affect the future of the village. At the same time, we communicate with village residents in an effort to enhance knowledge and convey the skills required to allow them to direct and to determine their own future as fully as possible.

Purposes

At the outset of the field research, the period of time spent in the field was to be only three months long. The initial purposes as defined by the Northeast Alberta Region Commission were:

- (a) To understand the functioning of the community to the greatest extent possible;

- (b) To facilitate effective communication between the community and government;
- (c) To assess community support for the establishment of a Community Plan.

By August, the existence of factionalism and conflict between segments of the settlement became evident. The split focussed upon the rift between the Treaty and Metis peoples. About this time, the possibility of the community forming a company and accepting a janitorial contract from Syncrude loomed on the horizon. As the success or failure of this venture would depend in large measure upon the ability of the various factions in the settlement to cooperate together in a joint venture, an additional purpose was added to our terms of reference, namely, to facilitate the Syncrude contract from inside the community. Accordingly, the period of tenure in the settlement was extended by an additional two months.

By November, 1977, it was apparent that the residents of the settlement preferred to defer the establishment of a company for at least a year. Leaders were of the opinion that the community could not cope with such an ambitious project at the present time. However, the desire to participate in the establishment of a Community Plan became apparent. In order to provide information which would assist residents to consider the future in realistic terms, information was introduced which generally outlined the overall implications of resource development for the future of Ft. MacKay. The additional purpose, to facilitate development of a Community Plan to be generated from within the community, was enunciated. Again, the period of field tenure was extended to January 31, 1978.

The leaders within Ft. MacKay were responsible for establishing one final purpose for the fieldwork. They requested assistance in working toward the structuring of a Community Committee or Association in essence to assist the community factions to get together and to

develop an organization which would be capable of presenting a strong, united front to external agencies and organizations. The Commission responded by extending the final date for termination of fieldwork to March 31, 1978.

Methods

A tendency exists to view these types of community study projects as sterile 'social research'. Unfortunately, many similar endeavors have strongly reinforced this viewpoint. However, the current project is primarily an "action-oriented" program as is suggested by the above-mentioned purposes. Effective action has to be based upon a certain minimum of knowledge. "Research" simply provides the means for attaining this knowledge and information. Thus, we would prefer to conceive of the present work as a "research and action" project.

The core method underlying our approach to the community is participant observation. We attempt to establish residence within the settlement in order to view the community from the "inside" or "through the eyes of the people". Participant observation allows the further advantage of being able to understand the difference between what people say and what they do.

Social scientists have long been aware of the distinct difference between "what people say" and "what people do" (Deutscher 1966). "What people say" about their beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours may bear little or no relation to "what they do" in fact. As Deutscher (1966:239) says,

there is adequate reason to suspect that behaviour toward words about social or cultural objects (i.e. responses to questions) may not provide an adequate basis for imputing behaviour towards the objects themselves (i.e., responses to the people or situations to which the words refer).

Participant observation provides the means of comparing words and deeds.

Admittedly, the job of the social scientist is made eminently easier in instances where precise measurement and control of variables is possible. However, in the case of trying to understand a community like Ft. Mackay, statistical methods have definite limitations upon their usefulness. Deutscher attributes the following statements to LaPiere:

"The questionnaire," he observed, "is cheap, easy and mechanical. The study of human behaviour is time consuming, intellectually fatiguing, and depends for its success upon the ability of the investigator. The former method gives quantitative results, the latter mainly qualitative. Quantitative measurements are quantitatively accurate; qualitative evaluations are always subject to the errors of human judgement. "Yet," he concludes, "it would seem far more worthwhile to make a shrewd guess regarding that which is essential than to accurately measure that which is likely to prove quite irrelevant."

Nevertheless, statistical indicators are appropriate to certain segments of this work. Consequently, where relevant, this information will be presented along with qualitative information to provide adequate context.

Participant observation is used also to demonstrate good faith to residents of the community. A "low profile" approach does not stand out like the "dreaded research" so universally despised in northern native communities.

We have alluded already to the great liability of participant observation. The method presents only one perspective, one person's opinion, of the reality of any situation. This is perhaps the most important issue to bear in mind as one reads this document.

Comprehensive house-to-house surveys were used to obtain demographic and employment information. No such information is based upon generalizations or estimates, but upon actual "nose counts".

A second round of formal discussions and interviews was initiated to obtain information pertaining to community priorities and concerns. These discussions were very "open-ended", though the interviewees were

directed toward discussion of some twenty-three basic issues.

Once each week, we cooperated with the teachers in the school to develop with the older children (grades six, seven and eight) a simulated Community Plan. This mechanism provided an opportunity to inject new ideas and planning concepts into the community by means other than home discussions and community meetings.

Carlene's skills as a Registered Nurse also provided many opportunities for access to homes and contacts with people in Ft. Mackay which would have been possible through no other means. This provided also an unofficial, but much needed service to the community during the period of field work.

In essence, the technique of participant observation depends entirely upon the successful establishment of meaningful rapport with residents of the host community. How this is attained is impossible to describe in detail. Let us say that anthropology is an art as well as a science. Long weeks and months are spent accomplishing little that is apparent to the untrained eye. But in truth, this is the most difficult aspect of the work. If rapport can be established, the issues for which one initially enters the community usually can be dispatched with relative ease.

Anthropology is not a method or a job. It is a way of life.

INTRODUCTIONLocation

The village of Ft. MacKay is located approximately 67 kilometers north of Ft. McMurray, and about 290 kilometers south of Ft. Chipewyan, on the west bank of the Athabasca River. One has a tendency to conceive of Ft. MacKay as an isolated or semi-isolated northern community having little contact with the "outside world". Perhaps this perception prevails because until the last decade access to the village was limited largely to air and water transport in the summer and dog team or perhaps some snowmobiles in the winter.

The encroachment of major resource development upon the traditional lifestyle of the village also has made a major contribution to the de-isolation of Ft. MacKay. Approximately ten to twelve years ago, the Great Canadian Oil Sands plant along with its gigantic strip mine operation was constructed on the site of traditional hunting and trapping grounds. This specific site, as well as the whole general area, was the site of summer residences for several families from Ft. MacKay. The GCOS plant is located on the west bank of the Athabasca River approximately 20 kilometers upstream from the village, a fact which has had many implications for the lives of residents of Ft. MacKay. Among other changes, an all-weather road has been extended from the GCOS site to Ft. MacKay. The advent of the road has been one of the most significant factors for change in the lifestyle of the residents of Ft. MacKay.

Similarly, the Syncrude Canada plant which has been under construction for the past few years is prepared to begin operations within the next six months. Again, the several thousand acre site has displaced persons from Ft. MacKay who traditionally hunted and trapped on this land. The Syncrude plant has brought a modern paved highway to within approximately 20 kilometers of Ft. MacKay, a fact which has not only made the amenities of Ft.

The village of Ft. Mackay is located approximately 100 miles from the mouth of the Mackenzie River and about 200 miles from the mouth of the Athabasca River. The village is situated on the west bank of the Athabasca River, about 10 miles from the mouth of the Mackenzie River. The village is situated on the west bank of the Athabasca River, about 10 miles from the mouth of the Mackenzie River.

The development of the village of Ft. Mackay is a result of the discovery of oil in the Mackenzie Basin. The village was established in 1912 as a result of the discovery of oil in the Mackenzie Basin. The village was established in 1912 as a result of the discovery of oil in the Mackenzie Basin.

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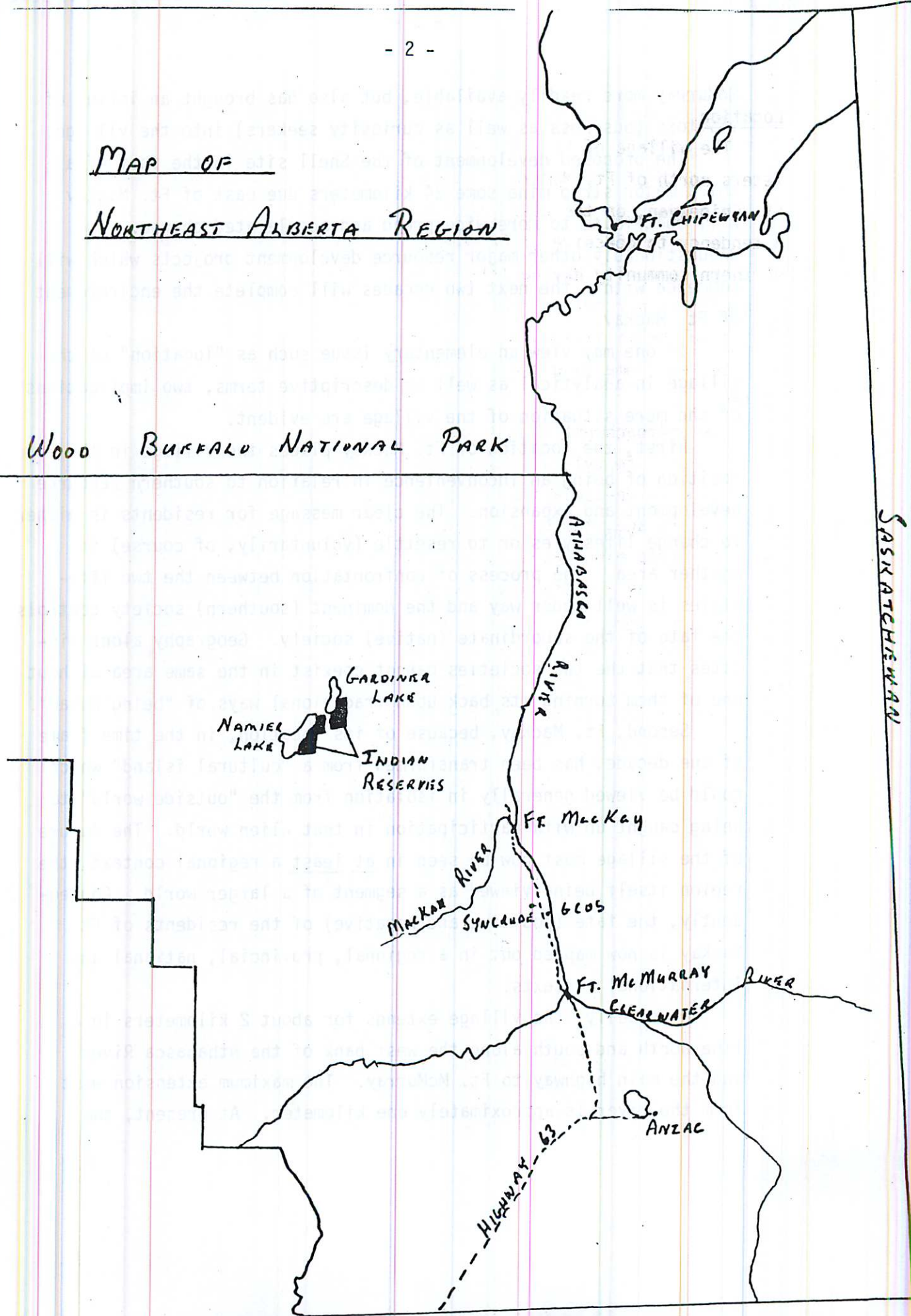
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MAP OF
NORTHEAST ALBERTA REGION

WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK

SASKATCHEWAN



McMurray more readily available, but also has brought an influx of visitors (business as well as curiosity seekers) into the village.

The proposed development of the Shell site in the form of a third major strip mine some 24 kilometers due east of Ft. MacKay will contribute to more widespread and accelerated change. And unquestionably other major resource development projects which will commence within the next two decades will complete the encirclement of Ft. MacKay.

If one may view an elementary issue such as "location" of the village in analytical as well as descriptive terms, two implications of the mere situation of the village are evident.

First, the location of Ft. MacKay places the village in the position of being an inconvenience in relation to southern resource development and expansion. The clear message for residents is either to change lifestyles or to resettle (voluntarily, of course) in another area. The process of confrontation between the two lifestyles is well under way and the dominant (southern) society controls the fate of the subordinate (native) society. Geography alone dictates that the two societies cannot coexist in the same area without one of them turning its back upon traditional ways of "being human".

Second, Ft. MacKay, because of its location, in the time frame of one decade, has been transformed from a "cultural island" which could be viewed generally in isolation from the "outside world" to being caught up with participation in that alien world. The future of the village must now be seen in at least a regional context, the region itself being viewed as a segment of a larger world. Consequently, the fate (positive and negative) of the residents of Ft. MacKay is now mapped out in a regional, provincial, national and international contexts.

Physically, the village extends for about 2 kilometers in a line north and south along the west bank of the Athabasca River and the main highway to Ft. McMurray. The maximum extension west from the river is approximately one kilometer. At present, the

village site includes approximately 45 to 50 housing units (see page 41), a cafe and store (see page 40), the schools (see page 34), the church (see page 48) and the main compound of the Alberta Forest Service.

Physiography, Climate, Vegetation

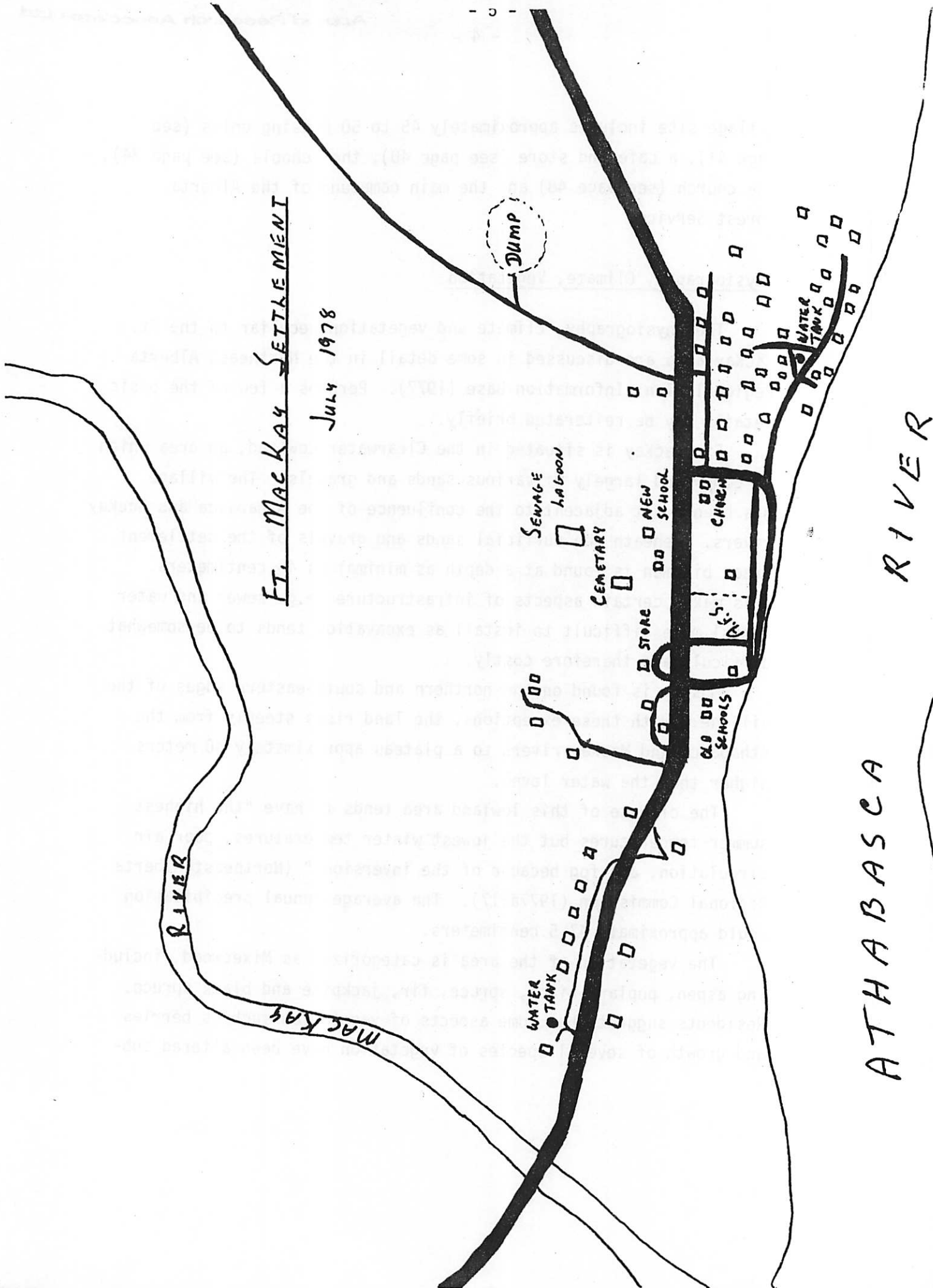
The physiography, climate and vegetation peculiar to the Ft. MacKay area are discussed in some detail in the Northeast Alberta Regional Plan: Information Base (1977). Perhaps a few of the basic details may be reiterated briefly.

Ft. MacKay is situated in the Clearwater Lowland, an area which is comprised largely of various sands and gravels. The village has been built adjacent to the confluence of the Athabasca and MacKay rivers. Beneath the surficial sands and gravels of the settlement area, bitumen is found at a depth as minimal as 45 centimeters. This makes certain aspects of infrastructure (e.g. sewer and water lines) more difficult to install as excavation tends to be somewhat difficult and therefore costly.

Muskeg is found on the northern and south-eastern edges of the village. With these exceptions, the land rises steeply from the Athabasca and MacKay rivers to a plateau approximately 40 meters higher than the water level.

The climate of this lowland area tends to have "the highest summer temperatures but the lowest winter temperatures, poor air circulation, and fog because of the inversions" (Northeast Alberta Regional Commission (1977a:17). The average annual precipitation would approximate 47.5 centimeters.

The vegetation of the area is categorized as Mixedwood, including aspen, poplar, birch, spruce, fir, jackpine and black spruce. Residents suggest that some aspects of vegetation such as berries and growth of several species of vegetation have been altered sub-



Ft. MacKay Settlement

July 1978

RIVER

MAC KAY

DUMP

SEWAGE LAGOON

CEMETARY

NEW SCHOOL

STORE

OLD SCHOOLS

CHURCH

WATER TANK

WATER TANK

RIVER

ATHABASCA

stantially by pollution from GCOS (see page 32).

Probably the most important implication of the overall physiography, topography and climate of the village site is that it appears to be ill-suited to sustaining large-scale urbanization, a factor which places stringent limitations on long-term growth alternatives as well as on the provision of certain amenities and infrastructure.

Demography

The demographic data presented below must be explained and placed in the context of information contained in other studies of Ft. MacKay. In 1974, Marino (1975:23) found the population to consist of 144 Treaty Indians, 94 Metis and 16 Whites, for a total of 254. This figure has been replicated and updated for 1975 in the Northeast Alberta Regional Plan: Information Base (1977a:81):

The population of Fort MacKay has grown from 59 in 1956 to 230 in 1966 to 254 in 1974. In 1975, the population consisted of 177 Treaty Indians (Chipewyan and Cree) and 81 Metis and non-natives.

Presumably the total population in 1975 would have been 258.

The important thing to recognize concerning the statistics presented above is that the census data were not obtained via an actual "head count". The information concerning Treaty Indians is obtained from the official DIANA band list. This list is not always current. The Metis and White populations were "estimated by a reliable source" in the Northern Development Group.

The data presented below are current to November 30, 1977 and are exact according to precise "head count". Each household was surveyed and all persons who normally reside in Ft. MacKay were included in the census.

The present population totals 204, including 111 Treaty Indians, 77 Metis and 16 Whites. The apparent decrease of about 50 persons since 1974 (or 54 since 1975) has not occurred in fact. Due to the methodology employed, persons included in the 1974 and 1975 figures were not actually residing in Ft. MacKay.

The Northeast Alberta Regional Plan: Information Base (1977a: 81) further states:

Because of incomplete data, detailed age-sex analysis of the population is not possible. The population is distributed roughly as follows: 38 percent under 17 years of age; 51 percent between eighteen and sixty-five; and 12 percent over sixty-five. In terms of sex distribution, the population is fairly evenly divided. However, there is a significant surplus of females between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine; such a surplus portends that family formation and births may be less than if there were a more equal sex distribution in this age group. This situation, combined with a declining birth rate, suggests that natural growth in Fort MacKay will be moderate in the future. If an annual growth rate of 3.4 percent is assumed, the population of Fort MacKay would be about 435 by 1990.

Our "head count" supports the general intent of the figures quoted in the "Information Base" document. Of the total population of 204, 113 (55.4%) are male and 91 (44.6%) are female. Ninety-seven (47.5%) persons are under twenty years of age; eighty-nine (43.7%) are between twenty and sixty-five years old; eighteen (8.8%) exceed the age of sixty-four (see the chart on page 8).

Between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine, females indeed outnumber males by a count of twenty-six to ten. However, the inference that "such a surplus (of females) portends that family formation and births may be less than if there were a more equal sex distribution in this age group" does not appear to follow logically or pragmatically.

The data presented on page 8 indicate that the birth rate over the last twenty years has been amazingly constant, fluctuating

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION CHART

By Age and Sex

<u>Ages</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
0 - 4	16 (7.8%)	7 (3.4%)	23 (11.2%)
5 - 9	15 (7.4%)	13 (6.3%)	28 (13.7%)
10 - 14	12 (5.9%)	12 (5.9%)	24 (11.8%)
15 - 19	11 (5.4%)	11 (5.4%)	22 (10.8%)
<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>54 (26.5%)</u>	<u>43 (21.0%)</u>	<u>97 (47.5%)</u>
20 - 24	4 (2.0%)	7 (3.4%)	11 (5.4%)
25 - 29	7 (3.4%)	10 (4.9%)	17 (8.3%)
30 - 34	7 (3.4%)	7 (3.4%)	14 (6.8%)
35 - 39	9 (4.4%)	4 (2.0%)	13 (6.4%)
40 - 44	5 (2.4%)	2 (1.0%)	7 (3.4%)
45 - 49	6 (2.9%)	1 (0.5%)	7 (3.4%)
50 - 54	4 (2.0%)	3 (1.5%)	7 (3.5%)
55 - 59	4 (2.0%)	4 (2.0%)	8 (4.0%)
60 - 64	3 (1.5%)	2 (1.0%)	5 (2.5%)
<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>49 (24.0%)</u>	<u>40 (19.7%)</u>	<u>89 (43.7%)</u>
65 - 69	5 (2.4%)	1 (0.5%)	6 (2.9%)
70 - 74	1 (0.5%)	5 (2.4%)	6 (2.9%)
75+	4 (2.0%)	2 (1.0%)	6 (3.0%)
<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>10 (4.9%)</u>	<u>8 (3.9%)</u>	<u>18 (8.8%)</u>
TOTALS	113 (55.4%)	91 (44.6)	204 (100%)

two or three plus or minus of twenty-five during each five-year period. The data presented by Marino (1977:22) similarly indicate that following the in-migration of the late "fifties" and early "sixties", the population of Ft. MacKay has remained at approximately 200 persons (plus/minus) since 1961.

Ft. MacKay Population
(Marino 1977:22)

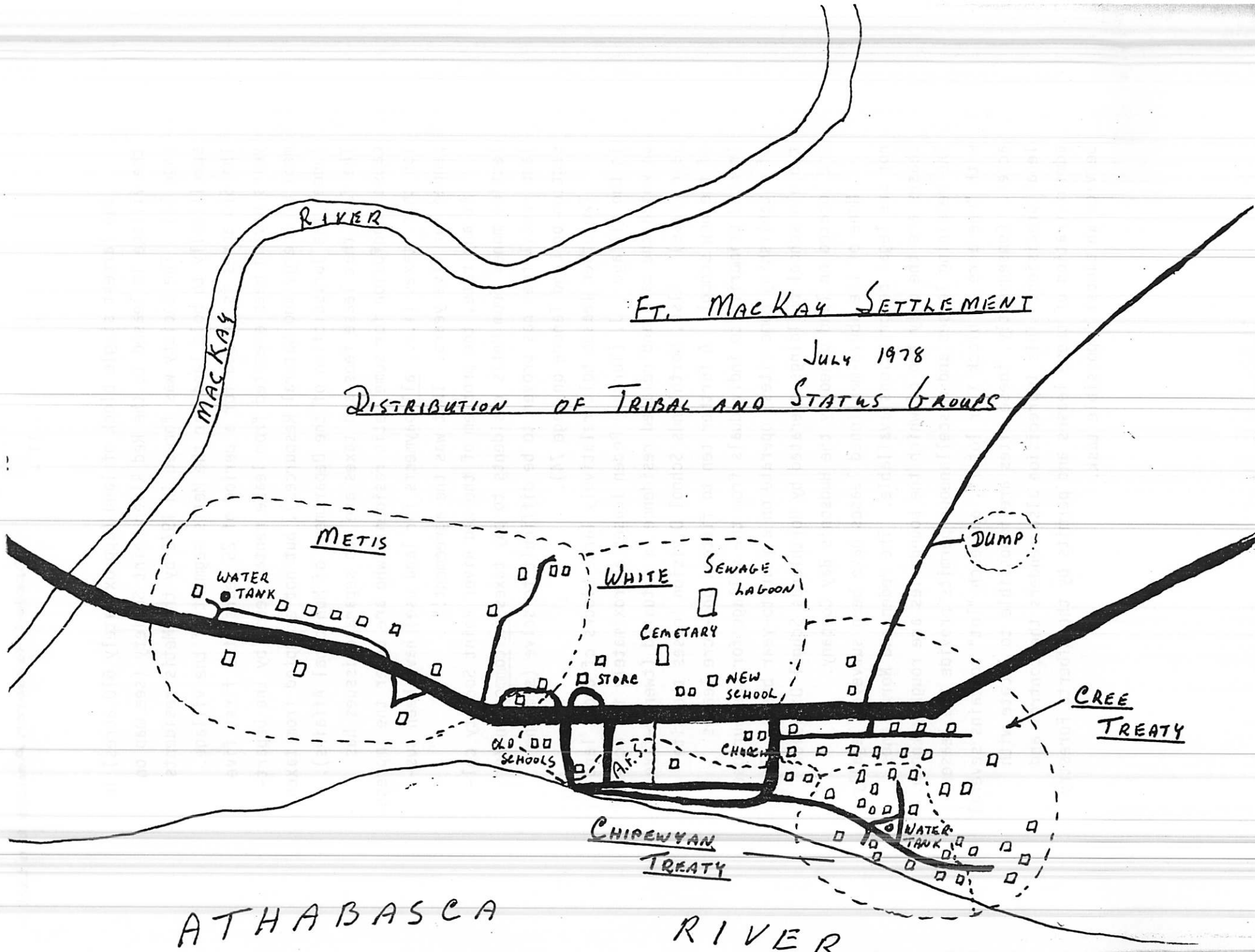
	<u>1956</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1974</u>
Population	59	187	230	200	254

Contrary to the "Information Base" document which concludes that the natural population growth would be about 3.4% annually, we suggest that no basis exists for assuming any natural growth rate (i.e. barring an influx of settlers) for the village. The population tends to remain relatively constant.

Within the context of the 111 Treaty residents of Ft. MacKay, about 38 are of Chipewyan descent and 73 are of Cree descent. The map on page 10 illustrates the geographic placement of tribal and status groups in the village. The general tendency to segregate the four primary social groupings (Metis, White, Cree and Chipewyan Treaties) is immediately noticable. This provides the first important clue to the overall social structure of Ft. MacKay.

Land Dispositions and Uses

The Northeast Alberta Regional Plan (1977b) illustrates adequately that Ft. MacKay is surrounded literally by land on which mineral leases have been secured by major companies. A large portion of what is informally referred to as "the village" (no legal status exists at present) also is under lease or is patent land. Identification of the legal boundaries of most leases and miscellaneous permits appears to be impossible for reasons explained below.



FT. MACKAY SETTLEMENT

JULY 1978

DISTRIBUTION OF TRIBAL AND STATUS GROUPS

METIS

WHITE

DUMP

CREE
TREATY

CHIRENYAN
TREATY

ATHABASCA

RIVER

The largest single block of land (approximately 610 acres) in the village is leased to the Red River Point Society (see map on page 12). The Society was formed in 1972 by the Metis residents specifically to hold land for the Metis segment of the village. The 610 acres is leased for a period of 25 years, the first five years having been exempted from lease rental fees (by the Department of Energy and Natural Resources), but not exempted from taxes (under the jurisdiction of the Department of Municipal Affairs). The fact that lease fees and taxes are two separate issues has caused confusion for some Metis residents who are under the impression that "taxes (i.e., all payments for land use) have been suspended for five years. That was the agreement!"

At any rate, the problem of the Red River Point Society collecting money from Metis residents to pay taxes in common and/or land rental fees has proven to be difficult to solve (see the section on Land Tenure on page 74).

Two other leases hold relatively large blocks of Crown land in the village. J. (Torchy) Peden leases approximately ten acres on which the cafe and related residence is situated (twenty-five year lease). Also, Northlands School Division leases the site of the new school. A further ten to fifteen one-acre leases (rented primarily to individuals from the village for the purpose of establishing home sites) operate on a year-to-year basis. The two old school buildings operated by Northlands School Division are located on land owned by the Hudson's Bay Company.

None of the above-mentioned leases have been surveyed legally, nor are legal descriptions available. The Peden and Northlands leases are the only two of which the boundaries are roughly known. The remaining leases and miscellaneous permits provide the leases with "one acre in block X or lot Y", and each "lot" contains several acres. Consequently, these sites are impossible to locate with legal precision. This imprecision also renders the control and administration of these leases and permits by the Alberta Forestry Service an almost impossible task.

LOT 12
159 a.

LOT 11
154 a.

H. B. SINGLETON
(EDMONTON)
SALT CLAIM

MISCELLANEOUS LEASE
2935 RED RIVER
POINT SOCIETY

PATENT
GOVT. OF
CANADA

LOT 10
159 a.

1" = 880'

28.5 a. LOT 9

ALBERTA
POWER

R. C.
CHURCH

27.0 a. LOT 8

NORTHLANDS
SCHOOLS

32.3 a. LOT 7

DIVISION

24.8 a. LOT 6

N. SHOTT
PATENT

24.1 a. LOT 4

A. F. S.

J. & M. PEDEN
10 a. LEASE

PATENT
J. PEDEN

PATENT
H. B. C.

LOT 5

ATHABASCA RIVER

13.4 a.

58.0 a.

LOT 4

15.2 a.

129.0 a.

LOT 3

91.1 a.

LOT 2

56.2 a.

128 a

LOT 1

Map of Land Dispositions
FT. MacKay Settlement



No Indian Reserve exists in Ft. MacKay. The reserves belonging to the Ft. MacKay Band are located in the vicinity of Namur Lake (about 120 kilometers northwest of the village). Another small reserve (approximately one square mile) exists on the east bank of the Athabasca River, roughly five kilometers upstream from Ft. MacKay.

Within the village, the Ft. MacKay Band has leased approximately twenty acres from the Government of Canada for a period of 99 years. The Federal Government holds clear title to this block of land. About 90% of the 111 Treaty residents of Ft. MacKay live on this lease. The remainder are scattered in other areas of the general village site.

It is noteworthy that at the present time, 77 Metis control about 610 acres, while 111 Treaties control roughly 20 acres. For the Metis, this means that they pay lease fees and taxes on a large number of acres which they do not use or need. On the other hand, the Treaties tend to be relatively cramped together and require more land for housing.

Other small parcels (3 to 5 acres) of patent land in Ft. MacKay include acreage owned by J. (Torchy) Peden, The Roman Catholic Church, The Hudson's Bay Company, and Narcisse Shott, an old time Metis resident.

Community Services and Infrastructure

The following section with its several segments describes various aspects of services and infrastructure in Ft. MacKay as they exist at the present time. In addition to this general description, we present the views of residents concerning some of these issues. On the basis of formal interviews conducted in each household, the relative priority placed on each of these items by community residents is illustrated on page 15. (See page v for methodology and context.)

(1) Residents' Priorities. In attempting to establish some type of meaningful list of priorities which would accurately reflect the views and concerns of residents of the village of Ft. MacKay, interviews were conducted in households representing the three primary segments of the village, the Treaty Indians, the Metis and the Whites. In other words, the whole village received the opportunity to present opinions. This point is made for two important reasons. First, some native people suggested that the white minority should have no voice in local affairs whatsoever. Therefore, why should whites be interviewed at all? Clearly, this viewpoint is unrealistic in a village where White people (even though they are only a small minority group) have business, residential and occupational interests. Furthermore, the perspective is as parochial as that expressed by Whites in other communities in which native people represent minorities.

Second, Treaty Indians, Metis and Whites in Ft. MacKay do present differing viewpoints on some issues, particularly those which relate to differing legal status or cultural perspectives. On the other hand, general similarities in viewpoint between all three groups appear to occur much more frequently than do differences. From the point of view of gaining an accurate understanding of the concerns of each group in the village, as well as the community as a whole, collecting and presenting the responses by these categories seemed to be appropriate.

The List of Community Priorities presented on the following two pages must be interpreted in light of the following points.

- (a) The chart depicts priorities in relation to Treaty Indians, Metis, Whites and the whole Village.
- (b) The far left-hand column lists the order of the priorities.
- (c) The columns headed "Relative Value" show how each group ranked items within its own list. Comparison of rankings between groups is not generally valid.

Ft. MacKay Residents'

List of Community Priorities

TREATIES			METIS		WHITE		WHOLE VILLAGE	
Order of Priority	Item	Relative Value	Item	Relative Value	Item	Relative Value	Item	Relative Value
1	Negative Growth	100	Negative Growth	100	Transportation	100	Negative Growth	100
2	Water	94	Transportation	93	Negative Growth Water	94 94	Transportation	95
3	Transportation Fire Prevention	92 92	Road Improvement	90	Sewer School	92 92	Water	93
4	Sewer	89	Water Pollution Control	89 89	Road Improvement Pollution Control	90 90	Sewer	84
5	Road Improvement	87	Sewer	88	Government Services Fire Prevention Community Health	88 88 88	Fire Prevention Road Improvement	82 82
6	Pollution Control Indian Association	86 86	School Fire Prevention Trap Lines	87 87 87	Recreation	87	Pollution Control	80
7	Businesses	85	Land Tenure Metis Association	86 86	Local Government Companies Trap Lines	86 86 86	School Native Associations	71 71
8	Community Health	84	Policing	84	Land Tenure	85	Community Health	67
9	Recreation	82	Recreation	81	Businesses Native Associations	84 84	Trap Lines	66

Ft. Mackay Residents'

List of Community Priorities (Cont.)

TREATIES			METIS		WHITE		WHOLE VILLAGE	
Order of Priority	Item	Relative Value	Item	Relative Value	Item	Relative Value	Item	Relative Value
10	Trap Lines	78	Housing Community Health	80 80	Policing Housing	83 83	Recreation	65
11	School Local Government	77 77	Electric Power	78	Ambulance Electric Power Telephones	82 82 82	Businesses Policing	58 58
12	Policing	76	Local Government Ambulance	77 77			Local Government	55
13	Housing	75	Businesses	75			Housing	53
14	Telephones Companies	71 71	Telephones	74			Government Services	46
15	Ambulance Government Services	70 70	Companies Gov't Services	73 73			Ambulance Companies	45 45
16	Electric Power	65					Telephones	42
17	Land Tenure	47					Electric Power	38
18							Land Tenure	33

Several important points are immediately visible from the List of Community Priorities.

- (a) The need to improve businesses and commercial interests in the village was perceived as more significant by Treaties than by Whites or Metis.
- (b) Conversely, Metis and Whites sense a greater need for improved schooling, particularly above the level of grade 8, than do the Treaties.
- (c) The need for some form of local government which spans the scope of the entire village is seen as more urgent by Whites than by either Metis or Treaties.
- (d) Similarly, Whites rate government services as being significantly poorer than did the Metis or Treaties.
- (e) Land Tenure is an issue of urgent concern to the Metis, of moderate concern to the Whites, and is viewed in somewhat negative terms by the Treaties. (It is important to note that "Land Tenure" in this instance refers solely to individual leasing or ownership. The Treaties emphasize their need to have access to more land to be held corporately for the Ft. MacKay Band.)
- (f) "Housing seems to appear much lower on all lists of priorities than may have been expected. In a sense, this is a "mathematical illusion" in that the houses of extremely poor quality "cancelled out" the ratings of the houses of relatively high quality. In other words, housing tends to be of either good or poor quality rather than generally of moderate quality as might be inferred from the list of priorities. (See the section on "Housing" on page 41 for detailed description of housing quality.)

Following is a series of detailed discussions pertaining to each of the items on the priorities lists.

(2) Growth: The issue concerning which all residents of Ft. MacKay appear to feel most strongly appears to be the future growth of the village. In excess of 95% of the population opposes any type of growth which would imply an influx of population from outside of Ft. MacKay. Following are a number of verbatim comments from the households interviewed.

- M - We have to say that we want more people because that will happen anyway. We would like the services that more people would bring, but we would also like the village to stay as it is.
- M - For my part, I would open the village to create a little town here. There would be no discrimination between Whites and Natives.
- M - I prefer to keep MacKay the same way as it is, but we would like running water and sewage.
- M - I don't mind it growing a bit, but not too much. Nobody bothers you now.
- W - The community should not be phased out. There should be a certain degree of freedom of movement for people. Services requiring a slightly larger population will not be available if there is no growth. Moderate growth should be allowed if services can sustain it. I am afraid that the Community Plan is just a way to legislate boundaries for the village so that the companies can mine right up to the outer limits. I don't approve of that.
- T - I think there should be a Community Plan. I would favor moving to an urban area for myself. For the people here, they should be here for another 100 years. If I had a family, I would stay in MacKay or go to Namur Lake. If a person from MacKay moved to an urban center, after a while it would not matter any more what he did. Not too many people will want to move from this location.
- W - The community should stay the same. Leave it as is. One cannot have segregation such as allowing only Native people to move in. It is not practical. If segregation is to be enacted, growth should be cut off now. The people need time to decide their future.

Let them work it out themselves. Don't change the village even through provision of basic amenities.

- M - Just keep it like it is. Don't even let other Native people move in.
- W - The village will obviously have to conform to some degree to the resource development pattern of the future. Yet, the preservation of the area as a village is necessary. We have no right to destroy family units like this.
- W - The community cannot stay as it is. Thus, a restricted growth pattern should be allowed. The people coming in should be the type of persons the community wants. The influx must be done on a "trickle" basis rather than a sudden large influx.
- Dwellings should be permanent rather than mobile. The influx should be restricted to native people. Growth should be regulated in quantity and quality.
- If MacKay is to be phased out, there should be some provision for relocation of the Metis. If it is eliminated, the Metis and Treaties should be allowed to relocate together.
- If MacKay is eliminated, the new community must be properly planned.
- W - If people are moved without full knowledge of the implications, it would be the end of the community. If I were them, I would move to Namur Lake as soon as possible. But this does not consider the fate of the Metis. And another move for any of them, and they would not survive. The community was hit with encroachment about 10 years ago. Adjustment has taken place at an incredible rate. Can more be expected?
- W - I favor modest growth to get services.
- W - I can't see relocation because I can't see the older people moving. Therefore, leave the older people here and allow more native people to move in. People here will not integrate into an urban setting and Namur Lake is too far from amenities.
- W - Ft. MacKay should stay as it is because it is the only home that people know. They will not move away.
- T - The village should be kept just the way it is now. We have been here since the beginning, so we should not have to move. I suppose we would have to move if the issue were forced because we are not on the reserve. But I would rather stay here.

- T - Keep the village as it is and add services. If we let people come in, we will be crowded out. We are fighting enough among ourselves without bringing more people in.
- W - MacKay should be left as it is. If it is going to fade away on its own, that is OK over a long period of time.
- T - The bigger the population, the better. There will be better services.
- T - My grandfather was the first to come to Ft. MacKay. I don't want to have to leave. Why should White men come and kick us all out?
- T - MacKay should stay as it is. Don't even bring the native guys up from the south. We have enough trouble of our own.
- W - We can view the situation in two ways. First, one could let the village stay as it is. It is an escape route where they do not have to face reality. Second, if they are moved, there has to be something like Namur Lake which is predeveloped. You can't just kick them back to the bush to fend for themselves.

Note that in relation to the informant comments presented above, (T) designates a comment from a Treaty resident, (M) indicates Metis comments and (W) identifies White responses.

Several important points may be elicited from the perspectives presented above.

- (1) These opinions include the entire range of perspectives. However, the fact that over 95% of those interviewed favor no in-migration to the village must be kept foremost in mind.
- (2) It is important to observe that most Native people in Ft. MacKay do not even wish to have Native people from other areas move into the village. Only some Whites suggest this might be a viable alternative.
- (3) Perhaps 20% of the village residents would concede

modest growth in return for improved services. But in most instances, this is seen as a "price to pay" for amenities, and certainly is not desirable ideally.

- (d) The sense of segmentation between Treaties, Metis and Whites appears to be an assumption common to nearly all informants.
- (e) For purposes of constructing a Community Plan, Ft. MacKay residents have indicated clearly that they want to retain the village as a residential site into the indefinite future. Allowances for natural growth (should such occur) must be considered. However, immigration of "outsiders", Native or White, is opposed.

(3) Transportation. Another issue high on the list of priorities for residents of the village is transportation. While virtually all Whites have private vehicles, only five or six native households have similar privilege. Within the last month, the Band has purchased a mini-bus to provide itinerant transport, with emphasis upon taking workers to the Syncrude site. Again, because of the difference in legal status, some controversy has occurred over whether this vehicle may legitimately transport non-status people.

At present, no form of scheduled public transport service exists in Ft. MacKay. However, both Greyhound Bus Lines and Diversified Transport have made application to provide regular service to the village. The result of these petitions is still pending.

The form of transportation most frequented by native residents of Ft. MacKay is taxi. The cost of a round trip to Ft. McMurray varies between sixty and seventy dollars. An average of six taxis into the village per day would be a close approximation of the frequency of usage of this type of transport.

During the summer, boats are still used quite often for trips on the Athabasca River and its tributaries. Also, during the winter, snowmobiles are much in evidence and have replaced dog teams as preferred transport along trap lines.

The strong desire for some form of scheduled public transport pertains primarily to four important concerns:

- (a) The need for transportation to employment sites;
- (b) Bussing high school children to school in Ft. McMurray;
- (c) Shopping;
- (d) Access to non-emergency medical services.

Native employment allegedly is one of the prominent objectives, or at least concerns, of the major resource development companies locating in the northeast region of Alberta. Similarly, such employment is stated as a priority for both federal and provincial governments. Transportation to and from the plant sites for residents of Ft. McMurray is a fringe benefit of employment. The distance involved is approximately 50 kilometers each way. Yet, transportation for the labor force in Ft. MacKay (a distance of approximately 20 kilometers one way) seems to be impossible. How does this fit in with the various government and company programs which aim to encourage native employment or to develop the skills needed by native people to become employable in resource development activities?

Schooling is offered only to the level of Grade eight in Ft. MacKay, although in the fall of 1978, this will be altered to include teaching of Grade nine. Every year, students wishing to continue school beyond the level offered in the village are forced to leave home and board in an alien community. This process has never worked successfully. The attrition rate within the first few months of living away from Ft. MacKay is virtually 100%. If offering high school education in Ft. MacKay is too costly in relation to the number of students, why can the children not be bussed into Ft. McMurray daily to attend school? No predominantly White community in Alberta would tolerate transportation standing in the way of a reasonable opportunity to pursue a high school education.

Public transportation would provide access to businesses and services in Ft. McMurray which at present may only be reached via costly taxi services. Even government departments such as Fish and Wildlife do not seem to realize that to purchase a ten dollar permit for net fishing (for Treaty Indians), one must hire a taxi (at a cost of sixty dollars) to do so. Particularly for old people, public transport would be helpful for shopping.

Each year, thousands of dollars are spent by government for the cost of taxis to bring people from Ft. MacKay to the medical services which are offered in Ft. McMurray. This process places the responsibility for making appointments with doctors, dentists, etc. upon the shoulders of the community health nurses. Public transport would alleviate the excessive cost of this service and place the responsibility for medical and dental appointments upon the individuals who require attention.

Public transportation is urgently needed in Ft. MacKay. Consulting studies indicate that if the transportation problem is segmented into the categories of employment, school, general and medical transport, no one category can economically justify provision of such conveyance. Or to look at the issue from another perspective, the bureaucratic compartmentalization of segments of the needed funds is a major impediment to provision of acceptable service. A jointly coordinated effort might have a chance to be economically viable. The real question is, "Can Northlands School Division, Community Health Services and the major companies overcome bureaucratic impediments to cooperate in a coordinated effort?"

This is not to say that the village has no responsibility. Anything which could be arranged would require local cooperation as well. The following comments by residents of Ft. MacKay focus the village problems.

T - The concept of time would be the main impediment to a bus service. If people want to go NOW and the bus is not scheduled, they would still take a taxi.

- W - *We should have transportation with a bus system as outlined in the Diversified proposal. When Fort Taxi had a bus operating, people still preferred a taxi.*
- M - *We need bus service, but not from Greyhound or Diversified. It should be locally operated.*
- W - *There is a great need for transportation. An outside company would work out best. Perhaps the most immediate need is for transportation to the work site.*
- W - *Bus transport would be nice, but I fear that the parents would not be home half the time with the kids. If the schedule does not coincide with individual need, taxis will still be used.*

(4) Water/Sewer. Until recent years, the village took water from the Athabasca River for drinking and other domestic purposes. However, the advent of major resource development activities means that the use of untreated water must be abandoned. The expanded population of Ft. McMurray has increased the amount of effluent released into the river upstream from Ft. MacKay. Great Canadian Oil Sands also releases waste approximately 20 kilometers upstream from the village. As Syncrude begins production, the quality of river water may be expected to deteriorate further.

Well-drilling programs in the community have thus far been unsuccessful in locating an acceptable alternative to river water. Apparently the wells which have been sunk have struck natural gas or a mixture of oil and water at very shallow depths (e.g. 40 ft.).

As a result, water is trucked into Ft. MacKay from Ft. McMurray or Syncrude. Two holding tanks have been constructed in the village, one in the north end for the Treaties and one in the south end for the Metis. This system appears to be the most viable at the present time, although a few major problems have resulted.

First, as most people in the village have no means of transport, the mere physical problem of moving water from the two tank sites into

homes in a problem of some magnitude. This is doubly true if sufficient quantities of water are used to provide even minimal standards of sanitation. Drinking water is a minor issue compared to hauling water for bathing or doing laundry. In many instances, water for all these purposes must be moved by hand over distances of three to four hundred meters.

The second major problem is that while the quality of the water trucked into the village may be of perfectly acceptable standards, the holding tanks in the community are not cleaned regularly. Apparently the recommended frequency of cleaning is every three months. Village residents claim that the tanks have not been touched for close to two years and I know from personal experience that they were not cleaned during the nine months we lived in the village.

While literally no native household in Ft. MacKay has running water, no White home is without this convenience. The same is true of sewer facilities. All native houses have outdoor privies, while White homes have septic tanks with indoor plumbing. One reason for this inequity unquestionably relates to the high cost of providing universal water and sewer facilities for the village. But perhaps even a more fundamental reason is that Whites living and working in the village simply would not tolerate living under conditions similar to those in which the Native residents must live. In relation to employment of school teachers, Forestry personnel, etc., these basic amenities are understood implicitly to be necessary "to stabilize the high turnover of staff". Perhaps a similar relationship should be assumed in relation to providing the necessary home conditions to enhance the stability of Native employment.

Comments from informants concerning water and sewer are as follows.

- M - *The water supply is not bad, but the tank must be cleaned regularly.*

- M - The water is a real need. Many times I have gone to the tank and the water is dirty in the tank. They have not even cleaned the tank once in a year. Also, the Alberta Housing Corporation units have their own holding tanks installed, but it was done so poorly that they cannot be used.
- M - Sewer would aid sanitation.
- M - It is too long a distance to haul water, especially for women when men are not home.
- M - The taste of the chlorine in the water is hard to get used to.
- M - The present water system makes it impossible for people who cannot haul, especially the old people.
- W - I hate to see billions of dollars spent on industrial development and nothing done to upgrade facilities in MacKay. Water would upgrade the sanitation. The MacKay River is still unpolluted and might be used as a water supply. With regard to sewer, the sanitation angle is important. It is probably a want now, but it is certainly a need for the future.
- T - I have made a friend of the water truck driver and even though it is against the rules, I get water right from the truck. That is the only thing that saves me. Otherwise, I could not haul it.
- M - The water that we have at the present time is of good enough quality. The water tastes OK. It is treated well and seems fresh. At least we get it for free and we would have to pay for running water. We have gotten along without sewer until now. Not everybody has a house good enough to have a bathroom. This is a problem. It would be OK if everybody had a house with a bathroom you could get sewer to.
- W - Water is stored in tanks at the present time, but it used to come from the river. Now the companies have polluted it. Somebody should bear the cost of this travesty to the community. The companies have created the problem; they should correct it by whatever means is possible. Sewer is provided by government everywhere else. The community should also have their input under normal circumstances, but here they could not afford it. Sewer is really not needed here in relation to the present lifestyle.

- W - The water is simply not clean. Blood infections and blood poisoning have resulted.
- W - If the companies are reaping the benefits from this area, they should provide compensation via such things as sewer systems.
- W - I think that the houses in the village should have running water and sewer. Sanitation requires it. When people have to carry every drop of water they use, they will clamp down on it as much as they can.
- W - Water and sewage would be good, but I believe they are too costly to provide in this area. The Tar Sand is so shallow.
- T - It would be good to have running water, but where would it come from? The wells drilled previously hit only natural gas.
- T - The kids get sick from the water at the pumping station. There is too much treatment in it.
- T - With the present tank system, if the power goes off, you have no access to water. Even after the power comes on, the pump has to be reset and only Forestry have the key. It is sometimes hard to get water flowing again. In the 1960's, Indian Affairs tried to drill wells on the Treaty side. They drilled two to a depth of 40 ft. and struck natural gas. The rigs just about blew up. Northlands drilled a well by the skating rink and hit oil and water together. The water was not drinkable.
- W - At present, people have to travel to get their water. We are allegedly trying to fit them into a more sophisticated way of life. There should be no discrimination. The tanks have never been cleaned. The problem is either the tanks or the truck.

(5) Fire Prevention. At the present time, the village has no means of fighting fires in houses or other buildings. Some homes have fire extinguishers (which many persons do not know how to maintain or to use). Recently, smoke detectors have been purchased by the Band for installation in Treaty homes.

When fire breaks out in a home or building, the only thing one may do is try to get the people out and then stand back to watch the structure burn. This may have been economically justifiable (assuming that one could neglect the effect on people) in the past when buildings were simple structures erected at low capital cost. However, present housing is expensive and costs will only increase in the future. Also, new facilities such as the recently constructed school are beginning to be placed in Ft. MacKay - structures which are too costly "to stand back and watch them burn."

Concern that Ft. MacKay has no emergency firefighting services was voiced universally by village residents.

- M - We need equipment and help. The people here do not know how to operate the fire extinguishers or how to fight fire.
- M - We need a fire truck here. Forestry should be the ones who keep it.
- M - There should be firefighting equipment in the village. Forestry should be responsible for it. There should be volunteer firemen from the village.
- M - People should be gotten together and trained how to fight house fires. The necessary equipment should also be here. Forestry should be responsible for organizing this.
- W - There is a need for fire prevention services. There is not even a fire break around the community. A truck placed with Forestry would help. A volunteer fire brigade could serve.
- T - There is nothing we can do at present by hand. If the equipment were here, the local people should organize a firefighting crew.
- T - This is a very basic need. It should be organized and operated by members of the community. It should be separate from the operations of Forestry.
- M - Lots of houses have burnt and people cannot stop it, We need equipment and it should be that Forestry is responsible for it. I have nothing against the people who live in MacKay, but on weekends, not many people are able to do anything.

- W - With the higher cost of houses and the new school, we really do have need for some means of fighting fires. Equipment is needed badly. Firefighting should be done with volunteers in conjunction with Forestry.
- N - There is a need for fire extinguishers. They should be in the house. No fire hall is needed. Forestry acts as a fire hall now.
- W - There should be some form of fire fighting equipment in MacKay. If extinguishers must be used, they should be 350 pound dry chemical extinguishers mounted on a vehicle. People should be trained for their use.
- W - Fire prevention in the home should be the focus. There should be some relevant home skills courses. Emergency service may not be necessary because the houses are built so poorly that they would burn before any response could be made.
- W - Fire services is the greatest need in terms of emergency service. It is most important for the school. There is a need for home skills courses to be repeated constantly, particularly in terms of fire prevention. People are not aware of issues such as spontaneous combustion.
- T - A fire truck is needed here. There should be training for the firemen. Forestry could take care of it. There should be fire training for everybody in use of fire extinguishers. Most people don't know how to use them. The homes are set up poorly for fire evacuation. There should be a door in the back. Smoke detectors are to be put in every house. I have been after people for a long time to build houses where you don't have to come out through the fire.
- T - We have lost a lot of houses. We do need the service. Once a fire has broken out, fire extinguishers are no good. We need proper equipment. Men in MacKay would be the firefighters.
- W - Emergency fire service is not needed at present, but as the value of houses and property increases, it will be necessary. Most fires now are because of alcohol or arson. If people are drunk and set fire to the house, what can you do?

- W* - Firefighting equipment and crews are needed, but they would have to be under the direction of somebody responsible such as Forestry. The fire extinguisher system is not adequate. You would think they would do something after putting up a new school like they did.
- T* - We need fire extinguishers at least and know how to use them. Any equipment at all would help and we could get a crew to operate it.
- T* - We need fire equipment. The kids play with matches and oil stoves are dangerous. People don't think about these things.
- T* - The whole community should have fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. We (the Band) could never get the equipment for a truck or a fire crew. However, the large extinguishers should be in each house. Above all, there should be courses for everybody (especially women) in how to use extinguishers and in general fire prevention and emergency procedure. There are two fire extinguishers in every Treaty house, but they are very small.

The problem of fire prevention appears to be sufficiently serious to demand that:

- (a) fire extinguishers of sufficient size to be useful should be available to all homes;
- (b) training programs in how to use fire extinguishers and other firefighting techniques be provided for all adults (men and women);
- (c) adequate fire fighting equipment (such as a used truck) be stationed at Ft. MacKay under the care and direction of the Alberta Forestry Service;
- (d) volunteer fire fighting crews be trained and organized under the direction of the Alberta Forestry Service.

(6) Road Improvement. The quality of roads may be divided into two categories,

- (a) the roads in the settlement;
- (b) the highway from Syncrude to Ft. MacKay.

Roads within the settlement of Ft. MacKay generally are not poor in quality, though some exceptions do exist. A few roadways have been poorly planned, being constructed close enough to some houses that they are dangerous. Several other areas require better drainage and proper gravel. To date, lack of proper planning may be the most prominent general problem.

As the roads also tend to be used as primary routes for pedestrian traffic, better regulatory signs are needed. This issue will become more critical with the opening of the new school. The location of the school will draw more children on to the main highway through the village, creating a very hazardous situation.

The major problem with roads in the settlement is that they are unmaintained. The relevant branches of government (e.g. Municipal Affairs, Alberta Transport, Indian Affairs, etc.) simply do not serve the community in this regard.

While the highway from the Syncrude turnoff to Ft. MacKay generally is poor, some sections have been upgraded. However, other sections are so badly constructed that they require rebuilding in order to be maintained at all. The practical effect is that even when vehicles are available to transport residents to work, town, etc., or when emergency services such as ambulance are provided, the quality of the road is at best a detriment, and frequently is a deterrent, to effective transport. This is again a factor which helps to undermine the stability of employment.

Again, the lack of maintenance of this road is appalling. In reality, grading usually is done only on days when senior government officials are scheduled to visit or to attend meetings in Ft. MacKay. This fact is recognized by all residents and is the subject of caustic comments and cynical jokes.

While all rational individuals are aware that the population of the settlement is too small to justify a "super highway" at the present time, and that this road must assume a place in a broader list

of priorities, the following suggestions seem reasonable.

- (a) A statement of priority, or a construction timetable for rebuilding relevant sections of the road should be prepared by Alberta Transportation and officially publicized so that residents need not live with uncertainty into the indefinite future.
- (b) The road should be systematically and regularly maintained, with grading at least twice each week. Presently, a grader must be brought from the Hangingstone River (approximately 100 kilometers) each time grading is done. This is costly and a major problem in relation to scheduling. Perhaps the solution would be to contract with R. Angus for use of their equipment two days per week, as the R. Angus site is located right along the relevant road.

(7) Pollution Control. Pollution may be a delicate subject politically, but it is a perceived reality which is on the minds of the residents of Ft. Mackay on a daily basis. Indeed, pollution has been a significant factor in altering the life style of the residents, and promises to be even a greater factor with expanded resource development and industrialization in the future. Residents view the issue as follows.

- M - There is a real need for pollution control. The wind blows smoke here. The water from the river is not drinkable any more. The fish will soon be no good. The berries and animals have become sick and disappeared since pollution began.*
- M - When the plants arrived, the berries and game began to disappear. It could be the smoke (GCOS). It travels a long way.*
- M - There should be a garbage truck here to pick up garbage twice a week. People in the community should get together to do this. Both the Chief and the Metis Association president should organize this together.*

- M - Since GCOS has come, the cones dry up on the spruce and never grow. Even back in the bush, the needles are drying on the trees. It is evident because these things have happened only since GCOS has been operating.
- W - There should be limited or no open pit mining.
- W - Pollution problems range from strip mining to water and air pollution. GCOS is pumping crap into the air. But AOSERP is government and Syncrude is government so what can you expect.
- W - Pollution has to be monitored by an independent agency. Government and the companies must be responsible to the people. Is AOSERP going to do anything about pollution or just study it?
- T - The fish taste like oil.
- W - The government is shy. If they press for pollution regulations and restrictions, the plants will close down and Alberta can't afford that. The pollution will be a lot greater when Syncrude starts up if policing of pollution continues to be poor.
- W - There will be more problems in the future than there are now. Water pollution is terrible. The river water has deteriorated just in the last eight years. The fish are now inedible. The Firebag River is the only unpolluted place left.
- T - The smoke from GCOS is bad for you. The snow brings the smoke down and kills the small animals like squirrels and weasels. You see something like jelly spread all over the willows. We stopped melting snow and ice to drink for this reason.
- W - The major problem is the present disposal of garbage and sewage. A garbage collection service is really necessary.

Some persons from government and industry would argue that the community perception of pollution is not based upon fact. Especially if this is so, at minimal cost, the government, through AOSERP or the Department of the Environment, could explain formally to the residents of Ft. MacKay:

- (a) the function of the research being conducted by AOSERP
 -- research which is daily visible to the residents;

- (b) the actual scope and degree of pollution in the area at present, and what the settlement may expect in the future;
- (c) whether anything can, or will, be done to alleviate the effects of pollution in the area;
- (d) which branches of government are responsible for enacting and enforcing pollution legislation;
- (e) how enforcement takes place at the present time.

(8) School. The place of education in the community, and the issues of relevance to education, will be discussed in a subsequent section. For the moment, only a description of school facilities is offered.

Ft. MacKay is served by Northlands School Division, the head office of which is located in Peace River. To the end of the 1977-78 school year, grades one to eight have been taught. As of September, 1978, grade nine will be offered in the village. A total of three teachers and one teacher-aide are responsible for teaching the range of grades offered. A total of 56 students are enrolled.

A modern five-room school has been constructed and will be ready for opening in September, 1978. For a number of years, two old structures have been used. A permanent, one-room building belongs to Indian Affairs, while a portable two-room school belongs to Northlands School Division. The new school includes a small gymnasium and is served by running water and sewer facilities.

(9) Native Associations. The Metis of Ft. MacKay are represented provincially by the Metis Association of Alberta, while the Treaty people are affiliated with the Indian Association of Alberta. Each association has regional representatives or field workers responsible for Ft. MacKay. However, for several reasons, the profiles of the associations are low, and the respective groups of residents of the village tend to view them as remote and largely irrelevant. Indeed the associations seem to be perceived in much the same light as are

most aspects of government. The role of the associations will be discussed in detail in a subsequent section in the context of the overall political organization of the village.

(10) Health Services. The only aspect of health service which is delivered within the community of Ft. MacKay is the visit of the Community Health Nurse every second Tuesday. For this purpose, a "nurses' trailer" is maintained in the settlement. The closest hospital, medical doctor and dental services are located in Ft. McMurray.

Following are comments of residents pertaining to health facilities and care.

- M - For needy people who are Metis, transportation to hospital should be paid for.*
- M - The nurse is irregular and comes only every two weeks.*
- M - The nurses should be here all the time. They really should live here. The cost of doing everything from Ft. McMurray is too great.*
- W - The service is not too bad, but the nurse is not available frequently enough. A full-time nurse would be best.*
- T - The kids are the important focus of community health. As long as they have access to health care, that is all that is needed.*
- M - They should bring a doctor here instead of a nurse. Service should be more frequent. A doctor visiting would solve problems both in McMurray and here.*
- W - There is a need for a dentist and doctor one day per week. The present need for, or purpose of, the health trailer is unclear. It is not utilized. There is a great need for general health education in the village.*
- W - Resource personnel are needed. Child care, etc. should be taught. Nursing visits should be more frequent. Liason with the hospital in McMurray is necessary. Why is the hospital representative a white man? There should be local native representation.*

For children, there should be semi-annual trips to the dentist. There needs to be more dental access for the whole community.

The problem at present is transportation. Also, doctors do not take legitimate complaints seriously. The community and the hospital have to come to understand each other.

- W - Dental problems are incredible. There is a need for regular service. A mental health worker is required.
 Children cannot be taught when they are sick. Kids need the practice of regular health care and they will carry this over to the next generation.
 The nurse should be here at least once a week. There is no time for thoroughness at present.
- T - I don't know what the nurse is here for. She rarely visits the houses.
- T - Health service is not good. When you really need the nurse, you can't get one. Just because we have a car, she expects us to take the kids to the hospital. But, my husband is at work all day, and I do not drive.
- T - As far as the hospital is concerned, our baby has convulsions every time it gets a high temperature. I have a note from the doctor which instructs me to bring the baby to hospital every time the temperature gets high. When I do this, and even when I show the doctor's note to the people at the hospital, they rebuke me for bringing the baby in "for babysitting services".
- T - We need a better nursing service. The nurse never came when we need her. At least, the nurse should come out more often. It would be even better to have a nurse live here. The trailer here now is almost no help at all.
- T - Health services are not too good. The nurse should be here a minimum of once each week. Preventive and educational programs should be added such as "home makers" classes and home visits.
- T - The nurse should have an interpreter with her, especially for the old-timers.

Complaints concerning health services are numerous. Some are valid; others are not. None seem to be directed at the present nurse personally, but are focussed more accurately upon the structure of

service delivery. Many are products of poor communication or lack of understanding both on the part of residents of Ft. MacKay and of medical personnel in Ft. McMurray.

Analytically, the issues may be placed in the following general categories:

- (a) areas of inadequate service;
- (b) misuse of service;
- (c) lack of health education.

First, undoubtedly community residents would like to have a full range of health services situated in the village. However, this generally is recognized as infeasible when cost is measured against the small population.

However, a visit once every two weeks by a community health nurse certainly carries the issue to the opposite extreme. One cannot expect the most able nurse to deliver even basic health care under these constraints. The decision-makers responsible for structuring such a situation are insulated from having to perform in the field (as is required of the nurse) under demands which are frustrating and impossible to meet.

Second, the needs which are not met at the village level are passed on by default to the hospital and other medical facilities and services in Ft. McMurray. Here, a number of events occur.

- (a) Medical personnel become frustrated and angry because Mackay residents appear with complaints which seem to be too minor to justify the attention of a highly trained staff.
- (b) Persons are hospitalized for illnesses normally treated on an out-patient basis, where the patient lives in proximity to the hospital.
- (c) Patients fail to keep appointments in part due to transportation difficulties.
- (d) Remedies prescribed assume a standard of living similar

to Ft. McMurray, including comparable running water, sewer, housing, nutrition, etc. which do not exist in Ft. MacKay. One frequent complaint concerns lack of personal hygiene or cleanliness. Ft. McMurray standards in this regard also would be lower if citizens had to carry all their water by hand over relatively long distances. Ft. McMurray medical personnel simply do not appreciate the difference in standard of living between the two communities. Consequently, attitudes of MacKay residents and prescribed treatment programs frequently are taken out of context.

All of the above issues contribute to the conclusion drawn by medical personnel that residents of Ft. MacKay misuse medical services and facilities. What alternative do people have? Every aspect of the current structure of health services to the community encourages and enhances misuse. This would be visible readily if one were to view the community residents' way of life as a whole rather than artificially compartmentalizing it to conform to bureaucratic categories. In our culture, the individual bears the responsibility to integrate bureaucracy for himself, and one's education provides the information and skills to do so.

This leads to the third point. Indeed, many residents of Ft. MacKay do misuse health services for the reasons suggested above, and many more. The information and skills referred to above must be presented through programs of health education. Then, they must be reinforced through reasonable provision and structure of services.

We strongly recommend:

- (a) that nursing service be provided on a full-time, live-in basis to Ft. MacKay, at least until roads, transportation and health education have been improved;
- (b) that health education focussing upon the following be offered systematically in Ft. MacKay
 - personal health and hygiene

- nutrition
- basic first aid
- preventive programs
- appropriate use of hospital and related medical services.

The objection to such programs inevitably will be cost. We challenge this argument. Because health care is delivered not wholistically, but according to bureaucratic categories, shifting the costs from one segment to another within the total system will have positive fiscal consequences for some segments and negative results for others. Viewed in isolation, the cost to Community Health Services may rise. But hospital costs and the expensive misuse of highly trained medical personnel as well as exorbitant transportation costs (to bring patients from Ft. MacKay needlessly) would drop significantly. On a proper cost-accounting basis, we suggest that the total cost of health service delivery might be lower.

(11) Trap Lines. Problems with trap lines occurred relatively high in the list of community priorities and concerns. Trapping is still a prominent activity in Ft. MacKay. A complete discussion of the issue is reserved for a subsequent section related to economics and life style.

(12) Recreation. Presently, recreation facilities in Ft. MacKay are limited to a poor baseball field during the summer and an outdoor skating rink for winter. The need for improved facilities is documented in several planning documents and reports. Comments of residents are as follows.

- M - We need a place for showing movies, having bingos and for the adults to use for recreation.*
- T - The recreation proposal describes the recreation needs and wants of the people. There is need for a separate agency comprised of local people to deal with Parks and Recreation.*

- W - *There is nothing to do but drink. There should be a community hall or even a swimming pool. There should be a paid staff from the village to organize and to schedule events. The tourist use of the MacKay River has to be controlled.*
- W - *Facilities in the new school should help if the principal and the community cooperate.*
- W - *The more recreation pursuits, the better it is for the mental health of the whole community. A real need exists for recreation for women.*
- W - *I don't know what recreation facilities are needed. Unless something could be done to severely regulate usage, anything that was built would be ruined.*
- T - *We need to have something different. It has always been hockey and baseball here. There needs to be something for adults. A swimming pool should be here. We live on the water and nobody knows how to swim.*
- W - *Cable TV is really necessary.*

A grant has been received under the Young Canada Works program for improvement of several outdoor recreation facilities (see Appendix B for proposal). The gymnasium in the new school will provide a wide range of indoor recreation activities. The one great remaining need is for a community hall which could be used by all age groups for activities ranging from meetings to bingos to showing of movies.

(13) Businesses. Only two private businesses have operated in Ft. MacKay, both owned and operated by J. (Torchy) Peden. However, the Little Arrow Cafe has been discontinued and the store recently took over the old cafe premises.

A full discussion of businesses and economic development in Ft. MacKay may be found in the chapter on economics presented below.

(14) Police. Policing of Ft. MacKay is done on an itinerant basis or in response to a crisis call. The RCMP detachment is located in Ft. McMurray. On the average, unscheduled patrols would be conducted in the village approximately twice each week. The RCMP have no

office or accommodation in the community. Policing is the responsibility of a "rural" detachment which also deals with Anzac and Janvier.

A full discussion of policing is placed in the context of the chapter on "political organization" presented below.

(15) Local Government. Ft. MacKay is an unincorporated settlement within the boundaries of improvement District #18. As a result, the community has no form of local government which is formally recognized by the Government of Alberta. The only means of representation available is through the local Metis Association for the non-Treaties and through the Band Council for the Treaties. Also, a local representative is appointed to the Hospital Board in Ft. McMurray.

Local government is discussed more thoroughly in the chapter on "political organization".

(16) Housing. In general, the quality of housing in Ft. MacKay is very poor in relation to predominantly white communities such as Ft. McMurray. The results of a highly subjective inspection of most houses in Ft. MacKay are illustrated by the chart on page 42. Notwithstanding its shortcomings, this exercise does demonstrate the overall housing conditions, as well as the comparative conditions between Whites, Metis and Treaties. The following points are apparent.

- (a) Very few houses have adequate foundations; none have basements.
- (b) Native houses do not have amenities and services comparable to homes of Whites, though not even the White accommodation is of high quality.
- (c) Native homes are smaller than those of Whites, yet they house nearly three times as many persons per household.
- (d) Native homes have fewer rooms than White houses with more people occupying these rooms.

HOUSING ASSESSMENT (Cont.)

FT. MACKAY

	<u>TREATY</u>	<u>METIS</u>	<u>WHITE</u>
Average Sq. Ft./house	580.9	574.4	891.4
Average persons/house	4.2	4.75	1.7
Average sq. ft./person	138.3	120.9	524.3
Average rooms/person	.76	.61	2.9

Comments of residents pertaining to housing are as follows.

- M - *We have problems getting Alberta Housing Corporation to do proper maintenance. We even have to buy our own fire extinguishers. We want to own our own house, but we are continually put off.*
- W - *There is a need for upgrading the number of quality houses. The present housing is of poor quality and maintenance is a problem. People should be taught how to maintain houses, and also where applicable, maintenance should be done.*
- W - *The type of housing they are getting now is inappropriate. The houses need to be substantial and well-built instead of being slapped together. Basements are needed in relation to the large families. Multiple family dwellings are not appropriate. Houses should be situated so as to give proper "breathing space".*
- T - *At other reserves, they get furniture with their houses. Why don't we get it here?*
- T - *The construction of the houses is terrible. The wiring is bad enough to be a fire trap. The house leaks like hell.*
- T - *Placement of houses has to be reorganized and houses have to be moved. Houses should be in the neighborhood of 200 to 300 feet apart.*

T - *Because the houses are not on foundations, they move. The walls and the floors move as well.*

In essence, houses in Ft. MacKay are:

- (a) built of poor material;
- (b) poorly structured;
- (c) poorly maintained;
- (d) built at random without planning in the sense of overall village layout;
- (e) lacking amenities considered normal or essential in most communities.

Consequently, housing patterns in Ft. MacKay do not support the wage labor, steady employment, regular school attendance type of life style toward which native communities allegedly are directed as they experience a transition from the "old way". How people can be expected to maintain regular jobs and school attendance under existing living conditions is difficult to imagine.

To assist in development of a Community Plan acceptable to the residents of Ft. MacKay, an exercise was conducted with the grade six, seven and eight students. The purpose was to elicit views concerning desirable house design and spacing between houses. The students accurately reflect information gathered less systematically from a number of adults.

(17) Government Services. Only two branches of government have a permanent profile in Ft. MacKay, the Alberta Forest Service and Northlands School Division. For the past nine months, the Northeast Alberta Regional Commission has had permanent representation in the village.

Other departments with regular liason with the settlement include Social Service and Community Health, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada Manpower and AOSERP.

For a complete discussion regarding government and its

relationships with Ft. MacKay, see the chapter on "political organization

(18) Ambulance Service. Ambulance service to Ft. MacKay has improved greatly since it was taken over by the Ft. McMurray Fire Department. Probably the greatest impediment to service at present is the poor condition of the highway. This adds significantly to the "turn around" time from Ft. McMurray.

Following are comments of residents concerning ambulance service.

- M - The ambulance should be stationed in Ft. MacKay.*
- M - The ambulance takes too long to get here.*
- M - There should be an ambulance permanently in MacKay. It takes them too long to get here and back. Somebody not from the village would have to be responsible for it.*
- W - Even insurance does not cover the cost of ambulance service. Improvement in the road is the only thing which would improve service. However, if an ambulance were kept here, it may help to improve service.*
- M - The present system is not good enough. There should be an ambulance right here. It cannot be the responsibility of local people because they are undependable. Forestry could do it because they are here all the time.*
- M - They need faster drivers. Also, there should be someone in the ambulance to treat people on the way to the hospital.*
- W - Ambulance service needs improvement. An ambulance must be more accessible. Perhaps there should be a permanent ambulance in MacKay. The drive into McMurray is long for serious injuries. Even facilities in McMurray are not all that good.*
- T - We need a vehicle here because sometimes at night we wait 2 to 3 hours for an ambulance. Somebody from outside the village would have to be responsible for it because you cannot depend on people here. People here drink too much to be of help.*

- W - Ambulance service is poor in some ways, though in part it is because of tampering by the residents of MacKay. In general, I can't complain, but then again, I have my own vehicle.
- W - We have phoned the ambulance and they have refused to come. The service is not adequate. Ambulances at Syncrude and GCOS should be available. Why could they not be used?
- T - It is a long run to McMurray. A vehicle should be here. Forestry could store it and there could be a local driver.
- T - The ambulance service is too slow. Perhaps we can get service from closer by such as Syncrude. We could even have an ambulance ourselves. It could be tied to Forestry or to a permanent nurse or paramedic stationed here.
- T - Sometimes the ambulance takes a long time to come. The basic system is good because we have nobody here who is capable of operating an ambulance.

(19) Companies. At the present time, the only major companies having an impact upon Ft. MacKay are Great Canadian Oil Sands and Syncrude. Shell oil is taking its first tentative steps toward involvement. While each of these companies have itinerant contact with the village, interaction is not intensive. Company relationships with Ft. MacKay are described and analyzed in several subsequent sections of this document.

(20) Telephones. Presently, only one public radio-telephone is available for use of village residents. Frequently this telephone is out of service. This proves to be a serious problem in cases of emergency, as well as being a general inconvenience.

Two private radio-telephones also are present in Ft. MacKay, one at the school and one at the Forestry residence.

Apparently AGT will extend line service to Ft. MacKay in 1979. Viewpoints concerning telephone service are expressed by residents as follows.

- M - What would the cost be? A phone is especially needed for emergencies.*
- T - There should be a telephone at each end of the village. This would be better than phones in each house because if people have individual phones there will be problems with paying bills. They will get cut off. Maybe even the lights will be cut off.*
- W - Telephones would be good, but there will be problems with people abusing them.*
- T - AGT has committed in writing to telephones for MacKay and this is good because individual telephones are necessary.*

(21) Electric Power. Alberta Power provides line service to Ft. MacKay. Complaints concerning this service are few in number. The major problem which exists appears to be that some houses are wired poorly while others are of such poor quality that they cannot be wired economically.

(22) Land Tenure. Individual land tenure is an issue of great importance and concern to the Metis in particular. Presently, only two private citizens own patent land. Land dispositions have been addressed above, and the issue of land tenure is discussed at length in the chapter pertaining to economics.

(23) Radio/Television. Both radio and television service to Ft. MacKay are poor. The only station to provide radio programming is CJOK in Ft. McMurray. CBC is the sole television available and the strength of the signal is very weak, making reception poor.

(24) Mail. Mail service is provided for Ft. MacKay through the small Post Office located in the General Store. Mail is delivered to the village on Tuesday and Thursday of each week, but is sent out only on Thursdays.

(25) Churches. The only church located in Ft. Mackay, and the only religious group which consistently serves Ft. Mackay, is the Roman Catholic Church. The priest serving the community, Father Georges Begin, has resided in the village for a span of 29 years. The role of the church and the significance of religion to the community is discussed in the chapter on "world view".

Planning

As one of the primary purposes of this report is to feed into the preparation of a Community Plan for Ft. Mackay, the overall issue and process of planning should be discussed briefly.

The concept of long-term, formal planning does not occupy the same integral place in either Cree or Chipewyan cultures as in white Canadian culture. One central reason for this is that the traditional focus of Cree and Chipewyan cultures is to live in harmony with nature rather than to control and to direct it as does the dominant society. If control (e.g. regulation, management, exploitation) of nature is not one's objective, there is no value to long-term, formal planning. Instead, response to the exigencies of the moment makes more sense.

Furthermore, the notion that anybody has the right to intervene in the life of another person (particularly for the purpose of controlling or regulating someone else) is alien. Individuals should have the freedom to pursue their own interests and way of life, guided by their own conscience.

From the perspective of residents of Ft. Mackay, then, the concepts of planning, regulation and management are practiced in White society and affect one's life insofar as they are applied to the village from "outside". Formal planning always has been something done by the dominant society for the subordinate group. The

reasons for planning as well as the planning skills valued by White society are appreciated and developed (with some individual exceptions) only to a minimal degree. As a result, the motivation for formal planning tends also to be minimized. Indeed, "planning", accompanied by the inevitable regulation and direction, becomes something which is accepted with a fatalistic attitude, or which is passively resisted.

The fact is that Ft. MacKay lies in the path of the dominant society's attempt to control development and exploitation of natural resources. If the residents of the village do not plan for their own future (for whatever reason), the planning will be done for them. Of course, the dominant society will plan in accordance with values and attitudes which are meaningful to its own members.

Consequently, we have discussed as completely as possible with village residents what is likely to occur in terms of resource development in the northeast region of Alberta during the next two decades. The purpose of doing so is to provide motivation for the people of the village to consider their own future and to participate as much as possible in molding that future (methodology explained on page V). This process seems to have been somewhat successful.

Given that some basic motivation for planning has been sparked among residents of the village, the next step is to ensure that planning is done with and not for the people of Ft. MacKay. To some extent, this depends upon the degree to which they actively make the effort to participate. At the same time, it depends upon the initiation of a process whereby the people are allowed, or provided with, the opportunity of participating in mapping out their own future rather than having this done for them by government and/or industry.

The fact that some initial fieldwork has been done, and that this report exists, does not mean that "participation" by the people of Ft. MacKay has been elicited adequately and "completely". The

basic (alien) seeds of continuing participation in planning have been planted. Nurturing, growth and maturation are aspects of the overall process which yet have to commence. The importance of this approach is underscored by the Northeast Alberta Regional Plan: Information Base (1977a:148).

Regional planning should accommodate both lifestyles, by reserving areas where the traditional activities of hunting, trapping, and fishing can be carried on and by providing access to employment opportunities arising from industrial development. Insofar as possible, regional planning should be supportive of the trapping industry and other non-industrialized activities by recognizing them as viable, productive economic activities, a regional plan should provide for alternative lifestyles in terms of housing, services and recreation.

That the native people have already experienced conflict arising from industrial development and an increasing reliance on welfare is evidenced in social problems, such as alcohol abuse, violence, child neglect, and so on (personal communication, Fort McMurray Health Care personnel, 1975). Regional planning should not only provide for the improved delivery of social, especially preventive, services to the native people, but also provide for and encourage native involvement in the planning and delivery of these services.

The attractions of industrial activity and urban development outside the small settlements may draw the younger generation away from their home communities to the larger centres. Such a drain on the local community may lead to their ultimate decline and disappearance. On the other hand, if opportunities for economic development are created in the small settlements themselves, the populations may stabilize and even grow. Regional planning should accommodate various options for the future of each settlement, by providing flexibility for future involvement. It should also encourage the participation of residents in the planning process in order to assess what option is most acceptable to local residents.

ECONOMICS

Introduction

Until approximately twelve years ago, Ft. MacKay remained a small, isolated community having extremely limited contact with the larger Canadian society. If we were to borrow and to modify a concept developed by Redfield (1960), we might note the contrast between the "little community" and modern, industrialized society somewhat in the following manner.

<u>Little Community</u>	<u>Larger Society</u>
(1) small, homogeneous	- large, heterogeneous
(2) emphasis on personal relationships (kinship)	- impersonalized relationships.
(3) Traditional (religious) values	- secularized
(4) rural orientation	- urban orientation
(5) economic generalization	- economic specialization
(6) simple technology	- industrialized complexity
(7) subordinate	- dominant
(8) subsistence production	- market economy

In the initial stages of contact, Ft. MacKay probably resembled the ideal type which has been described above as the "little community". As contact becomes more intensive and change accelerates, the "little community" experiences a transition toward the characteristics of the "larger society". At present, the community of Ft. MacKay may be described as lying somewhere along the continuum from "little community" to "larger society", but still tending toward being typical of the "little community". The tendency is for change to begin with the economic aspects of the lifestyle of the "little community", and to lag somewhat in all other aspects.

Nowhere is this process more readily visible than in the context

of the contact between Ft. MacKay and the larger Canadian society. The settlement which once could be viewed as an isolated, relatively homogeneous society must now be interpreted in a regional, provincial, national and international context.

Traditionally, the lifestyle of Ft. MacKay was indeed homogeneous. In all aspects of daily life, including conflicts, individuals interacted with other persons who they knew well. Conversely, as contact outside the settlement increased in frequency and scope (and continues to do so at the present time), people are forced more and more into a world which is heterogeneous, where emphases upon personal relationships are of lesser importance; where one does not have a personal knowledge of associates and co-workers, bureaucracies, government, industry and assorted other impersonal entities. The transition is frightening and disorienting, promoting insecurity within individuals. It is also mandatory if one is to survive in economic terms or to gain the material benefits of the new way of life.

Throughout the remainder of this chapter, other implications of the Little Community/Larger Society dichotomy will be discussed. In so doing, we should remember that expansion of the economic system of the Larger (southern) Society is the sole rationale for encroachment upon Ft. MacKay. This encroachment precipitated culture contact. At the same time, the desire for superior technology and amenities (in the broadest sense) and for acquiring the purchasing power to obtain this technology, is probably the single most compelling factor motivating change from within the community. (This is true not only today, but throughout the history of native/European culture contact. See Sealey 1975.) Many residents of Ft. MacKay are able to explain this concept very clearly. Values are changing with a new emphasis upon materialism being in the forefront of change as has been the case in hundreds of other situations of culture contact in North America and around the world.

As suggested above, the desire for modern technology and the ensuing necessity for greater participation in the economic system of the Larger Society frequently means that changes in material culture are adopted a long time before other aspects of culture change (such as social organization, political organization, values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours). This mixture of the technology of one "world" with many traditional aspects of another produces conflicts, tensions, stress and disorientation for persons caught up in this transition. The hybrid is a bit of a monster which is somewhat ominous and threatening.

The transition from Little Community to participation in the Larger Society inevitably is seen and described as "progress" by members of the Larger Society. The implication is that "development" is occurring; "advance" is being made. And of course "progress", "development" and "advancement" are "good" because this means that the Little Community is moving toward us, the Larger Society, in terms of life style.

The ultimate proof of "progress" is supplied through our passion to measure things. The criterion of measurement inevitably is economic or technological because these issues can be enumerated in terms of Gross National Product or technological sophistication. And numbers always carry with them the illusion of being objective or neutral in terms of value judgments (which in fact they are not). Social structure and organization, political organization, values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours are more difficult to quantify unless we actually confess our ethnocentrism -- our belief in the superiority of our own way of life -- and judge other cultures out of context (i.e. by our own cultural standards rather than by theirs). What is "progress" to our way of thinking may be viewed less enthusiastically by others.

To understand Ft. MacKay, then, we must realize that the Little Community is in a state of transition toward the way of life of the Larger Society. Change has been initiated via the realm

of economics and technology. For many people in the settlement, especially the elderly, this version of "progress" has been imposed by the Larger Society by means of major resource development and industrialization. Others have chosen "progress" of their own volition.

Either way, change on this scale is a traumatic process. People in Ft. MacKay have a tendency to believe erroneously that change can take place in terms of economics and technology, while the remaining aspects of living can remain constant and unaffected. Hence, the "best of both worlds" is desired, and anticipated, but can never be attained. Herein lies the root cause of personal distress and upheaval.

Production

Traditionally for the people of Ft. MacKay, production was based upon hunting, gathering and trapping. The goods produced were directed toward two distinct objectives (a) personal subsistence, and (b) cash sale or trade. These two production objectives reflect the different economic spheres in which Ft. MacKay may be seen.

First, Ft. MacKay may be viewed in terms of being a Little Community. In this context, production was primarily for personal subsistence. One produced one's own food, shelter, transportation and so on.

As a consequence, only a primary division of labor tended to exist, the division between the hunting and trapping activity of the men and the child-raising and home-making activities of women. Within each of these basic divisions, members of the respective sexes tended to be generalists in terms of production.

In other words, given that a difference existed between the tasks of males and females, each person tended to be a "jack of all trades", producing most things necessary for living. Labor was

not divided into highly specialized categories to be offered for sale on the open market as is the system in our own society. An individual was relatively independent and economically self-sufficient, relying on nobody else for the basic essentials of life.

Second, Ft. MacKay may be seen in the broader context of economic participation in the Larger Society. The relationship between the Little Community and the Larger Society must not be construed as being mutually exclusive, but simply one in which interaction is well regulated. From this perspective, native people might be viewed somewhat as specialists, producing raw furs which are sold or bartered on the open market in exchange for goods produced by other segments of the Larger Society.

As the old way of life has been destroyed and replaced by resource development and exposure to massive industrialization, many changes in aspects of production are taking place. The old style of hunting and trapping required the ability to move over relatively large areas to sustain production. Now the population of Ft. MacKay is being "stabilized" basically within the confines of one settlement, the focal point of which is our concept of long-term, formalized schooling.

Living in a fixed settlement alone forces drastic change in production roles. Production for subsistence is increasingly difficult to attain. To be productive, one is forced onto the industrial labor market where labor is a specialty sold on the "market place" in return for subsistence goods. This forces individuals into alien roles which frequently are poorly understood. And how can a person participate in the labor market if he or she does not possess the specialized skills demanded by industrialization?

These skills require time to develop -- at least one to two generations. In the meantime, two alternatives face the individual. One may either drop out of the process of production (with the consequent implications for attitudes, values, self-perception, personal identity and self-esteem) or participate in an artificial, make-

work project which requires only general labor skills.

Rapid encroachment of industrialization caught the residents of Ft. MacKay without the skills necessary to fulfill productive roles other than general, itinerant labor in the economic system of the Larger Society. (Women also are able to enter the general labor market, which has broken the traditional pattern of division of labor.) These skills are developing, but the process takes the same lengthy training time as for people in the Larger Society, perhaps even longer because the life skills which support an industrialized life style also have to be acquired. In the meantime, changing conditions and demands of ever more sophisticated and complex technology keep the people of Ft. MacKay in the position of always having to "catch up" with "progress" and "development".

Distribution

Only two points need be made concerning distribution of goods in Ft. MacKay. First, with the exception of the furs produced by trapping, goods were not offered for sale on the open market. As a result, the premises, principles and concepts which are taken for granted or are assumed in relation to "economics" as understood in the Larger Society (concepts such as 'supply and demand', 'market economy', 'capital', 'profit', and so on) are alien and unknown in the Little Community.

Traditionally, the principle underlying economic transactions for residents of Ft. MacKay was one of reciprocity. When food, shelter, and so on were available to an individual, one had an obligation to distribute these goods in a prescribed manner within one's own kin group. Conversely, when one's kin had goods available, one had a claim to a set portion.

Second, the key to understanding the pattern by which goods were distributed was the kinship system, a subject which will be discussed more fully in the chapter pertaining to "social organization". The kinship system indicated for the individual those persons

to whom one had economic obligations, as well as those from whom one might receive economic privileges. Reciprocity was activated and operated through the kinship system.

Increased culture contact has brought residents of Ft. MacKay into more intensive participation in the economic system of the Larger Society where principles of distribution are based upon a "market economy" rather than upon reciprocity. Specifically, one is expected to sell one's labor on the "market place" in return for cash. Ultimately, one should participate in some form of economic transaction in which one might use 'capital' to make a profit and so to accumulate wealth. The distribution system of the Larger Society is structured to allow individuals to excel and to accumulate wealth. The traditional system had the effect of equalizing wealth so that no one individual had abundance while others were in need.

Presently in Ft. MacKay, aspects of both distribution systems operate simultaneously. Slowly, participation in the market economy of the Larger Society is increasing while distribution via the traditional kinship system is decreasing in frequency. The quest for cash and the things cash can buy is now an integral part of living. But the traditional values and attitudes regarding kinship obligations and privileges are still overlaid upon the economic system of the Larger Society to produce forms of economic behaviour which "we find difficult to understand".

Consumption

Patterns of consumption once again reflect the transition from the tradition of the Little Community to participating in the economic system of the Larger Society. Traditionally, consumption was based upon the use of goods provided by hunting and trapping. Game which was killed was used in total for food, clothes and cash sale or trade of furs. In return, goods acquired from the Larger

Society mainly included staples to supplement diet, and emphasized goods required to support the hunting and trapping lifestyle.

At the present time in Ft. MacKay, the transition to store bought consumer goods is almost complete. Wild meat, including fish, consistently decreases in importance to most residents of the settlement. At the present time, only six or eight families appear to consume wild meat with any degree of regularity.

Food and clothes are now purchased at the store in Ft. MacKay or in the shopping centres of Ft. McMurray. The traditional diet which included relatively extensive amounts of fresh meat has been replaced by commercially packaged food. Residents of the village have no way to preserve food for long periods of time. As a result, patterns of consumption tend to focus upon canned foods. Also, particularly for young people, "junk foods" tend to form a substantial portion of the normal diet.

The increased availability of cash has turned the attention of many people toward other commercial consumer goods. To fulfill transportation needs, cars, trucks and snowobiles are highly valued. Nearly all families have purchased radios, stereos or televisions. As access to Ft. McMurray is relatively limited, many people purchase commercial goods, especially clothes, through catalogue sales.

Traditional patterns of consumption, then, appear to have emphasized independence and self-sufficiency. As people become more accustomed to participation in a market economy, they have become increasingly dependent on others for the basic essentials of life as well as for the luxuries.

Employment

With the exception of the elderly, most persons in Ft. MacKay have participated in wage labour employment sometime during their lives. An employment survey was conducted to determine the work

histories of residents of Ft. Mackay, and the range of skills available in the settlement. The tables on the following pages illustrate the employment histories of residents of the community. All persons aged sixteen and over have been included in the survey. The material was collected in November, 1977.

The Metis segment of the community includes about twenty females and ten males who currently are eligible for the work force. Of the males, three have no education, while the remaining seven have an average education of 7.4 grades. Six men are currently employed, with four being unemployed.

Of the twenty females eligible for the work force, five have no education. The remaining fifteen average 7.8 grades. Twelve women are currently housewives, four are employed, three are unemployed and one is on welfare.

The Treaty segment of the community has twenty-seven males and twenty-six females theoretically eligible for the work force. Of the males, eight have no education, while the remaining nineteen average 7.15 grades. Eleven are currently employed on a permanent basis, four are temporarily working and twelve are unemployed. Of the twenty-six females, six have no education, while the remaining twenty average 7.65 grades. Sixteen of the females are housewives, seven are unemployed and three are employed.

A quick glance at the statistics pertaining to the White segment of the settlement indicates that all are currently employed. The Whites listed have either married into the community, or have been imported to occupy the highly skilled jobs in the community.

Economic Development

The whole question of implanting or motivating economic development in native communities which are unfamiliar with the concepts which underly such development is a delicate matter indeed. However, the issue must be addressed, as during the past year, external

FT. MACKAY, EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

METIS RESIDENTS

Sex	Age	Years Employed	Type of Job	Grades Completed	Other Skills	Present Status
M	62	21 pt. tm.	Labor	0	None	Welfare
F	57	None		0	None	H. Wife
F	19	1	Chambermaid	9	None	Emp.
M	62	25 pt. tm.	Forestry	0	Strawboss	Unemp.
		3	Janitor			
F	55	None		0	None	H. Wife
M	27	1	Labor	4	None	Unemp.
F	29	1 pt. tm.	Firefighting	9	Firefighter	Unemp.
M	44	21	Labor	0	Firefighter	Emp.
F	34	8	Labor	8	Janitorial	Emp.
F	21	1	Teacher Aide	9	None	Emp.
F	35	1	Labor	6	Labor Course	Emp.
F	51	None		0		H. Wife
M	16	1 pt. tm.	Labor	9	Firefighter	Unemp.
M	49	22 pt. tm.				
		3	Labor	0	Firefighter	Trapping
F	37	None		5		H. Wife
F	18	3 months	Labor	8		Unemp.
M	19	2	Labor	8		Emp.
F	18	1 month	Labor	9		H. Wife
M	43	15	Labor	10		Trapping
F	43	None		0		H. Wife
F	16	None		11		Unemp.
F	27	None		8		Unemp.
F	29	None		7		H. Wife
M	37	18	Heavy Equip.	7		Emp.
F	31	1 month	Labor	5		H. Wife
M	22	4 pt. tm.	Labor	9		Emp.
F	17	3 months	Labor	7		H. Wife
M	43	15 pt. tm.	Labor	0	Firefighter	Trapping
M	81	50	Trapper	0		Retired
F	74			0		Retired
M	45	10 pt. tm.	Labor	5	Firefighter	Trapping
F	50	None		0		H. Wife
M	90	50	Trapper	0		Retired
F	75			0		Retired
F	29	2	Health Aide	8	Health Aide	H. Wife
F	31	None		8	Ward Aide	H. Wife

FT. MACKAY EMPLOYMENT SURVEYTREATY RESIDENTS

Sex	Age	Years Employed	Type of Job	Grades Completed	Other Skills	Present Status
M	60	10	Carpenter	0	None	Emp.
M	21	3	Maintenance	11	None	Unemp.
M	18	None		9		Unemp.
M	16	6 months	Labor	7	Firefighter	Unemp.
M	35	16	Labor	8	AVC	Emp.
F	25	None		7		H. Wife
F	23	None		0		Unemp.
M	41	16	Labor/Trucker	6	Truck Driving	Emp.
F	26	None		9		H. Wife
M	56	42	Labor/Trapper	0	Firefighter	Unemp.
F	54	3	Labor	0		H. Wife
F	23	None		4		Unemp.
F	16	None		7		Unemp.
F	19	1	Labor	8	AVC Indust.	Unemp.
M	37	21	Trapper	4	Firefighter	Trapping
F	35	10	Labor	7		H. Wife
M	67	50	Trapper	0		Retired
M	30	10	Labor	7		Emp.
F	27	5	Labor	11		H. Wife
M	47	30	Labor/Trapper	2	Firefighter	Unemp.
F	66	None		0		Retired
M	40	17	Labor	0	Firefighter	Emp.
F	21	None		7		Unemp.
F	62	None		0		H. Wife
F	31	6	Clerk/Manager	12	Business	Emp.
F	35	None		7		Emp.
M	16	None		10		Unemp.
F	24	2	Teacher Aide	10	Teacher Aide	Unemp.
M	82	55	Trapper	0		Retired
F	74	55	Trapper	0		Retired
F	39	4	Waitress	7		Unemp.
M	16	None		8		Unemp.
M	54	22 p.tm.	Labor	5		Retired
M	35	11 p.tm.	Labor	9	Firefighter	Emp.
F	21	None		7		H. Wife
M	34	3	Labor	8	Welding	Emp.
F	19	None		7		H. Wife
M	60	40	Trapper	0		Trapper
M	52	35	Trapper	0		Trapper
M	56	35	Trapper	0		Unemp.
M	74	50	Trapper	0		Retired

FT. MACKAY EMPLOYMENT SURVEY
TREATY RESIDENTS (Cont.)

Sex	Age	Years Employed	Type of Job	Grades Completed	Other Skills	Present Status
F	74	50	Trapper	0		Retired
M	38	5	Labor	3		Unemp.
M	47	20	Labor/Trapper	0		Emp.
F	41	None		3		H. Wife
M	29	11	Heavy Equip.	8	Heavy Equip.	Emp.
F	28	None		6		H. Wife
M	32	4	Labor	8		Unemp.
F	19	None		8		H. Wife
M	67	50	Trapper	0		Retired
F	57	None		0		Retired
M	25	2	Labor/Trapper	8		Trapper
F	70	None		0		Retired
F	74	None		0		Retired
F	60	None		0		H. Wife
M	37	20	Trapper	5		Invalid
M	34	9	Labor	7		Emp.
F	30	None		5		H. Wife
M	30	2	Labor	6	Firefighter	Unemp.
F	27	2	Teacher Aide	7	ECS	Emp.
M	53	12	Labor	0		Emp.
F	34	7	Labor	7		H. Wife
M	67	50	Trapper	0		Retired
M	86	60	Trapper	0		Retired
F	77	60	Trapper	0		Retired
M	49	35	Labor/Trapper	7	Firefighter	Unemp.
F	29	None		10		Unemp.
M	49	None		0		Unemp.
F	49	None		0		H. Wife

FT. MACKAY EMPLOYMENT SURVEY
WHITE RESIDENTS

Sex	Age	Years Employed	Type of Job	Grades Completed	Other Skills	Present Status
M	29	13	Foreman	10		Emp.
F	29	7	Manager	12		Emp.
F	26	2	Teacher	12	6 yrs. Univ.	Emp.
M	27	2	Fireman	12	4 yrs. Univ.	Emp.
M	34	14	Electrician	11	Electrical	Emp.
M	38	10	Teacher	12	6 Yrs. Univ.	Emp.
M	36	10	Teacher	12	5 Yrs. Univ.	Emp.
F	58	28	Manager	7		Emp.
M	69	40	Priest	12	8 Yrs. Univ.	Emp.
M	29	11	Optician/Gen.	9	Optics	Emp.
M	32	12	Heavy Equip.	6	Heavy Equip.	Emp.
M	27	6	Forestry	12	Technical	Emp.
M	22	6 months	Forestry	12	Technical	Emp.

pressure upon Ft. MacKay encouraging the acceptance of economic development projects has increased significantly.

In 1973, Richard G. Wilkinson wrote a book entitled Poverty and Progress: An Ecological Model of Economic Development. While the hypotheses expounded by Wilkinson are insufficient in themselves to explain all the subtleties of the processes of economic development, several points are worthy of consideration.

One of Wilkinson's central concepts is the notion of ecological equilibrium.

The concept of ecological equilibrium is meant to cover any combination of a method and a rate of resource use which the environment can sustain indefinitely. It may refer to a situation in which the population restricts its demand for resources to a level which the environment can supply naturally, or it may refer to a balance struck on the basis of particular cultural patterns of resource management by which the environment's production of particular renewable resources is artificially increased. In this context the

'carrying capacity' of an area of land is of course the largest population which can be maintained on it in ecological equilibrium -- given the prevailing method of environmental resource exploitation. Ecological equilibrium situations are defined to be consistent with cultural stability from the point of view of subsistence and productive activities. If a society is in ecological equilibrium, then it satisfies the ecological requirement for stability. It is not about to run short of resources it depends on (Wilkinson 1973:21, 22).

From Wilkinson's perspective, one would have to say that the traditional way of life among residents of Ft. MacKay changed because ecological equilibrium was unable to be maintained. As resource development increases, and larger amounts of land are turned over to this activity, people are no longer free to use traditional hunting and gathering areas because ecological exploitation by the Larger Society systematically confines residents of Ft. MacKay to the immediate area of the settlement. The single most prominent factor which appears to have restored a type of ecological equilibrium in the context of a new life style is wage labor employment supplemented by social assistance. In one sense, these two factors have created a new and different kind of cultural stability which may be quite acceptable as a way of life for many members of the community. As Wilkinson says,

a leisure preference is a clear indication of the relative sufficiency of a society's material means of subsistence and should be regarded as a feature of societies in ecological equilibrium (Wilkinson 1973:85).

What, then, is the motivation to accept or to initiate programs of economic development if residents of the community are enjoying a state of cultural stability or ecological equilibrium? Life may be quite tolerable and acceptable as it is. After all, argues Wilkinson,

people are driven to change and to seek out a new way of life by the development of sheer poverty as the means of subsistence becomes inadequate (Wilkinson 1973:54).

This implies that in the present context, change will be motivated only if social assistance or wage labor become insufficient to sustain the present lifestyle. Perhaps for some this is the case already, though for many it obviously is not so.

This leads to the most fundamental issue of all surrounding the question of economic development in Ft. MacKay. Do residents want to initiate change in the form of economic development programs? This question is one which is frequently overlooked both by residents of a Little Community as well as by "outside" consultants, agencies and organizations. Nevertheless, the question is eminently relevant to all parties.

First, let us adopt the perspective of residents of Ft. MacKay. Nearly all persons interviewed stated that they want economic development programs because of the employment opportunities which would be created. Nobody is averse to more cash being available. Of course economic development is wanted in this sense. But many individuals are equally reluctant to tolerate the changes in lifestyle which accompany economic development projects in spite of the increased cash flow. This is one major reason why economic development fails. What is not realized is that one cannot initiate economic changes without creating a host of changes in other social and cultural aspects of living. In this light, one might more ably refer to "socio-economic development" rather than simply to "economic development". It is nearly impossible to restrict economically created change to the realm of economics, for "economics" is not an isolated "compartment" of life. We ask again, do residents of Ft. MacKay want or need economic development under present conditions of relative ecological stability?

Individuals and agencies outside of the community frequently tend to overlook or ignore this question. The assumption is made that economic development must occur; it is only a question of what

form such development ought to take. For many members of the Larger Society, it is totally inconceivable that residents of the Little Community might not want economic development if they were aware of the implications. The epitome of the argument is encapsulated in the question, "What will the future hold without economic development"? The clear implication is that the future will be bleak indeed.

This point may be true. However, it is not necessarily true. For example, as long as wage labor employment is supplemented by social assistance, the present quality of life might be quite acceptable.

If, instead of using the narrowly defined concept of economic efficiency, we examine the total impact of economic changes on society and individuals -- not just variations in working hours but in these subjective matters as well -- then we will get a better idea of what makes people hesitant to accept changes which would seem to bring with them the advantages of increased production. We can understand why people have shunned wage labor, factory work and urban society, in spite of the increased rewards, until their subsistence situation has forced them to value the increased material return more highly.

As man increases the rate of environmental exploitation he will frequently have to live with a productive system which imposes an increasing number of restraints on his life. But even if we do not accept that the quantitative material increases underlying economic development are necessarily accompanied by a qualitative determination in the conditions of human life, there is no reason to think that development is -- of necessity -- accompanied by any marked improvement. One of the advantages of reinterpreting economic development so that it is no longer synonymous with progress and improvement is that we no longer need to invoke ignorance as the explanation of the persistence of primitive modes of production in some societies. One's conceptual framework is freed from the need for such paternalistic attitudes (Wilkinson 1973:108).

In order to avert a most fundamental disaster, then, let us be prepared to entertain the possibility that residents of Ft. MacKay might not want to accept economic development projects with all of their implications, or that they might be somewhat fearful to do so, notwithstanding the fact that many "good arguments" may be constructed in favor of such development. Field research conducted in Ft. MacKay suggests strongly that ambivalence exists in many minds over this issue. Motivation must exist in order to overcome the acceptable inertia of ecological equilibrium and cultural stability.

Turning to the practicalities of initiating economic development, the argument presented above clearly establishes two possible starting points. First, a push toward acceptance of economic development projects could be forced through destroying ecological equilibrium and cultural stability. For example, in the face of decreasing opportunities for wage labor employment due to the impending end of the construction phase of Syncrude, social assistance similarly could be eliminated to upset ecological equilibrium or cultural stability. However, the "forced" approach must be viewed in the context of some serious ethical considerations.

Second, the principle of realistic self-determination on the part of residents of Ft. MacKay may be adhered to. In this instance, the first step would be to explain the implications of development as clearly and as comprehensively as possible. Only the rare individual in Ft. MacKay at the present time understands concepts related to the establishment and operation of 'limited liability' companies. Similarly, few persons are knowledgeable concerning the privileges and obligations inherent in the formation and operation of a company. The residents of Ft. MacKay must be allowed to determine their own response to the possibility of economic development opportunities, a response which must begin "where the people are" in terms of understanding and skills. Any form of economic development structured

outside of the community and imposed by alien individuals or agencies is doomed to failure.

If socio-economic development projects of any kind are to be undertaken by the residents of Ft. MacKay, the organization of the community as a whole will have to be revamped to provide a strong foundation and a suitable environment. It seems evident that no specific project can be placed within the framework of the present community factionalism and lack of formal organization, and be expected to succeed. A complete discussion of the present political organization of the village will be presented in a subsequent chapter.

In order to be successful, then, socio-economic development must not be imposed upon, but must be initiated by, residents of the host community. Once this objective is stated clearly by residents of the community, and is understood in the context of the implications for change in lifestyle, the process of socio-economic development may begin.

The process does not begin with the incorporation of a company to be delivered in due time to the residents of the community. It starts with education in two areas. First, education is required in the social skills which are necessary to form a stable foundation for economic development. In the case of Ft. MacKay, the first social skills required are those which would support cooperation between people instead of reinforcing the jealousies and factionalism which currently keep people from working together.

Second, at the same time as supportive social skills are being learned, discussions and workshops are required to teach the basic concepts which must be known in order for members of the community to fulfill successfully the obligations and responsibilities demanded by economic development projects.

Furthermore, as suggested in a previous section, amenities in the community such as housing, water, sewer and many other aspects of infrastructure, must be upgraded increasingly over time as the

overall process of socio-economic development unfolds.

As social skills, understanding and the amenities needed to support economic development become more sophisticated, small practical projects should be undertaken to acquire useful skills and to build confidence. Over time, these small scale projects may give way to more ambitious programs, but only at a time when residents of the settlement feel comfortable in participating in more complex economic opportunities.

Above all, a process of socio-economic development such as that described generally above must be sustained by competent resource people from outside the community particularly in the formative stages. The critical qualities to be possessed by such resource persons are threefold: (1) a superlative knowledge of the content of the field in which one is a resource person; (2) a sensitivity to the lifestyle of Ft. MacKay and the consequent ability to communicate with residents of the settlement in terms which they can understand; (3) a commitment to provide adequate information with which local leaders may make their own decisions rather than making decisions for local leaders. The role of the resource person is to support the development of local leadership, not to exert leadership. The converse of this commitment implies that one will let local residents, particularly leaders, feel the full positive and negative impact of their decision-making. Only in this way are lessons learned so that they may be applied at a future time when resource personnel are not required or available.

Businesses and Commerce

One of the avenues for future economic development relates to the provision of commercial services in Ft. MacKay. In the introductory chapter, we reported on the types of commercial enterprises currently existing in the settlement. Following are viewpoints expressed by residents concerning present commercial facilities as

well as the prospects of future development. These opinions do not necessarily represent the views of Applied Research Associates Ltd.

- M - We need a better clothing store.
- M - There should be more businesses. We need to buy better food, clothing, hardware, etc. Furniture is also a real need. It would be good if businesses were owned by people from Ft. MacKay rather than by outsiders.
- M - Things are OK as they are. I never use the stores here anyway. If White people take over all the businesses, it will be bad.
- M - A bigger store or another store would be good. We need one that has a wider variety of food and clothing. There should never be a liquor outlet here. If there was, there would soon be no people. They would all be dead. Ownership of stores should be organized around a COOP including both Treaties and Metis.
- M - Our biggest problem is that there is no way to cash a cheque in MacKay.
- M - The present businesses should either be expanded or others brought in. A COOP involving the whole village would be good, though it is hard to say whether or not people have the required skills. The present businesses would be real good if they were expanded and if they were kept open.
- W - The village can only support the present businesses.
- T - A bigger store would be nice. Sometimes you need something that is not there.
- T - For a grocery store, there should be a COOP. The cafe or other businesses should be run by people in the community rather than by somebody from the outside. Clothing and hardware should also be in the COOP. The COOP should be a whole community type of organization. We have a great need for services. I guess we also have a want for local ownership.
- M - Present businesses are OK if they were opened as they should be. Now half the time you want something, but you can't get it because the store or cafe is closed.

If people from MacKay ran the store, there would be an argument every day. To own the store locally is OK. But some other outfit would have to run it for local people.

- W - We need a little bigger store with more variety. We serve the old people who do not want to go to town. The younger people are all going to town. Thus, it would not pay to run a larger store here. The community is not large enough to support a large store.

Only staples, fuel, oil and gas are necessary. Even the pool tables have limited economic value. We had two pool tables and it did not work. When people run out of money, they stop until more money comes in. The social dynamics of everybody being involved in the pool table is very important.

A food service outlet is not warranted financially. A craft store would really go. People come in constantly to buy handcrafts.

People in MacKay could run their own businesses as long as they hired an outside manager, at least for a period of time. The people here could handle the daily work right now.

- M - We feel that the price of goods here is too high. A larger store with more variety is needed. This would alleviate the necessity of going to Ft. McMurray. Who actually runs the store does not make any difference.
- W - There are not enough people to support businesses. People should be able to run their own businesses in Ft. MacKay. We shop for nearly everything in McMurray.
- W - There has to be community restrictions regarding the location and types of businesses allowed. It would be good to have native owned and operated businesses, though this may be very theoretical at present. Maybe there should be provision for commercial interests to locate in the areas of the existing Treaty and Metis leases.
- W - The village needs better quality goods and better variety. I first thought a native store or COOP would be the answer, but now I see that people probably would not stick with it. People have no storage areas or means of keeping goods such as by freezing. Large orders cannot be handled, which places people at a disadvantage.

- W - The store and cafe are sufficient as is. If there is regular transport, the people will go to McMurray and it will not pay to keep the store open.
- T - We need a much better store. You can't buy anything here. Therefore, we do our shopping in town. There are lots of natives in other areas who own their own store. Ownership here should at least be tried on a native basis.
- W - I can't complain about commercial services. The hours are not compatible with my hours so I don't use the services. They don't keep regular hours. The only improvement I could ask for is in regard to hours. The store would need a larger population to warrant expansion.
- T - A COOP will not work. People will not work together well enough.
- T - A laundromat is needed.
- T - Banking services are desperately needed.
- T - A crafts store would go.
- T - If somebody from the community were to own a business (particularly a store), he or she would have to have a pretty good head. He would have to be fair to the people. It would be tough. That way you can't make a profit out of the people in MacKay. Perhaps a COOP would work, but the problems. . . .
- T - We want all the stores, not only one store. A COOP or IGA would be good. We like to eat well. Right now you can't get vegetables or anything fresh. Clothing and hardware are needed also. We need a laundromat and a place to have a bath. The kids would never get sick if there were a place to bath.

A number of issues arise from the foregoing comments. First, on one hand, a desire is expressed repeatedly for a broader range of commercial store facilities, or for greater variety in the present store. On the other hand, increasingly stores in Ft. McMurray draw patronage away from the village. Only the elderly and others unable to get to Ft. McMurray with each shop primarily in Ft. MacKay. This

in turn adversely affects the economics of a store in Ft. MacKay.

Second, the anticipated upgrading of public transportation facilities beginning in early 1979 may draw even more shoppers to Ft. McMurray.

Facilities which are needed at present include:

- (a) a laundromat;
- (b) banking services of some kind;
- (c) some form of cold storage facilities;
- (d) an outlet for locally produced handcrafts and an overall organization of the production and marketing of these items;
- (e) a games and recreation centre which would cater to people of all ages.

Fifth, the desire for a community-wide COOP is apparent. The great difficulty in this regard is acquiring adequate management. However, the possibility of forming a community COOP or company to purchase the existing store should be investigated thoroughly, particularly in light of the current owner's advertised intention to sell out.

If local residents want better quality, more variety, lower prices, etc., they are going to have to initiate the solutions to these problems themselves. It is one thing to criticize the present practices without understanding how they operate and quite another thing systematically and constructively to initiate and to support improvement. Every business enterprise must make a profit in order to continue operating. This would be necessary even in the case of a community owned company or COOP. The problems which residents perceive cannot all be placed on other people's shoulders for solution. To the extent that residents wish to accept the responsibility for initiating change, solutions can be found. But at the present time, we have to realistically recognize that if somebody from the outside did not choose to make their home in Ft. MacKay and to provide the existing services, the community likely would not have any store.

If the current situation is unacceptable, then only the residents of Ft. MacKay can change it.

Sixth, the present small population will not support the variety of stores and services which many people would like to see. It is even questionable whether the competition which many persons would like to see could be supported by the current population. This may be one of the disadvantages in living in a settlement like Ft. MacKay -- a disadvantage to be weighed against the many advantages which such a community offers.

Land Tenure

Of all the issues of current significance to Ft. MacKay, Land Tenure has the potential of becoming the most controversial. Probably more than any issue other than the fact of encroaching resource development, the manner in which the land tenure issue is resolved will affect the future of the community.

The concept of private ownership, particularly of land, is one of the philosophical cornerstones of the value system of the Larger Society. The general absence of a similar concept in the value system of the Little Community explains why participation in economic development projects frequently misfires. Similarly, the economic activities of individuals in Ft. MacKay will not resemble those of persons from the Larger Society if the key concept and issue of private ownership of real property is foreign to one's world view. From this perspective, then, a Land Tenure program would appear to be the only manner in which residents of Ft. MacKay may be provided with the elementary tools of participation in the broader economic system of the Larger Society.

But do the residents of Ft. MacKay understand the meaning and implications of private ownership of land? While a few perhaps do, the majority certainly do not. Most informants do not see any

difference between individual leasing of land (e.g. through the mechanism of "miscellaneous permits") and private ownership. Before people even could decide realistically whether or not to opt for Land Tenure, this lack of knowledge would have to be eradicated. Due to unfamiliarity with the concept, some people find the issue very frightening to deal with.

Information pertaining to the meaning of private ownership of land was introduced for the first time in the context of household discussions and interviews conducted throughout the settlement. The basic differences between patent and leased land were discussed and the most elementary information introduced. On the basis of this information, most Metis in Ft. MacKay appeared to prefer some form of individual land holding rather than the current system of holding a lease in common through the mechanism of the Red River Point Society. On the other hand, only three Treaty families demonstrated a definite preference for Land Tenure, with three other Treaty families suggesting that they might be interested. (We should point out also that Treaty families do not understand the legal implications pertaining to their Treaty status if they should opt for Land Tenure). Following are the comments of community residents in relation to the principle of land tenure.

- M - Each person should have their own land. We need to know what the cost of owning one's own land or lease would be.*
- M - Land tenure would be a good thing. We could dissolve the Red River Point Society in favor of land tenure.*
- M - Each person should have their own lease or own their own land. We have been in trouble for a number of years trying to pay taxes in common for the Red River Point lease. Individual ownership would be a lot better.*
- M - I would rather have my own lease. Nobody bothers you if you have your own land.*
- M - Each person should have their own land. One could build a fence.*

- W - Each family should have their own titled land. On a short-term lease a person could never get financing to build. The collateral which land provides is important.
- T - Land should be held individually. People would lessen their dependence upon the organizations which tend to take care of them too much.
- M - It would be much better if one owned one's own lease. Now people do not seem to be helping each other.
- W - The problem is that people here would sell titled land. Something would have to be done to control the situation, otherwise the land would be sold immediately.
- M - People should own their own land. It is too much trouble for people to pay for the Red River Point Society lease. It is too much hassle trying to go around to collect from everybody for a joint lease.
- M - Each person should have their own lease and then nobody would bother you much.
- W - The way the village operates now, there is no need for land tenure. However, if there were to be an influx of people, there would be a need to protect the people and to place them on an equal footing with persons from outside. There needs to be information fed to the village concerning how land tenure works, what private ownership means and under what conditions it is granted.
- W - Land tenure depends upon whether people understand the concepts of individual ownership. However, land tenure should be secured for community members at this point in history. In saying that this is a need, this may be my own white interpretation.
- W - I don't know what would be best. If they are to pay for it, they should have their own little piece to call their own.
- T - Land use should be kept just as it is now.
- T - I don't like to be pushed in with other people. I would rather have my own place where I would not be bothered. Now I live on the road where there is no peace. People just walk into the house whenever they want.

- T - Each family should own its own land. Now you can't even build a fence without getting into a fight. You can't have a garden. There is no garbage disposal.
- W - I would like to own my own land or at least get a long term lease. A land tenure program would be great.
- T - A person should own land so you can do as you please. I was first to put a fence around the house when my late uncle was chief. He told me that I should take it down. However, we need fencing for control.
- T - At least individual lots are needed. The houses are going to have to be moved and lined up to provide services. We have asked for \$90,000 to move and align the houses. However, there should not be individual ownership. The land should still be held in common. Our greatest problem is to get more land. Things are overcrowded. We have suggested an additional lease of 27 acres for the Band.
- T - The present way is better. If each person has their own land, it would be like a townsite. There would have to be streets. Maybe some people would like that, but I don't.
- W - Land tenure is needed because there would be better control. Also, individuals would be better off. The Metis need land tenure more than the Treaties do. It is a need for control and a want for individuals.

Subsequent to the household discussions from which the above comments were elicited, several further discussions related to land tenure have been held with the members of the Red River Point Society. General consensus of the members appears to favor relinquishing the roughly 610 acres of land currently leased by the Society in favor of individual land tenure. This predisposition certainly is tentative and members have decided that a final decision depends upon answers to the following questions.

- (a) Could the land be sold?
- (b) Would land tenure allow us to keep the sites on which our houses are located at present?
- (c) Would adopting the land tenure program demand that all land leased by the Red River Point Society be

- turned back to the government?
- (d) Would the land tenure process guarantee land for future generations of children, and would it be available to them under the same conditions?
 - (e) What would be the initial cost to the individual of land tenure?
 - (f) Once land was received through the land tenure program, what would the taxation be?
 - (g) If land tenure were accepted, are housing programs available? Under what conditions?
 - (h) If land tenure were accepted, what would be the status of the existing Alberta Housing accommodation in the settlement?
 - (i) Would giving up the Red River Point Society land and opting for land tenure imply that outsiders would be allowed to settle in the village?

It is one thing to provide the answers to these questions and quite another to ensure that all community residents clearly understand the answers and the implications before a final decision is made officially to request a formal Land Tenure program. An education program including workshops, home discussions, etc. must be completed before the residents of Ft. MacKay are asked to make a final decision regarding their positions on Land Tenure.

From an analytical point of view, we suggest that private ownership of land is an essential step in the course of events leading to more complete participation in the way of life of the Larger Society. Consequently, private ownership must be made possible if, and only if, residents of the settlement make an informed choice opting for increased participation in the Larger Society and the change in lifestyle which this choice would imply. Conversely, some members of the community must be satisfied that government is not trying to

take the Red River Point Society land away as some people apparently fear, but is simply offering a Land Tenure program if the community chooses this option.

This raises another interesting question. Is the Provincial Government willing to live with the probably long-term implications of offering Land Tenure in Ft. MacKay? Creation of patent land in Ft. MacKay will virtually consolidate the long-term existence of a community at this location. And a community requires provision of many aspects of basic infrastructure.

When patent land is acquired, it may also be sold. Regardless of the expressed desire of residents to maintain Ft. MacKay for the people as it is, and to prevent in-migration by outsiders, the value of two-acre sites at the very core of industrial development appears to be very great indeed. The probability of families from Ft. MacKay selling their land for appreciably large quantities of cash seems high. Presumably the native settlers would revert to squatting on crown land. The purchasers would be Whites looking for acreages. Through this mechanism, Ft. MacKay could rapidly be turned into a "White" community demanding extensive services. Is the government willing to accept the long-term consolidation of such a community?

Trap Lines

We must remember that traditional economic activities of Ft. MacKay are based upon hunting and trapping. While contact with the Larger Society has changed economic activities significantly, hunting and trapping are still important aspects of the way of life of many residents of the settlement. The following comments concerning hunting and trapping are offered by a variety of residents.

- M - *The oil companies disturb the trap lines. About five traps of mine were ruined this year. If a road goes in on the other side of the river to Shell, it will pass right through my trap line.*
- M - *The collars placed on the animals by AOSERP do not allow for the growth of the animal.*
- M - *The oil companies have asked me to move my cabin, but it is log and cannot be moved. It took a lot of work*

to build and now I am too old to build another.

- M - My trapline was taken away close to Shell and I was given another up on the Firebag River. This is because work is about to begin on Shell. There should be compensation for destroyed traplines. It should be paid every month, but I don't know how much. Compensation should be the same for everybody regardless of the economic significance of the trap line.

The way of life is the most important thing about the trapline. If I get fired from where I work, I can always go to the bush and make my living.

We want to have the same hunting and trapping rights as the Treaties. We are all native people. Why couldn't we all have the same rights? We all like wild meat.

- M - The most important thing about trapping is not the money but the way of life. It is our way. It makes a man feel good. It is good for the family.

Compensation should be paid not only for the loss of furs, but also for the cabins and the improvements.

- M - They are going to break up the line where my father and I trap. There should be compensation.

- M - Nowadays, the companies do not give warning when they will be operating in your area. Consequently, you can't pick up your traps or equipment.

Compensation for destroyed lines should be given in monthly payments.

The most important thing about the trap line is not the money, but the way of life.

The older rangers had an unwritten law of the bush that you could kill one moose per year off your line as long as it was for personal use. But communication with Fish and Wildlife these days is pretty poor. Also, the minimum kill law for your trapline is unfair because you may have a bad year. Nobody knows beforehand what the minimum kill is.

- W - The traplines should not be destroyed. It is a way of life. Compensation should be given by legislation.

- T - Twenty years from now, there will be no more trap lines. The guys are being screwed by Syncrude. They settled compensation after, not before, the lines were wrecked. They had to go to the companies and seek compensation; the companies did not come to them.

The most important thing about the traplines is the life-style, not the economics. My dad is too old to be a laborer, but trapping is not that hard.

- M - If the game is chased away, how can you catch anything? With my Dad, Fish and Wildlife told the old man that they would take the line away if nothing was caught. There is a real conflict between us and them. They changed things from lines to general areas. The old man signed for it not knowing what he was signing because he cannot read or write. Now they want us to move the cabin we built.

The most important thing about a trap line is not the money, but the way of life. Without the freedom, you feel stuck.

- M - People who work traplines all their lives should not be moved. The old man was told he would lose the line if he does not kill more. Last year there were no animals there. This year, he is getting more. The old people should be left alone.

The most important thing about a trapline is not the money, but the food you get off of it. People are healthier in body and mind if they are on the trap line. You are not there to drink, but to make your living.

- M - I have problems now with Petro Canada building roads on my trap line. They have run over traps and now I can't find them. There should be compensation.

Everybody should get the same amount of money in compensation regardless of productivity. It should be paid every month.

- M - Both the money and the way of life are important. The money -- you use it. The way of life is good. It is quiet for us.

- W - Compensation for destroyed or negatively affected trap lines should be legislated. Adequate compensation should be given based upon what a person makes off the line each year.

- W - Traplines are beneficial in terms of mental health. They provide regular food and rest. People are rejuvenated by the experience. You can see the difference in the comportment of the school children after a stint on the trap line. Kids are rested, happy and not frustrated. The effects are long-lasting. This is an essential aspect of community life.
- T - I have to kill something before the year is over or I lose my line. My mistake was to work all winter. Compensation should be given for ruined lines on a monthly basis. A guy needs a line because a guy can always make a living by trapping. If you have a job, it is better to work, but when you lose your job, you need a line. With a job you make a little money every day. But on the line, you never know for sure if you will make money.
- W - The most important thing about trapping is the way of life. Compare wage labor and trapping for (a) money made and (b), difficulty. People do it because they have done it for so long.
- W - The increasing number of white people in the bush creates more and more problems. People wreck trappers cabins. When traplines are destroyed, there should be compensation. The way of life is more important than the money made.
- T - Treaty Indians should be able to hold a trap line regardless of whether it is used regularly. I would like to hold a trap line. There is a real conflict for me between earning \$9.30 per hour working and earning \$150 per month with the benefit of the life style on the trap line. If my employment ends (as it will), where can I work?
- T - With the switch from the lines to areas, people who have trapped an area for thirty years have to move. Cabins have to be abandoned. There is no communication between Fish and Wildlife and the people. The Fish and Wildlife officers just do things on their own without consultation.

For many guys, they depend on the money from trapping. But it is in fact a "second home" to live in the bush. A line might have been 80 miles long and with the area system, the length is cut off. A lot of guys would rather quit trapping than build new cabins and start again.

A number of issues arise from the comments presented above. First, we tend to assume that the significance of hunting and trapping has to do with the economic value of these pursuits. Yet, nearly all informants agree that the most important thing about hunting and trapping is the overall way of life which is implied rather than the economic return. This is supported by the fact that virtually all persons agreed that compensation for destruction of trap lines should be the same for everybody, rather than being dependent upon the economic yield of the trap line. In essence, the compensation would then be seen as arising due to loss of life style, something which would affect every trapper in the same way.

Second, the issue of compensation for destruction of trap lines must be addressed much more systematically than has been the case. Uniform means of compensation should be legislated rather than being left to negotiation between individuals and the major companies.

Third, we understand that a trap line is seen frequently as "something to fall back on" when wage labor employment is unavailable. This is of great importance particularly to illiterate persons.

Fourth, the regulation enforced by Fish and Wildlife pertaining to a minimum annual yield appears to have the effect of working in direct opposition to the majority of programs sponsored by government and industry to encourage stable employment of native persons. Several residents of Ft. MacKay quit their jobs during the past winter to obtain minimum yields in order to hold on to their only source of independent social and economic security -- their trap line.

Fifth, some residents of Ft. MacKay are trying to hold on to their traplines while exerting the least interest and effort possible in trapping. This is because they believe that impending compensation will be the "pot of gold at the end of the rainbow". This is probably the strongest argument against equal compensation for all regardless of the economic significance of the destroyed trapline.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Theoretically, the settlement of Ft. MacKay appears to have a maximum potential work force of approximately fifty native persons. Practically, only about one-half of this number might be predisposed to any form of regular wage labor employment. The skill level of this work force is minimal and an average illiteracy rate at the present time is approximately twenty percent.

The reason for the relatively unskilled work force is that presently Ft. MacKay is caught in the midst of transition from the traditional way of life to that of the Larger Society. This transition provides difficulty for many individuals to engage successfully in wage labor employment let alone to participate in more sophisticated projects of economic development.

Many commercial and economic development opportunities are readily available to the residents of Ft. MacKay. One which might be examined at the present time is the purchase of the existing store. The two major impediments to taking advantage of these opportunities are: (a) lack of knowledge and skills necessary to sustain such projects; (b) lack of stable living conditions. Systematically planned and organized programs of training may fill in the knowledge and skill gap. Completion of the Community Plan and subsequent initiation of a Land Tenure program (if requested by the community) may lay the foundation for obtaining infrastructure of sufficient quality to support and to enhance community stability.

The encroachment of major resource development and industrialization has interfered strongly with hunting and trapping -- the traditional economic base and cornerstone of the overall way of life of residents of Ft. MacKay. The present period in history catches many persons from the settlement with one foot in traditional trapping activities and the other in wage labor employment. The pull between these two pursuits frequently produces tension and

conflict for the individual.

The following recommendations arise from the material presented in this chapter.

- (1) Adult education programs, including basic upgrading as well as various aspects of vocational training should be offered in Ft. MacKay. In an effort to increase the skill level of the available work force.
- (2) Life skills programs (as opposed to theoretical courses) should commence immediately as a community-wide, integrated program. All aspects of social skills required to survive in the Larger Society should be approached, some examples of which might include: basic health and hygiene; home care and personal economics; driver training; care and maintenance of home and vehicles; nutrition; interpersonal relations (with regard to internal factionalism as well as expected social skills in the Larger Society); business fundamentals; concepts of private ownership; basic corporate concepts; and so on.
- (3) Beginning in September 1978, an educational "lead in" time should begin in relation to a Land Tenure program. This should include community meetings, home discussions, personal interactions, etc.
- (4) Representatives of relevant companies, government agencies and the trappers of Ft. MacKay should structure a series of discussions as soon as possible to recommend to the Energy Resources Conservation Board guidelines for legislation pertaining to compensation for disturbance and destruction of existing trapping areas. These recommendations should be contained in the brief to be presented to the ERCB by Ft. MacKay at the time of the public hearings into the Shell application.

- (5) Care must be taken to raise the level of economic consciousness and opportunity for the community as a whole rather than for individuals or groups within Ft. MacKay. From the perspective of residents, it is not good, that one person should be elevated above his peers.
- (6) It is curious that even with regard to such elementary issues as company provision of transportation to make employment possible (not to mention a variety of other points), Ft. MacKay has not shared in the benefits of resource development as has Ft. McMurray. If government, and more particularly, the companies are serious about trying to employ local native people, they must get together to correct at least the minor aspects of disparity.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONIntroduction

The first issue of significance to the settlement of Ft. MacKay is the degree to which people share a common identity or a sense of "community identity". Throughout the present document, there are some senses in which we hesitate to use the concept 'community' in that there is some question of whether residents share a sense of community at all. While residents of Ft. MacKay share a common geographic area, there are many levels upon which it may be questionable whether they share any community sentiment. The idea of a common, unified "community" does not appear to be well developed on a practical level between residents of the settlement even though many external organizations and agencies believe (or find it necessary to act as though they believe) that a community does exist. Indeed, many indications are that Ft. MacKay may be viewed more accurately as an agglomeration of families located in the same general settlement area than as a community of people who share common ideals, goals, beliefs, attitudes, values, and purposes.

Nevertheless, there is a sense in which community identity is manifest consistently. Residents of Ft. MacKay will rally together "to defend" the "community" against the "outside world". It is apparent, then, that if opposition, tension and stress are experienced in relation to the Larger Society, such external pressure tends to produce cohesiveness and solidarity within the community. Ft. MacKay will present a common front in situations of conflict with the "outside world". In this context, residents of Ft. MacKay belong to the "in-group" (us) as opposed to those who belong to the "out-group" (them).

In the absence of a tangible threat from outside of Ft. MacKay, people within the settlement tend to identify with a variety of groups and factions. The second level of group identity within the

settlement is based upon tribal affiliation and legal status. The difference between Metis and Treaty identity has been well-documented throughout this study. However, in many cases, tribal identity -- that is, whether one is Cree or Chipewyan -- becomes the focal point of allegiance for the individual. People from outside of the settlement have a tendency to discern very quickly the friction between the Metis and the Treaties, but frequently overlook the fact that tribal affiliations can be equally as strong.

The third level upon which social groupings can be analyzed is on the basis of kinship. Long-term observation indicates that one's ultimate allegiance is to one's extended family. Inter-family factionalism and rivalry is an immensely practical factor influencing the day-to-day behaviour of people within the settlement.

A more complete analysis of kinship will be completed below in a subsequent section.

In general, then, Ft. MacKay residents do exhibit a sense of community identity if one is viewing the interaction between the Little Community and the Larger Society. However, within the settlement, and in the absence of conflict with the Larger Society, social interaction tends to segment the community into more finite groupings and factions. Conflict between these factions tends to be very prominent. Yet, as Coser (1956) has pointed out, conflict can be a very strong force for enhancing community cohesion. As pointed out in the chapter on "political organization", opposition between extended families, and the balance of power which results, frequently is one of the strongest forces for social control and stability in a native community.

Socialization/Education

According to Brim and Wheeler (1966:2),

Socialization refers to the process by which persons

acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that make them more or less able members of their society. It is apparent that the socialization experienced by a person in childhood cannot prepare him for all the roles he will be expected to fill in later years. People move through a sequence of different positions in society, in accord with different stages of the life cycle.

In other words, the process of socialization in any community is the process which changes the newborn "little beast" into a fully participating member of his society according to the manner in which that particular society defines the meaning of "being human".

In the Larger Society, following an initial five or six year period when socialization is the primary responsibility of parents, we pass our children on to professional educators who are a part of a highly structured and complex system of formal education. For the next several years, we expect the life of the child or young person to focus upon the process of formal education which will prepare him for acceptance of responsible and productive roles in society.

Members of the Larger Society take this system of formal education for granted. Our view is that unless one has passed through this system, one is totally "uneducated". Consequently, other cultures which have no need to provide a similar system of "formal education" produce "uneducated" people.

In addition to being somewhat arrogant, this view is patently untrue: All societies provide a process of socialization which prepares individual members to assume constructive, participating roles. Knowledge and skills pertinent to adult roles as defined by that culture are acquired during that process of socialization. Anybody from the Larger Society who has lived in a community which does not share the "Western" tradition of "formal education" will realize that even (perhaps even especially) Ph.D.'s sometimes feel like fools when they try to participate in other cultures into which they have not been socialized. While members of the Larger Society see people of other cultures as being "uneducated", one native elder

expressed to me his sentiments concerning "formal education".

If the young people of today had to survive on their own, they would freeze to death in the schools with the teachers. Why don't white men know anything?

Socialization processes of different societies, then, prepare members of those societies to "be human" in different ways. Therefore, the most rapid way to break down a given society is to strike at the very core of culture, namely, the socialization process. The Larger Society systematically does this by law. "Every child must attend school to the age of sixteen".

Now the growing child gets two messages. From his own society, he receives a knowledge of the values and skills pertinent to a traditional way of life. From the formal school system, he receives a totally conflicting and different set of messages. The fact that many young native people tend to emerge from their first fifteen or twenty years of "double socialization" with confusion and frustration concerning values and norms is thus not very hard to understand. Traditional socialization processes have prepared them for a life which is dying rapidly. "Formal schooling" presumes a life which is not yet part of the community -- a life which is fairly alien. The young person, then, is caught in the transition, and as a result he cannot participate adequately in either world.

One final comment should be made concerning the difference between the socialization processes of the Little Community and those of the Larger Society. The Formal school system of the Larger Society reflects its own value system by teaching the novice how something works in theory before following up with practice. For example, even before the child enters school, as a toddler he is told by his parents to avoid touching the hot kettle on the stove. When he gets to be a "bigger boy" the method for handling the kettle first of all is demonstrated several times. Then, at the appropriate time as judged by the adult, the child is allowed to practice handling the kettle under close supervision until proficiency is attained. Only then is

he allowed to handle the kettle by himself.

Conversely, socialization in native communities tends to be based upon personal observation and practice. The same toddler in a native home would approach the kettle when he felt ready to do so. Nobody would intervene to stop him. He would learn how to handle the implement by trial and error.

The moral of this example is that the pattern of formal education exemplified by the school system of the Larger Society does not conform to the expectations of native people concerning how one should learn. The long years of theory appear to be senseless. And after all, what does an urban-oriented curriculum teach native children who have to grow up in a rural or isolated community?

Following are the comments of the residents of Ft. MacKay concerning the school.

- M - High school should be offered here.*
- M - We should have high school here. If there is no high school here, there should at least be a school bus to Ft. McMurray daily. It is necessary for kids to go to high school. It would help them work out in other places.*
- M - There are no problems with the teachers. However we should have high school in the village. Second best would be to bus students to McMurray every day.*
- It does not matter if the kids have high school if they are just going to live in Ft. MacKay.*
- M - I see no reason why kids in MacKay should even bother going to high school. It does them no good. Jimmy went to grade 12 and what did it get him?*
- M - More kids would continue on to high school if there were one here. There is a need to go to high school. Getting by without an education is a thing of the past. It will only get to be more so. It is impossible to get into any trades without grade ten at least.*
- W - There is a real need for high school. I know it is a matter of economics, but on the other hand, if the money is to be taken out of the area via oil, it should be spent in part on social services for local residents.*

A kid living in MacKay should go to high school. Without such schooling, he has no chance. A child should not be punished for where the parents decide to live.

- T - Kids should go to high school in Edmonton, or in some community other than in Ft. McMurray. In McMurray, the schools are overcrowded and elsewhere they are more stable.

The school is a lot different than when I went to school. Now they prepare a person for going to school in another community where values are different.

Going to high school at all does not make sense if I live here. It does mean something when you go out.

- M - If the new school is big enough it would be nice to have high school here. I took my daughter out of school because they promised me the daughter would live with my sister in Edmonton, and she would be paid for it. But she had to stay in a foster home rather than at my sister's. I found out she was not attending school regularly and I brought her back.

- W - High school would be nice, but not practical. People can't stay in MacKay with a high school education. What would a person do here with a high school education? People will have to go out to work.

- M - There is a rumor that things are leaking in the new school. Also, they say the furnaces are not working.

We need a high school here or bussing to Ft. McMurray.

Education is becoming more important here. There are plants coming in all around so you need an education to get a job.

- W - The lagoon on the site of the new school is a disaster.

There is a total lack of supplies in the school. The playschool should be utilizing the new school. Also, vocational training and upgrading should use the new facility.

There is a lack of funding. There is a poor and inadequate curriculum. Things like art supplies do not qualify for funds.

The library should be developed and should be used in conjunction with the bookmobile. Team sports should be encouraged through competition with teams from Ft.

McMurray. The school and the Recreation Committee should cooperate. Northlands keeps itself too separate from the community.

- W - There should be showers in the new school. The one immediate opportunity for improved hygiene has been blown.

Northlands does not do proper maintenance.

There should be individual housing for teachers instead of forced sharing.

There is a need for high school and upgrading either in the village or by bus to McMurray. There must be some realistic opportunity for success after grade 9. The answer might require some experimentation and even interim failure. The "our policy is such and so" angle of Northlands does not hold water as an excuse for no service.

- W - Part-time counsellors are needed in the school to deal with pupil - family - school relations. A native person should do this. A counsellor would have a full-time job with only a few pupils.

Special education help and materials are needed. These can't be purchased from general revenue. Special education consultants from Edmonton are not available.

Other educational needs for the village include:

- (a) adult upgrading classes;
- (b) home-making;
- (c) child care;
- (d) life skills;
- (e) nutrition

The only real option for high school is to have it in MacKay. Look at the work put in last fall trying to get kids to school in Ft. McMurray, and it collapsed right away. The kids certainly have the ability and they will need more education soon.

Vocational training may be the answer for this generation with the transition to high school to be made during the next generation. It would be better to give something attainable and non-frustrating. An academic education may not be warranted right now.

Showers are needed in the new school, especially with no running water in the village. Showers were in the original plans and were deleted. The kids have asked if they could wash their hair in the sinks in the new school.

Written materials and curriculum are not applicable to these communities; only to southern communities. For northern communities, more money should be available for special education materials. Books are provided (albeit several months late), but the "concrete materials" are missing.

The kids should be given a chance to perform well. But even the books which are available come three quarters of the way through the year. Because of these and other problems, one is forced to be "innovative" with Northlands in order to get things done at all.

- W - We need the same type of education (i.e. NOT Northlands) as Ft. McMurray. Things here are not as progressive as elsewhere. When the kid leaves to go out to school, he is so far behind, he can never catch up. Where there is no second language problem, kids should be treated equally.
- W - I was the first school teacher twenty-nine years ago. The kids learned quickly, but recess was a problem. The families lived in little pockets and the kids had never seen each other. The response was fights. After a few days, the parents came at recess to support their children in the fights.
- T - The teachers are all good and treat the kids pretty fairly. High school is needed here. Kids should go to high school because without education they will not get jobs. Soon it will be worse. If they had school, they would get good jobs instead of just labor.
- T - When school is finished for the day, teachers should send the children right home. Sometimes I worry about my kid and he is skating or something.

Sending someone out for high school is no good. They don't last. The girls go out to high school and come back pregnant.

- T - I would like to see the kids go to high school here rather than go out.

Kids should go to high school because it is necessary for getting a job. I learned my lesson being a laborer. Also, my little girl thinks that she just wants to stay in the village and have babies. If she had an education she would not think that way. There will be no more bush pretty soon.

- W - The school was built on the main road where ten years from now the traffic will be a real threat.

Right now, kids do not have to go to school regularly. Parents do not care if there is attendance or not. There needs to be enforcement. The present teachers have a much tougher job because of the past teachers. The teachers are doing the best possible with what they have to work with.

- W - Qualified teachers are needed for the smaller kids. The kids come home with A's on the report cards and cannot read. They learn more from Sesame Street and other TV programs than they do in school.

High school being taught here would be better than what is happening now. High school is required now for almost any job.

- T - Washrooms with showers should be built into the new school. I gave up being on the school committee because people would not respond. There is local apathy. There is no cooperation.

For high school it should be here or there should be bussing to McMurray. To board kids out is just a waste of government money.

Education is really needed. If I had an education I would not be stuck where I am now.

- T - The grades do not go high enough. High school should be taught here. It may even be workable with a bus system to McMurray. Anything less than this is totally unworkable.

We have need for adult education particularly for upgrading to grade ten for work at Syncrude and GCOS.

Anywhere you live there is a need for education.

- T - Adult education in English and writing is urgently needed.*
- T - We need a high school. Kids get homesick and don't last too long. Quite a few have gone out and none have made it.*
- T - There should be a bus to take kids to school. It is too cold for kids to walk in the winter.*

It really does not matter whether kids in MacKay have high school. Even if they are educated, they hang around all the time.

There was a program for kindergarten up to five or six weeks ago. The program stopped because of a hole in the roof and there were never any supplies.

The new school which will be ready to open in September is much appreciated and is a credit to Northlands School Division. However, even while in the lead in terms of provision of much-needed amenities, Northlands methods of operation get them into trouble. Notwithstanding all the studies carried out by the education establishment in Alberta in order to improve Northlands service and to improve the general level of education offered, curriculum and organizational matters have obscured the real problem. Northlands simply does not know or understand the communities it serves and as a result, the School Division ends up being insensitive to these communities regardless of whether their intentions are good or amenities are provided. The problem is a "people problem", not a curriculum issue.

Luckily for Ft. MacKay, the teachers currently living in the community do make almost superhuman efforts to know and to understand the community. They have lived in Ft. MacKay for three years -- almost an unprecedented term of service in the community. Their commitment and devotion to the children and parents have had an incalculable effect upon the overall stabilization of the community.

One additional point might be made. The question might arise, "After three decades of schooling and at least a decade of relatively intensive exposure to the Larger Society, why have the residents of Ft. MacKay not assimilated more completely?"

Over two decades ago, Hallowell noted that even after many decades of exposure, and even though these points were not observable to the casual eye, a study of the personalities of members of Ontario, Manitoba and Wisconsin bands indicated that exposure "did produce changes but even with the Wisconsin Band they were easily identified psychologically speaking, as being Indian."

The following characteristics were predominant in each of the four groups:

- (1) Emotional restraint;
- (2) Inhibition of expressions of aggression in interpersonal relationships;
- (3) A culturally demanded amiability and mildness in the face of provocation to anger;
- (4) Suppression of all open criticism of one's fellows;
- (5) Individuals functioned in terms of a highly internalized conscience rather than from outer social pressures;
- (6) Highly sensitive to others;
- (7) A fancied rebuff taken as a serious slight.

John J. Honigmann studied Indian values and beliefs among the Cree Indians on the west coast of James Bay. He found they had common beliefs and values with white people regarding violence, theft, deceit, incest and adultery. Beliefs and values which were startlingly different were found in the following areas.

- (1) Group identification - Only with their own band.
- (2) Competition - Success is appreciated but should never be publically advertised.
- (3) Poverty - Indians are poor. Whites are rich. Therefore

it is necessary and proper for Whites to care for Indians at certain times.

- (4) Social Assistance - It is wise and security-promoting to rely on public assistance.
- (5) Work - When the yield of a productive task seems uncertain, effort should be discontinued.
- (6) Property - With the exception of clothing, property is for use rather than display. It is not an extension of the ego.
- (7) Future - Little concern about the future.
- (8) Leadership - Too great evidence of power is resented and feared by those whom it affects.
(Sealey 1976)

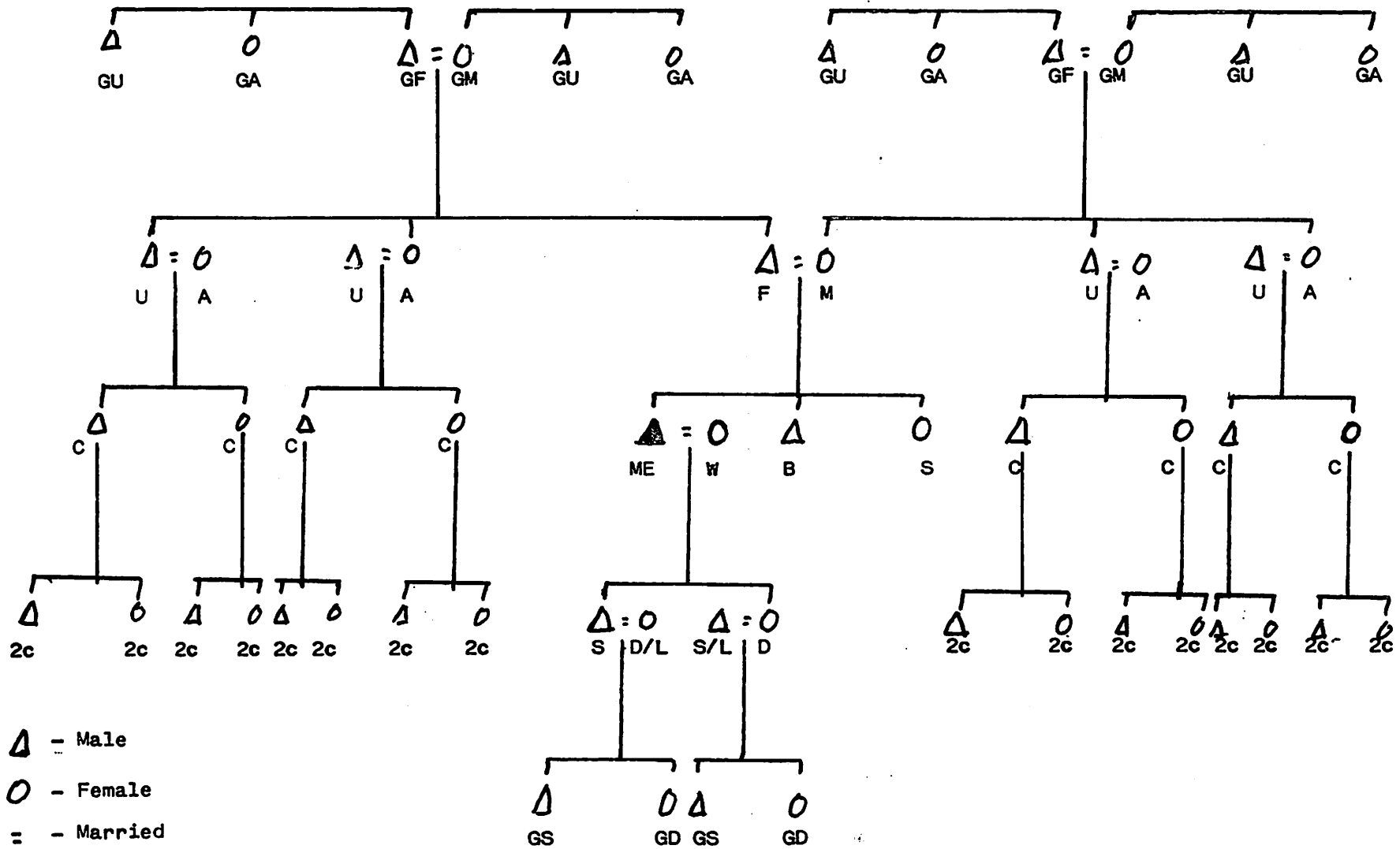
The point to be made is not that the residents of Ft. MacKay necessarily share these values (though this is true in many cases); but to illustrate that the transition period of change from tradition to the way of life of the Larger Society takes an extremely lengthy time. As stated elsewhere in this document, when change takes place upon culture contact, the areas of values and personality are the last to be re-worked.

Kinship

In a discussion in an earlier chapter, we typified the Little Community as placing emphasis upon personal relationships. Ft. MacKay, a settlement of 204 persons, allows literally everybody to know everybody else in a relatively intensive manner. Not only that, but virtually every individual has multiple relationships within the kinship system. The entire village is inter-related.

The key to understanding native communities is the kinship system. In our own culture, we take the structure of our kinship system so much for granted that we assume that every society in the world shares that structure. A brief glance at page 99 illustrates the

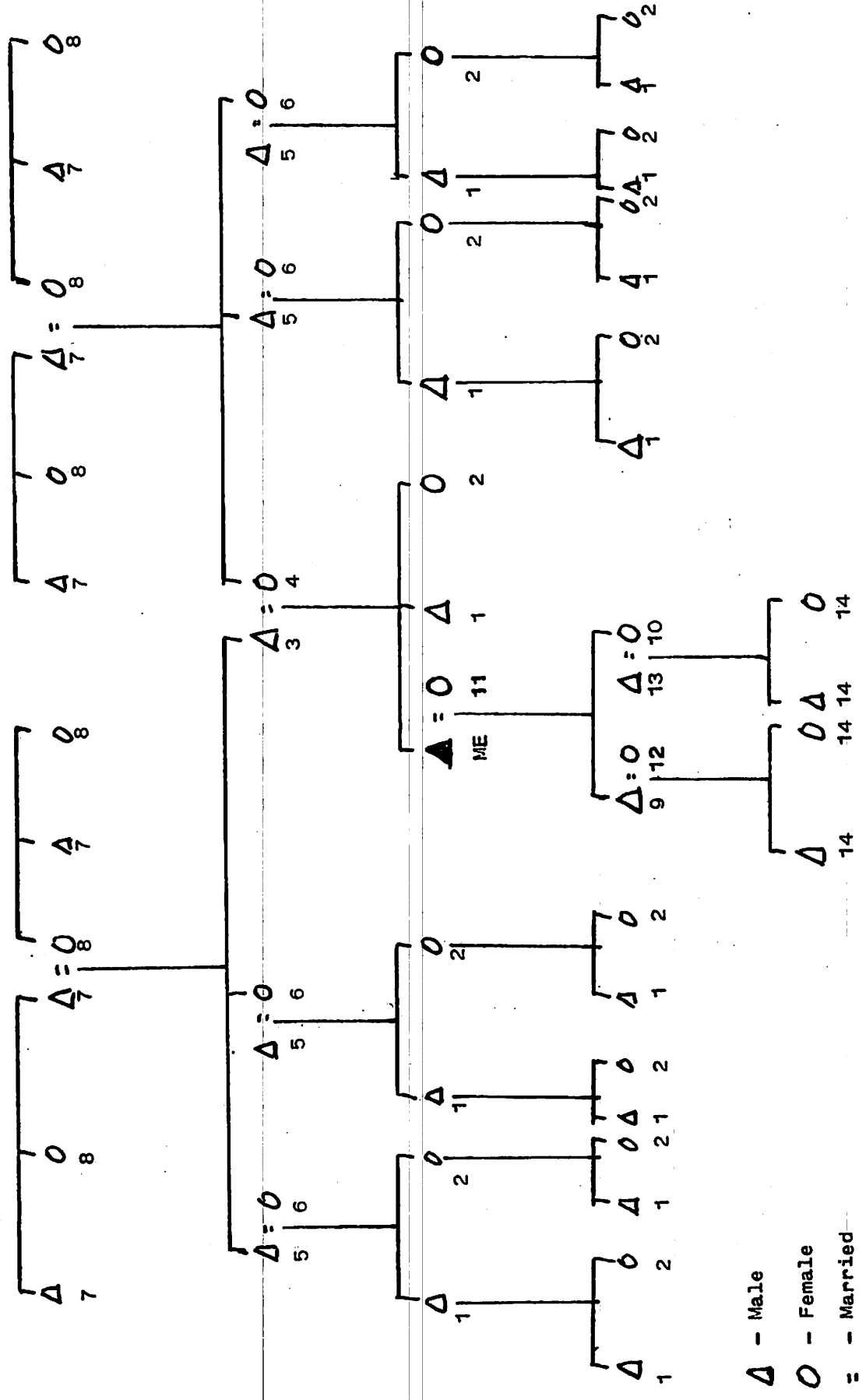
CANADIAN KINSHIP SYSTEM



Δ - Male
 O - Female
 = - Married

100 -

CREE KINSHIP SYSTEM



ideal structure of our kinship system. The chart on page 100 illustrates the structure of the Cree kinship system as traditionally (and currently) used in Ft. MacKay. (We also elicited the structure of a Chipewyan system, but the details are too complex to illustrate in this document). Notice that the Cree system groups relatives into different categories than does our system.

Now, what is the function of a kinship system? The kinship system of any society places one's relatives into groups. Through the process of socialization, we are taught the special ways in which we ought to behave toward people in each of these groups. For example, in our own system, the way in which we behave toward a spouse is different than interactions with aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, cousins, and so on. The forms of behaviour which we deem appropriate to any given type of relationship are taught to us so subtly that most of us probably would not even have thought about this issue. But, each of us during our lifetime internalizes these expectations, roles and norms of behaviour. So much is this so, that when you have a very special friend who is not related to you at all you frequently instruct your child to refer to him as "Uncle Charlie" rather than "Mr. Smith". By your doing so, the child picks up the message that this person is somehow special, and should be included in some category within the "in-group" (i.e. relatives), thus warranting the special behaviour.

Because we expect other cultures to have the same kinship structure (though they would have different words, of course), we naturally assume that the role expectations and behaviours appropriate to each of our "categories" will be found in the other culture. But if a similar structure does not even exist, one can see that the possibility of expecting similar types of behaviour toward relatives is simply ridiculous. "Fathers", "brothers", "cousins", and so on, will just not behave as we think they should, because they don't exist in other cultures.

This does not even begin to scratch the surface of what is an incredibly complex topic. Yet without this knowledge, one will never understand what makes a traditional native community "tick". As stated above, kinship is the key to understanding traditional cultures. With a little sensitivity and imagination, we can understand how difficult it is for native people without background knowledge in the political and economic systems of the Larger Society to understand our version of law, politics, economics or what the ideal relationship between father, mother and child should be. The background concepts from the socialization of our society just are not there. Conversely, members of the Larger Society, without undergoing socialization in a native community, have more chance of levitating to the top of Mt. Everest than to understand the complexities and implications of alien kinship systems.

We make this point simply to register the full impact of the principle that traditional native political organization and economic organization cannot be understood apart from the structure of the kinship system. If we understand this point, we begin to comprehend the extent to which residents of Ft. MacKay, the Little Community, and members of the Larger Society really do operate in "two different worlds". The situation in Ft. MacKay is made even more complex by the fact that there are two tribal affiliations, Cree and Chipewyan, and thus two different traditional kinship systems are operating simultaneously. Most people who have had extensive contact with traditional native communities are aware of the fact that kinship bonds are important. However, they usually try to make "sense" of the community using the kinship structure of the Larger Society as the primary tool of analysis. In truth, only an infinitely small number of persons from outside these societies have the conceptual tools necessary to understand how native social organization, primarily the kinship structure, operates.

To further complicate the situation, as with all other aspects

of life, Ft. MacKay is in a process of transition. The natural consequence is that traditional kinship systems are breaking down and the kinship structure of the Larger Society is being adopted. Some of the people in Ft. MacKay are beginning to operate according to the kinship structure of the Larger Society, while others (particularly the elderly) still hold to the system of tradition. Once again, many individuals are caught in a "no man's land" where role expectations, values and behaviour norms are conflicting and unclear.

The practical implication of these issues is that "outside" agencies and individuals tend to see problems where none exist, at least in the eyes of members of the community. Internally, the world makes eminent sense. "Outsiders" get frustrated when people inside the community don't behave the way they expect them to. When one cannot see familiar behaviour patterns, one tends to explain what appears to be social confusion in terms of "social problems". What is really occurring is that unfamiliar patterns of behaviour, be they social, political or economic, are problematic for members of the Larger Society to deal with. Two factors tend to mask the actual behaviour patterns within the Little Community. The first is, because native people are indoctrinated into their cultural patterns just as we are, they tend to assume the "naturalness" of their systems and to be confused by the behaviour patterns of members of the Larger Society.

Second, in the context of being dominated and encroached upon by the Larger Society, the tendency is to feed back to "outsiders" as much as possible the forms of behaviour which are expected (or are perceived to be expected) by people from outside of the community.

The net result is that the tensions and frustrations experienced by members of the Larger Society in relation to dealing with residents of Ft. MacKay are similar to those experienced by residents of Ft. MacKay in dealing with "outsiders". The only difference is

that being the minority, native people are expected to change their behaviour to conform to the norms of the Larger Society. Members of the Larger Society are under no pressure or obligation to undergo the reverse process of adaptation. Being in the dominant position, they can afford to ignore the problem.

Again, "kinship" is the key to understanding traditional native communities. To explain the details of Cree or Chipewyan kinship systems goes far beyond the legitimate scope of this document. Besides, we wish once again to emphasize that communities such as Ft. MacKay are in a period of transition even in relation to the very basic elements of social organization.

The point that we wish to underscore, then, is that frequently our assessment of so-called "social problems" in, or with, native communities (and certainly in Ft. MacKay) is irrelevant. If left alone, the social organization of native communities operates perfectly well for the maintenance of the community. The real problem comes with our demand for the assimilation of native communities into the Larger Society. If we expect the residents of Ft. MacKay to participate politically and economically in the Larger Society, we must recognize that knowledge of social organization -- the expectations, norms and behaviour patterns -- of the Larger Society are going to have to be imparted. In essence, people have to be resocialized if they wish to participate in the way of life of the Larger Society. The "knowledge" to which we refer is the very core content or "curriculum" of so-called "life skills training". As with all other education, one must begin "where the people are" in terms of understanding. To do that, we must first understand them.

Social Problems

The foregoing certainly is not intended to suggest that problems do not exist in Ft. MacKay or that everything in the community is "just a bed of roses". Obviously this is not the case. Nor do we

wish to imply that responsibility for problems is entirely the fault of unknowledgeable or uncaring people from the Larger Society. Responsibility for internal problems lies squarely upon local residents.

However, the perspectives presented above place a different slant upon what constitutes 'social problems' in native communities. Let us attempt some redefinitions.

For the purposes of clearer understanding, a social or personal problem is a social situation which is a source of perplexity or vexation. In other words, as persons interact in, and with their social environment, social situations occur which are a source of vexation. In our culture, we tend not to regard specific types of social behaviour as problematic until the behaviour becomes troublesome to somebody. When the social situation becomes a source of bother or trouble, it may be perceived as a social problem.

Alcohol abuse is a case in point. Drunkenness which occurs in private or at parties and celebrations may be a social situation which is entirely acceptable. But when the identical type of behaviour begins to be troublesome to somebody, the 'social situation' may be viewed as a social or personal problem. The values and attitudes espoused by individuals, groups and communities are the lenses through which social situations are viewed and interpreted to determine their positive or negative meaning. Trouble, perplexity and vexation may be the meaning of a social situation for one person or group, while the same situation may present no problem to others.

The practicality and importance of this point is continually reflected in the data presented in this study. Three common perspectives on 'social situations' appear to recur. First, we might view social and personal problems from a more or less academic perspective. From this viewpoint, a social or personal problem may be viewed literally as nothing but a 'social situation' which may be the subject of research. The issue is explored simply for the sake

of gaining knowledge or understanding of a 'social situation'. In essence, the social situation becomes an intellectual puzzle which is challenging to the researcher in terms of the analysis of specific types of social behaviour and interaction.

The positive implication of an academic perspective is that the objective of research is a systematic, fair-minded, analytical investigation of the 'social situation'. Ideally, the researcher has no "axes to grind". However, the limitation of the academic perspective is that the "problem" frequently is not seen in the context of its meaning to persons participating in the 'social situation'. The academic study of "social problems" provides interest and challenge to the scientific researcher, but is the source of vexation, frustration and trouble for the people in the community who are burdened emotionally with living their lives in the shadow of the problems. The academic perspective itself may be viewed as a "social problem" by persons in native communities. The researcher may be viewed as an uncommitted, uninvolved, unconcerned outsider who "toys" with local people and issues for his own selfish ends.

Notwithstanding a variety of negative attitudes toward the academic perspective, many people in local communities appear to be conscious of the value of systematic, unbiased research into social problems. To view problems as 'social situations' may rarely be accomplished by the committed, emotionally involved "insider".

A second perspective on 'social situations' which is apparent is that of non-local governments. By nature, central governments establish policies based upon the values and attitudes of the Larger Society. Small, native communities may be seen as subordinate in relation to the Larger Society. Thus, the viewpoints of persons and groups in native communities may differ from those of governments, and similarly their perceptions of what 'social situations' constitute social problems may be divergent.

Like the academic, government is perceived by local communities as the "outsider". The interests of government agencies (and consequently their values and attitudes) are distinct from community interests. Indeed, to be more accurate, the self-interest of various government agencies may be fragmented in the same way that persons and groups in a native community do not share the same perspectives on what is in the best interest of the community. As with the academic perspective, government conceptualization of, and response to, 'social situations' becomes troublesome and perplexing in itself. From the local viewpoint, government indeed can create or contribute to social and personal problems.

A third source of perspectives on 'social situations' is the community. As suggested by the comments of residents of Ft. MacKay, the 'social situations' which are a source of trouble or vexation differ internally within communities. Again, a variety of perspectives are represented by different factions within the community.

Perhaps the strongest argument for the over-riding legitimacy of the perspectives of the local community concerning what constitutes social and personal problems is that members of these communities are the persons who have direct, personal experience of 'social situations' in the community. As a result, they define the meaning of 'social situations' in terms of personal and community values and attitudes. Those persons directly involved in the creation and working out of 'social situations' are interpreting them through the eyes of the Larger Society. But when we want to identify social and personal problems in a community, the people themselves are the source of the data.

Probably the most significant problem identified by the residents of Ft. MacKay is the abuse of alcohol. Much could be written about the causes and effects of the problem. However, alcohol abuse in Ft. MacKay may be related simply to the transition in life style, perhaps to be viewed as a symptom of the stress, tension and leisure

of living in a fixed housing settlement. The interesting question was put to me by a lady in Ft. MacKay who asked, "Why do White people drink in the bush so much?"

Conclusion

Analysis of aspects of social organization such as family stability is relatively meaningless in the internal context of Ft. MacKay. Only at the present time are "family groups" such as found in the Larger Society beginning to emerge. The issue is only relevant in the context of questioning whether family organization as well as overall social organization and stability in Ft. MacKay is such that it would support participation in wage labor employment or in more ambitious economic development projects. Obviously the answer to the question is that family organization and social organizations are just now becoming compatible with wage labor employment, though neither are compatible with major economic development endeavors. But probably this situation will prevail until amenities and infrastructure are introduced which will support changes in social organization and values. "Stable" (in terms of the values of the Larger Society) families and living conditions are pretty hard to sustain in shacks with no facilities or in trap line cabins.

As the above information suggests, there is no "native problem". The "problem" is our ignorance of what is actually happening to people during a period in history when the very guts of their way of life are being eviscerated. Nevertheless, we continue to attempt to set up mechanisms of coping with "the native problem" -- mechanisms of which the net effects are perpetually to keep native people in a state of transition. At the moment, the traditional way of life is nearly dead, but participation in the Larger Society is also impossible. Consequently a third "no man's land" lifestyle has emerged based upon total dependence upon the Larger Society. It is perpetuated by ignorance of native lifestyle and by the "well-intentioned",

but impractical programs of "do-gooders". The real native question is, "How long will it be perpetuated?"

Obviously, residents of Ft. MacKay have come a long way on their own in a very short time, and against overwhelming odds. But the casualty rate is high. To come much further requires some empathy, understanding and accommodation by the Larger Society, as well as some responsive rather than imposing assistance. Also, we must present the expectations and norms of the Larger Society as they really are to the people of Ft. MacKay. Our mistake frequently is to try "to soften the blow" rather than to provide the tools for people in the Little Community to deal with "our world" as it really is.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Introduction

The fundamental issue to be dealt with under the rubric of "political organization" is social control. Every society must come to grips with this issue in relation to social control between members of the community as well as in terms of regulating interaction with the "outside world". The word "organization" implies that both the internal and external interaction have some meaningful pattern which might be recognized and stated at least analytically.

Three basic concepts dominate the domain of political organization, namely, power, authority and social sanctions. According to John Beattie (1964:141).

power is human power, and human power is the ability to produce intended effects, that is, to carry out one's will on oneself, on other people, or on things. Since it implies that the end which is brought about is foreseen, the notion of power is essentially teleological. When we say that a man has power we mean that he can do what he wants to do, and when we say that he has social power we mean that in a social relationship he can make another person do what he wants him to do. Thus social power is an aspect of very many interpersonal relationships.

Similarly, Beattie suggests that authority is the socially approved right to use power.

So political authority is more than just the ability to exercise power; it implies also that the right to do so is publicly acknowledged. Therefore, it involves the existence of a shared system of values, which includes the acceptance of the political and social institutions through which the authority is exercised (Beattie 1964:141).

In other words, authority is legitimate power. For example, a bank robber may use a gun and consequently have the power to force the teller to turn money over to him. But when the policeman uses a gun to apprehend the robber, he not only has power, but also the

socially recognized authority to do so.

Social sanctions are rewards or punishments administered in an effort to encourage persons to behave according to the expectations and norms of a given society.

With these concepts in mind, let us look at the political organizations of Ft. MacKay.

Social Control

In Ft. MacKay, problems of social control appear to be difficult for the community to cope with internally. According to the older people, their influence in terms of social control has waned significantly over the past two decades. Now, people do pretty much as they want. As one person said when a drunk was going to take his snowmobile, "I would rather that you did not take it, but I would not be one to stop you." Probably the most effective mechanism of social control in Ft. MacKay is the potential opposition of extended families. The major families are still strong enough and sufficiently cohesive to protect their members as well as to chastise an offender who belongs to a different family line. In this sense, inter-family "conflict," or "squabbling" serves as one of the most effective means of placing some limitations upon behaviour. One might depict the situation as a delicate balance of power between family lines.

Throughout the community, one of the most prominent responses to social conflict or violence is avoidance. If one's neighbors are drinking and fighting, one takes the family away from the hostile environment until things calm down. Very rarely is any attempt made to intervene in hostility and to eliminate such by force. Nobody has the authority to do so.

The last-mentioned point is very important in relation to several issues. For example, to place houses in close proximity to each other may be a major factor in increasing hostilities and

violence. People have been placed in close proximity to one another, contrary to their traditional freedom to roam more or less at will to hunt and to trap. Many of the comments which people have made in relation to the distance which should separate houses ideally indicate that people expect to be bothered in this type of situation and feel powerless to do anything about it.

Strong evidence exists, then, to suggest that one traditional means of social control which dominated relationships between individuals and families was avoidance. Everything about White, industrialized society brings people into closer proximity with one another. And our assumptions and premises concerning social control revolve around the control and regulation of relationships between people who live in close proximity to one another. This is indeed an alien concept to northern Cree and Chipewyan people. At the same time, it is a concept which is an integral part of industrialization and economic development as known in the Larger Society. Economic stability depends upon the ability to maintain social stability.

For native bands in northern Alberta, the chief was traditionally a strong influence upon social control. Old people indicate that "when the chief spoke, the people listened and respected him". All internal matters of social control were handled by the chief with the aid of his councillors. Only criminal matters were turned over to the R.C.M.P. who were respected and acknowledged as authorities in such issues.

Under the present conditions of culture change, this is certainly not the case. Local native leaders appear to avoid matters of social control. Their statements are not respected above those of anybody else. To a large extent, they appear to be irrelevant to the entire issue of social control. Why is this so?

At least three specific reasons are immediately apparent. First, the erosion of well-defined values due to the breaking down of the traditional way of life also has undermined respect for traditional

leaders. Responsibility for the socialization of the children in terms of the traditional value system has been passed from the hands of parents and grandparents to schools and other external agencies. Traditional values concerning respect and social control are viewed almost as curious remnants of the past.

Second, local leaders do not command the respect of the people because people apparently feel that their personal conduct is something less than exemplary. It is impossible to provide effective leadership in terms of social control on the grounds of a "do as I say, not as I do" approach.

Third, local leaders do not appear to be close to the people. The most common complaint voiced by residents of Ft. MacKay concerning local leaders is that they are so busy going to meetings with outside agencies and organizations that they never have time to be with, or to communicate with, the members of the community.

The problem of social control in Ft. MacKay is serious. Many young parents voice increasing concern about the desirability of raising their families in an environment largely devoid of social control mechanisms.

Successful socio-economic development also demands the stability nurtured by a positive, yet non-oppressive, system of social control. Many of the mechanisms utilized for social control in the past have been destroyed or are ineffective in the face of problems arising from the confrontation of the Little Community with the Larger Society. Residents of Ft. MacKay, in cooperation with many external agencies, will have to work toward re-establishment of effective means of social control. To begin, the reinforcement of the power and authority of local, elected leaders must be undertaken.

Police

In contrast to traditional values, the Larger Society has a

highly formalized structure and organization of social control. This includes legislators who make the law, a judiciary which interprets laws and the police who enforce them. The general view of the function of the police in the Larger Society is that they have the authority to intervene in social situations to bring about social control. This includes the removal of an offender from the scene of a disturbance unlike the traditional practice in native society where the offender was isolated by avoidance.

The activity of the R.C.M.P. in relation to Ft. MacKay tends to be in response to specific requests. The distance from Ft. MacKay to Ft. McMurray and the relatively few men available tend to promote the concept of "crisis response". Often the crisis has been averted or the damage has been done before the police are able to intervene.

A wide range of frustrations evolve for the police and for residents of Ft. MacKay because they do not always share a mutual viewpoint concerning the meaning and nature of social control. For major problems, Ft. MacKay relies heavily upon the R.C.M.P. as the community believes itself to be relatively powerless to deal directly with the problems of social control. In this sense, people frequently appear to be caught in a "no man's land" between traditional and new concepts of social control.

For their part, the police experience many frustrations in dealing with native people (including a "double standard" sometimes displayed by the judiciary in extending greater leniency to native people -- a "double standard" which frequently is taken for granted by native people and which makes the police and judiciary the subjects of some amusement). When frustration occurs, the attitude of the R.C.M.P. tends toward control of native communities rather than service as in the case of White communities. Because of this implicit attitude, any interaction with the community which falls into a category other than "crisis responses" tends to be resented by residents of the settlement. The ambivalence of community members in relation to the police is well illustrated by the following comments.

- M - It would be good to have the R.C.M.P. living in MacKay but at least the patrols should be more frequent. This should be primarily to control outsiders as new plants bring more people in.
- M - There should be an R.C.M.P. stationed in MacKay. Native or White does not matter, but he would be no good if he were from MacKay. This is because he would be related here and he would help his relatives.
- M - Police should live in MacKay. White or native does not matter.
- M - We need either a constable posted here or at least police should be here Friday through Sunday. It does not matter whether the police are White or Native.
- M - They don't bother me, so I don't bother them.
- W - There should be a policeman stationed here. Skidoos are a problem. Drinking is also a difficult problem. It does not matter whether it is a white or native constable.
- T - They are doing a good job now. A policeman here might be a good idea. Nobody ever bothers me except one person when he is drinking. White people don't bother me.
- T - We would get along better without police at the present. People should be able to resolve their own differences. As long as the police are available, there is no problem with outside Whites bothering MacKay people.
- The future depends upon the type of business to enter the community. If one were to have a bar, one would need police.
- M - It would be good to have a policeman stationed here. To have a Special Constable from here would never work. You would have no friends. Everybody would go against you. You could never live right.
- W - With the advent of the road, booze became a real problem. Now liquor is controlled better by the younger generation. Crimes of violence have really dropped off. But there still should be a Special Constable based here.
- M - There should be a portable jail here. The police should only come here if they are on call. They have no right to come in on a regular basis. This is like a Reserve.

They should not take offenders out to Ft. McMurray. They should be kept in a portable jail here so that when they are released, they are not left high and dry in McMurray.

- W - I would not want to see them around too much. They should be accessible, but not overly visible or imposing.
- W - Better liason is needed between the village and the police. There often seems to be antagonisms between the two. In most instances there is no need for permanent police here. The availability of police on short notice may be improved. Maybe a native Special Constable would help. Perhaps a temporary police station on weekends would help.
- W - More policing may not be needed at present, but a more understanding and human touch is required. There needs to be improvement in Police/Community relations. Craig Penner and John Morrison did a good job when they were responsible for these things. Native policing could be the answer, but the person could not come from this community. He would have to move out of town. A lot of these questions can only be dealt with by experimentation. There are no hard and fast answers. If you had asked me two years ago, I would have had answers, but now I am not so sure.
- T - The police pick up guys drunk and let them out in town at 6:00 A.M. If they have no money, they are stuck in town.
- There should be a policeman here, particularly if the village gets larger. Now everything is running free. There is no stop for nothing. White or native policing is needed.
- T - The police don't watch us very well -- only after someone gets killed. Twice I complained to the police about kids and drunks driving skidoos. Only after the child was killed did they do something. We have needed a policeman for some time. The problem is all over by the time the police arrive.
- T - Police should be stationed here. They come only when something happens. By the time they get here it is too late. It does not matter whether he is native or White as long as he keeps the peace.

- W - Policing is poor. Guys on snowmobiles are running around drunk all night. A constable should be stationed here for a period of time with a portable jail like at Bechtel. The place is still a little wild. For a while, there has to be a babysitter for the populace.
- W - Policing is not adequate. There should be a policeman stationed here. By the time the police come, the trouble is over. It makes no difference whether the policeman is white or native.
- T - I have never called a cop. People call the cops and when they come, they will not lay a charge. It is a kinship problem. If they are not willing to press a charge, they should not bother calling.
- T - Things are not too good now. The police do not look after the people here.
- T - I would like to see more responsive service. You phone them and they come days later. A constable should be stationed here.
- T - We need an R.C.M.P. stationed right here. I hide a gun under my bed all the time. You never know when somebody will break in and kill me.
- T - We need better policing than we have. Now they come mostly at nights. We need added service on weekends. It would be best to have a man stationed here.

It would be good to have the R.C.M.P. come to a meeting to discuss community problems with the police. The problem is not only with MacKay but is perhaps 80% with the men from the plants. The response of the police is that MacKay does not present many problems, but I would like to know how they would like to live here.

The following issues seem to arise from the comments made by residents of Ft. MacKay. First, the community relies heavily upon the R.C.M.P. for assistance in control of crimes of violence. Many members of the community appear to have particular fears regarding disturbances created by outsiders. This was especially true during the construction days of Syncrude.

Second, relations between R.C.M.P. and residents of Ft. MacKay would be drastically improved if both parties sat down to discuss their respective responsibilities concerning social control. At the present time, the R.C.M.P. do not appear to have a clear understanding of what residents of the community expect by way of police service. At the same time, residents of the settlement do not understand or appreciate the frustrations of the police force in regard to policing Ft. MacKay.

Third, it is much easier for residents of the community to relate to specific individuals rather than to a uniform. The recent reorganization of the Ft. McMurray rural detachment means that any one of a number of constables may respond to a call from Ft. MacKay. Before reorganization, responsibility for policing Ft. MacKay lay primarily in the hands of two specific constables. Certainly, from the perspective of people in Ft. MacKay, this was a more desirable structure of interaction.

Fourth, it is interesting to note that White persons tend to support the concept that what is needed in Ft. MacKay is a native Special Constable. Most native respondents do not think that a Special Constable would work out.

Fifth, some residents of the community seem to have an over-dependence upon the R.C.M.P. Discussions concerning social control also should focus upon the responsibility which community members must accept for certain aspects of their own social behaviour.

Sixth, a number of people apparently believe that a constable should be stationed at least part-time in Ft. MacKay. Discussions between the community and the police also should examine whether or not this course of action is necessary or even feasible.

Seventh, perhaps the R.C.M.P. should bear some responsibility for exploring the nature of their own relationship to Ft. MacKay and to other native communities. The present time offers a unique opportunity to obtain resource materials and personnel capable of

assisting in such a self-analysis.

Leadership

In examining the concept of social control in Ft. MacKay, we noted above the relationship between social control and "leadership". "Leadership" is relevant to many aspects of community life including "political organization".

In this instance, we will look at comments of residents concerning leadership in Ft. MacKay before examining some of the relevant issues.

- M - There is a lack of knowledge of what leaders should do. A leader cannot "run" the people. The people should tell the leaders what they want. Leaders should not make decisions alone, but decisions should be made by all the people.*
- M - Right now the leadership is not too good. The leader does not go to government nor does he go to the people to inform them of what is happening or to get their opinions. A good leader should work with the people and have meetings. He should go to the job sites and get jobs for people. But unlike the Treaty Chief, the Metis leader gets no pay.*
- M - Workshops for leadership training would be helpful.*
- T - Leaders are not preparing a better place for people to live. They are just getting by.*
- M - Training for leadership is really needed. The leadership is poor. The leadership is not communicating or is not responsible to the people. They should prepare for community meetings with the people so that when the "big people" come, they already know what they are going to say. The leader would be OK if he had training. He can speak up.*
- M - There should be leadership training specifically to show people what their roles are and how to relate to government. One of the problems with being President is that people expect you to care for them instead of doing things for themselves. People can't even make phone calls for themselves. A fellow can't stand alone. You have to*

have backing. If you don't have backing, you must be sure not to do anything.

There is good cooperation between Treaty and Metis leaders. It is the average person who is the problem. There are family disputes all over. You do something for one family and all the other families want it.

- T - There should be training for Chief and Councillors.
- T - The Council is no good. They do everything behind our backs.
- T - The Councillors should do the work for the Chief. The Band Manager should not have to run around and check the people. Councillors should communicate with the people.
- T - When the leaders go to a meeting they are afraid to talk. They do not know what they want when they go to a meeting.
- T - The Chief will work out OK. He and Band Manager work together. The Chief needs two good Councillors to help him. The Chief is by himself.
- T - Some people have no concept of financial responsibility. They think that Band money is their money.
- T - Community meetings should be held once a month. There are not enough community meetings. The left hand does not know what the right is doing.
- T - Only the Chief knows what is going on. There is no communication between people.
- T - We will come to meetings if older people are involved. The younger people who are doing the jobs do not communicate with the older people. We do not even know why they are going to meetings. We would like to have somebody go from house to house to explain things.

Even a cursory examination of the foregoing comments indicates that expectations which the residents of Ft. Mackay have regarding the roles of leaders and the expectations of the members of the Larger Society are literally "in two different worlds". Indeed, one of the foremost problems experienced by Ft. Mackay is the inability of the

Larger Society to convey clearly to residents of Ft. MacKay what the "outside" world expects in terms of leadership. For example, the expectations of the Larger Society to the effect that leaders should be motivators, initiators and organizers are certainly different from the norms suggested by traditional native values. In fact, one might question whether traditional Cree and Chipewyan cultures even possessed a concept of leadership which might be remotely similar to that of the "outside world".

Remarks presented above also indicate clearly that in the absence of expectations concerning the function which leadership performs, the hollow form or structure of organization can still prevail. Obviously, the mark of a "good leader" is to attend meetings!

Inadvertently, this attitude is being reinforced by the Larger Society. The dominance of external agencies forces the attention of community leaders to be directed outward from the community rather than inward toward the people. As a consequence, residents of Ft. MacKay legitimately claim that they never talk to the leaders because they are always at a meeting.

This is a definite liability for leaders because they have little opportunity to discuss issues with the people and to monitor opinions or to seek advice, even if they were predisposed to these activities. It renders leaders doubly vulnerable to being manipulated and directed from "outside" because they have no estimation of what internal support might be on any given issue. If the independence and self-determination of a community is to become a reality, the primary attention of leaders must be reoriented toward working with their constituents before confronting external agencies.

The lack of contact with the opinions and advice of their own people subverts the ability of leaders to establish goals and objectives -- both short -- and long-term -- for the community. Thus, there is no basis for interaction with the Larger Society or for choosing between the wide variety of programs offered by external agencies

and organizations. Or to view things from another perspective, companies, individuals, agencies and organizations which in other communities would be required to provide services are really accountable to nobody in Ft. MacKay. If decision-making is all external, and the community is really at the mercy of external entities, what is there left to lead?

Leaders in Ft. MacKay should undertake a fundamental reorganization of their duties. Functions of each position should be reviewed and leaders should be trained in skills relevant to their jobs. Above all, the purpose of restructuring these functions is to redirect the attention of leaders from outside the community to the needs and views of their own people on the "inside". During this time of reorganization, interaction with, and commitments to, external agencies, companies, individuals and organizations should be minimized.

Furthermore, leaders should establish attainable short and long-term goals and objectives for the community. These goals and objectives would become the primary guidelines for decision-making. If no guidelines or objectives exist, how can the value of any program or course of action be assessed?

Having set the affairs of the community in order from an internal point of view, leaders would be in a position to regulate the interaction of the community with outside agencies and organizations, rather than being dominated by them. The programs offered by "outside" organizations could then be accepted if they fit into the short or long-term goals set by the community. There would be no reason or necessity to tolerate programs imposed for the sake of the programming agency or company.

Local Government

Turning now from the characteristics and qualities required by leaders in Ft. MacKay, how should leadership be structured to best

serve the interests of the whole community, particularly in its relationships with external agencies? This question must be answered in the knowledge that the realities of differing legal status demand the co-existence of the Treaty Band Council and the local Metis Association.

The existing factions in conflict within Ft. MacKay are very difficult for external organizations to deal with. It is virtually impossible for such organizations to deal with miniscule segments of the community. For this reason, the long-term future of Ft. MacKay depends in large measure upon the ability of residents of the community to cooperate and to address the Larger Society with a unified voice. To the extent that such unification can be accomplished, the community will provide its own means of self-determination and decision-making.

Perhaps the only structural means of unification would involve the establishment of a central community committee or association. This would be comprised of two Band members representing the Treaty segment of the village, the two members of the Metis Association Executive representing the non-status native segment and one white person representing the small white minority in the village. Such a community association would deal only with matters affecting the whole community, thus making sure that interference in the internal affairs of the Band Council and the Metis Association did not take place.

Initially, the Ft. MacKay Community Association would exist strictly on an informal basis. This would allow the opportunity for factions within the community to work out a means of cooperation and to get the organization running smoothly. If so desired, at a later time, the Community Association could request that the Minister of Municipal Affairs officially recognize the Association as Local Advisory committee and declare the Ft. MacKay settlement a "hamlet".

While feelings vary to some extent concerning the desirability of a community committee or association to act on behalf of the whole village, general concensus seems to be that this structure would be acceptable and appreciated. Following are comments of residents of Ft. MacKay concerning this issue.

M - There should be a central committee for all of MacKay.

M - There should be only one group responsible for the village.

M - People should all live together and not be separated. They should have the right to live where they want to. I don't get involved because nobody here helps me very much. Everything I do around here, I do for myself.

M - There should be two governing bodies. I am Metis staying on Treaty land. People talk about that.

T - Everybody should work together. I think people would cooperate to do this.

T - It is pretty hard to deal with local government. No matter how it is done, there will be three different agencies to deal with. Treaties will not give up rights and Metis cannot be included. It is an impossible situation.

There is no coordination or planning for the community. Thus, we do not get anywhere.

The tribal difference (Cree and Chipewyan) does not hurt organization too much. If people really want something, they can stick together.

There is probably not enough interest in the community as a whole to make a community committee work. An amalgamation would not work on the basis of population because the Treaties would always have power.

M - If people were working together, they would have lots of backing in relation to government. As things are now, each end is fighting the other.

W - There will have to be a village committee comprised of both Treaties and Metis for the future. The White segment of the community should also have representation. The Band Council and Metis Association should still be maintained, but there should also be a central committee.

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- M - We should work together. Don't separate the people physically. There should be no "Metis" side and no "Treaty" side. A permanent community committee would be good if there are people who would stick with it.
- M - I think there should be just one committee for the whole village. I think people would cooperate better if this would happen.
- W - The idea of a central committee for the whole village sounds good, but it may not work. There needs to be more exposure for the people to political issues. At the present time, the village is so small that it boils down to family against family.
- W - The present situation is not very satisfactory. Change will take time and should be done in school programs. There needs to be more integration of community issues into the school system and vice versa. The community must come to the point of providing its own resources.
- T - It would be nice to have a central committee, but it would never work. But I would like to see more cooperation. The real problem is the Cree/Chipewyan division. We tried for a while to have a Cree chief and a Chipewyan chief, but there are not enough people. Everything always seems to be out of balance regardless of who says anything.
- T - The whole village should work together through a central committee. A long time ago we had a MacKay Committee and we were all mixed together. Then the Metis pulled out saying that the Metis Association gave them more than Indian Affairs gave us. Since then, we have not been together.
- T - Things should stay separate because people cannot get along. Some people get treated good and some don't.
- W - There needs to be cooperation between Treaties and Metis and between families within these groups, and a straightening out of who is boss. Neither the Metis Association President nor the Chief is doing anything.

As for myself, I am not relevant to either the Treaties or the Metis. Who do I talk to? There should be a community committee comprised of all segments of the village, including whites.

- W - Separation is better because this is the only way that fighting can be quelled. If everything was together, there would be continual fighting.
- T - When we lived together we had no major problem. I am not sure why we separated. I see no problem with the Metis, Whites or anything.
- T - The present system will not work for the future. We need better leadership working together. The Band can do nothing by itself.

The people should have knowledge of what is going on. They themselves should have basic life skills training or expose them to any training which would get them involved in their community. A community planning workshop would be helpful.

A community committee should be formalized without destroying the Council or the Association. The Community Committee should have official legal status at least as far as being an advisory board to Municipal Affairs. If a structure were worked out with local people, they could institute it and make it work themselves.

- T - It would be better to separate the Metis and Treaties each to have their own meeting. We can cooperate, but it would be better to stay separate.
- T - We should have a community committee to deal with things of common interest. The Council and the Association should be kept.
- T - The way it is now is OK. The Metis have different idea.

Government

To the vast majority of residents of Ft. MacKay, 'government' is a complete mystery. By and large, people have little or no understanding of how government is organized or how it works. There is no knowledge of the different levels of government or how governments relate to politically defined territories such as Improvement Districts, Municipalities, Provinces or Countries. Nor do people tend to relate

various levels of government to different jurisdictions or responsibilities. 'Government' tends to be a "catch all" phrase which refers to that aspect of the Larger Society which is "supposed to take care of us".

Let us begin by looking at the comments and remarks made by residents of MacKay in relation to "government".

- M - It is hard to see government people except when they are called for a specific need.
- M - The Alberta Housing Corporation does no regular maintenance. They only respond to emergencies. Canada Works projects work on every house in MacKay except the AHC houses.
- M - There are big problems with Fish and Wildlife. The minute we don't work the trapline, we lose it. This interferes with keeping our jobs. Yet, when I am 60 or 70 years old, I will have nothing to live on. I won't have a trap line.
- W - The Alberta Department of Transport is not doing a decent job. They went over the road last summer with a grader and pulled rocks onto the road. I hit the rocks and ruined the undercarriage on my car. I attempted to contact highways representatives in McMurray and all the way to the Minister. There was no access at any level.
- W - Forestry should be kept here. Government should have the physical presence of at least one organization here. The village warrants no other type of government service.
- M - Forestry is OK, but Alberta Transportation does a rotten job plowing the highway.
- W - Division of jurisdiction between federal and provincial governments provides a sour attitude on the part of the Metis. Forestry fills a number of gaps in the general day to day function of the community.
- T - Indian Affairs never assists us with anything. However, this could be a problem with the Band Council rather than with DIAND.

There are lots of problems with Fish and Wildlife. Every problem costs another taxi to go to town to straighten it out.

- T - The new Forestry guys have been here for several months and have not even come to the houses to introduce themselves.
- T - The major problem with government is that it is always telling lies. They have made it so that people no longer bother to attend meetings. They are always waiting. They treat us like children to whom you tell them to sit down and keep quiet and we'll give you a candy.
- T - Fish and wildlife is a problem. Things used to be good when it was all with Forestry. Now even Treaties need a permit for fishing and have to tag nets. Who can pay the cab fare to get the permit? Fish and Wildlife officers have been destroying nets belonging to Treaties.
- T - Government in general just keeps on going ahead and doing things without informing us let alone seeking our views. With all the money that is being taken out of the area, why are services not being provided?

We should be compensated for the loss of game and berries and the general destruction of the way we lived.

- T - Government does not serve us at all. People on welfare do not get half enough to live on (i.e. people who cannot work). The federal standards are even lower than the provincial.

Government does not inform us of what is going on around us.

We have no idea what AOSERP is doing. You see them around all the time, but you don't know what they are doing. I asked one fellow what he was doing and I just got brushed off. AOSERP is also on the traplines, often disturbing them, and the trappers are not even informed.

- T - Fish and Wildlife took my trapline from me for failure to use it enough. They don't explain things. They help southern whites before us. We don't want to pay for a fish net permit.
- T - AOSERP has never done anything, not even inform us concerning their findings. The collars they are putting on animals are killing them because they don't stretch as the animal grows. We have found two dead moose this year strangled by the collar. The same is true of a wolf my uncle William killed this year.

W - People have a difficult time dealing with government agencies at arms length by phone. There is a lack of communication and coordination between government departments.

As with many other groups and agencies, the residents of Ft. MacKay tend to display a very great dependence upon governments. Note that the complaints which people voiced concerning government tend to be extremely specific and finite. They relate to the individuals or agencies with whom contact is very direct and visible. In general, people tend to have a very poor knowledge of rules, regulations and functions of governments which are taken for granted in the Larger Society. The Alberta Forestry Service is the only agency with any continuing presence in Ft. MacKay. People tend to see Forestry as being the manifestation of government. Residents voice their concerns, problems and frustrations to the Forestry officers or to the local school teachers simply because the average resident has no idea of how to approach the appropriate division of the bureaucracy.

As a generalization to which some exceptions can be made, government (particularly the provincial government) does not deal very adequately with Ft. MacKay. From the politicians to the personnel from line agencies, many representatives of government responsible for integral services to the community have never visited the settlement. In most instances, it would be as true to say that Ft. MacKay is as unknown a quantity to government as government is a mystery to residents of Ft. MacKay. And one of the major reasons why many branches of the Alberta government can sustain the alienation of Ft. MacKay without experiencing serious consequences is simply that at present the residents of the community do not have the knowledge or skills to make their voices heard. Any southern community possessing the exposure, sophistication and skills required to state their case clearly would not tolerate the deaf ear of government which is the norm in Ft. MacKay. Surely a government which reaps such incredible economic benefits from the very "back yard" of a community

whose way of life virtually has been turned upside down has a responsibility equally as systematically to provide knowledge, skills and opportunities required by residents of Ft. MacKay to adapt to the new life style as painlessly as possible.

Another issue of major importance to Ft. MacKay is the fact that the community is divided between two governmental jurisdictions. The federal government has responsibility to the Treaty Indians of the settlement. At the same time, because there is no Indian reserve in Ft. MacKay, the provincial government has total jurisdiction in the settlement. However, on a practical, day-to-day basis, the respective federal and provincial agencies tend to act as if the jurisdictional issue were unclear. This causes a wide range of needless problems for residents of the community. It also demands that in order to avoid total chaos, the two levels of government must coordinate their involvement in the settlement. To date, federal and provincial agencies each have tended to operate in Ft. MacKay as if the other did not exist. The effect of this exclusiveness is only to support, or worse yet, to create more factionalism within the community.

These observations are not intended to be moralistic. Even less so are they intended to reflect a "bleeding heart", "do gooder" attempt to finger an innocent government as the "bad boy" in the whole affair. But it might not be so unreasonable to expect a serious attempt to be made by a responsible government to provide the means for the community, if residents so wish, to attain the dignity and independence it once knew previous to the encroachment of the Larger Society.

To the credit of some individuals, over the last year, the provincial government has begun to respond to community need and initiative by working more intensively with residents of Ft. MacKay, among other things, to establish a community plan. Hopefully, this will be only the first step in responding in a thoughtful, coordinated and enlightened manner to problems which the community wishes to resolve "without handouts".

Companies

The major resource companies wield political power. Following are comments of residents of Ft. MacKay concerning Syncrude and GCOS.

- W - GCOS causes pollution. The plant is a shambles. Legislation should be tighter with regard to pollution. And it must be enforced.

The companies have a social responsibility. Hiring should be fair. Immigrants should take second place to locals in terms of hiring.

The companies should leave the land to live on without it being ripped up or poisoned.

- T - The company (Syncrude) treated me well. They have to give me compensation for my trapline. I received \$10,000, but I should have had more. I had a nice life on the trap line. It was close to here. They gave the money at so much each month. The most important thing about the trap line was not the money, but it was a good way to live. After I spend the \$10,000 what am I going to do? I would be still trapping for another nine or ten years.

- M - The companies do no job at all. I have been trying to get on with Syncrude for a long time. I only have grade 7, but I could go over to Syncrude and show these guys how to use the equipment. The problem may be the union.

- W - Syncrude has not been pulling their weight in MacKay. The company should have more involvement here. There is no program for everybody to work on the same shift, thus making common transportation feasible. Many men will not work because of transportation problems. Why should a guy stay in camp only 13 miles from home?

The NO TRESPASSING signs were not bright in terms of public relations with the people of MacKay.

- W - The large companies should actually do something. The theory of native hiring and the practice are worlds apart. The company does not go out of its way to hire native persons. They have not really tried. There is strong anti-native feeling at the working level.

- W - There is a strong need for effective liason. Syncrude and the community do not understand each other. Issues include:
- (a) minimum grade ten for employment;
 - (b) Syncrude does not have a realistic view of native people. The native people they have working in community relations are urban natives who don't know anything more about MacKay than the white people do;
 - (c) provision should be made to get work patterns which are in accordance with native life styles;
 - (d) Syncrude has made no real effort to help MacKay with amenities as it has done in Ft. McMurray;
 - (e) People have applied for jobs and there has been no follow-up;
 - (f) None of the companies have shown the same interest in MacKay as they have shown in McMurray.
- W - The companies don't do much of anything for MacKay. GCOS initially disturbed the way of life for the people more than Syncrude, but did nothing to compensate the community.
- McMurray receives from the companies because it is conspicuous. Acclaim is instant.
- T - People now do weekend hunting and trapping. Everybody has been given a fair chance by the companies. But people don't hold jobs. They don't want to work.
- Syncrude won't take you without grade ten regardless of what you can do. Besides, who wants to drop from \$9.00 per hour to \$4.00 per hour?
- T - Syncrude has promised all kinds of things, particularly jobs and have not come through. Three weeks ago, they came to the village to get three seamstresses, and now it has been dropped again. Look at the broken promises with the janitorial service. They must also drop their grade ten requirement and focus only upon ability. They should not limit training to heavy equipment. There are a lot of other fields people are interested in.
- Why can't transportation be provided to MacKay when Syncrude and GCOS both supply it to and for McMurray.
- T - The companies should pay a royalty to MacKay instead of to the Government.

- T - *There are no real problems with Syncrude. But then again, nobody has gotten on with them either.*
- T - *Relations with the companies are not good. We cannot just go in and look for a job. This could be a problem with Manpower. They will not hire directly from the company office.*

The grade ten requirement is crazy. Some of the guys here have more experience than the people who are doing some types of training.

The people from Syncrude do not keep us well informed. They do not keep promises. The janitorial service is a good example.

From the foregoing remarks, one can see that the following issues are of importance to the relationship between Ft. MacKay and the companies.

First, many people from Ft. MacKay have adopted the attitude that the companies have an obligation to provide anything which suits the whim of the populace. The view is, "the company is big; it has lots of money".

Second, employment programs are disappointing. People in Ft. McMurray feel that GCOS has not even made the effort. This is attributed recurrently to the fragile economic condition of GCOS as representatives of the company have alleged.

On the other hand, Syncrude has tried through very costly programs to effect native employment. With Syncrude the problems appear to be:

- (a) No transportation is provided even if people do want to work.
- (b) The grade ten qualification is difficult for most people in Ft. MacKay to meet.
- (c) Syncrude believes that Ft. MacKay and other native communities have understood their programs and regulations. This certainly is not the case.

(d) From the perspective of community residents, Syncrude has made many promises to Ft. MacKay which have not been followed through. One reason for this may be that the persons which Syncrude place in the position of dealing with native communities belong to the middle echelon of management. Communities force these company representatives "into corners" and promises are forthcoming. When the representatives go back to deal with upper management or with the persons responsible for actual operations, difficulties appear to emerge in relation to practical follow through on these commitments. Attitudes toward native employees differ in various segments and at various levels of Syncrude.

Third, the companies complain that native labor is neither dependable nor consistent -- a point which is sometimes true. The converse is equally true. The companies have been undependable and inconsistent in terms of relations with Ft. MacKay.

Fourth, the responsibilities of the major companies with regard to Ft. MacKay have not been defined clearly by government during the initial period of negotiation and before operations begin. Any responsibilities which are defined tend to pertain to Treaty Indians rather than to whole communities.

Native Associations

The Indian Association of Alberta and the Metis Association have done a great service on a provincial level in terms of making the general plight of native people known to the public and to government. However, the people of Ft. MacKay seem to see these organizations as being much the same as government in that they are "southern" oriented. While they have been of great public relations value and similarly of help in the formal political arena, they have done no more than government or industry to deliver skills and services to Ft. MacKay.

- M - *The Metis Association does not do a good job. They hardly even show up around here. It would be good to see everybody working together.*
- M - *If you want something from the Metis Association, they might come. But otherwise you never see them.*
- T - *The associations are irrelevant to me as a person. They come to the odd meeting.*
- M - *The Metis Association does not do a good job. We cannot get housing material to fix up the house. I finally received some from Canada Works. They have promised again and again, but we have never seen anything. The only time you see Stan is when he needs a vote.*
- M - *The Metis Association does not pay anything. The Chief is well paid. The Association does not do much for us. One can call them all the time, but it does no good.*
- T - *We don't even know who the Indian Association is.*
- T - *The Association is irrelevant. They have listened to our grievances and have done nothing about them, just like government.*
- T - *The activities and actions of the Association have been increasing over the past year, though they still do not reach the people. William Beaver is starting to do a good job.*

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations appear appropriate to the theme of "political organization" in Ft. MacKay.

First, Ft. MacKay has real problems with social control. Residents of the community perceive the problems, but because of the prevalence of traditional values and attitudes, feel that they are relatively powerless to cope with the issues.

Second, the police are an alien influence in terms of social control. Nevertheless, as the life style of Ft. MacKay continues to adapt to that of the Larger Society, the police are going to be increasingly required for purposes of social control. Now is the time for the R.C.M.P. and the local leaders in Ft. MacKay to enter

into a series of discussions to resolve the question of the relationship of policing to the community's need for social control. Each needs to outline its expectations for the other.

Third, as Ft. MacKay emerges into increasing participation in the Larger Society, more pressure will be placed upon nominal leaders "to lead" as that concept is understood by members of the Larger Society. We believe that the desire exists among leaders, but the skills and knowledge are lacking. An intensive program of practical and elementary leadership training is necessary immediately in Ft. MacKay.

Fourth, the community has indicated a desire to enhance cooperation between factions through the formation of a community committee or association. This committee should be supported by government and industry from inception to operation and maintenance. One integral factor required to allow establishment of a community committee is the bolstering of the Local branch of the Metis Association in Ft. MacKay -- the Red River Point Society. Initially, the Society requires funds and leadership training in order to participate in a community organization on an equal footing with the Treaty segment of the community.

Fifth, until the recent fieldwork and initiation of a Community Plan in response to the desire of residents of Ft. MacKay to have a strong input into their own future, the Provincial Government has tended to be absent from involvement in Ft. MacKay. More cynical observers may interpret this absence as lack of concern or commitment. Perhaps a more accurate interpretation would be that Ft. MacKay has been unable to establish liaison with the appropriate levels or segments of government. And conversely, government has not known how to communicate with or to understand and interpret Ft. MacKay. The extensive fieldwork leading to this report, the information contained in the document, and the intensive work and program implementation resulting from this government initiative provide the first tentative steps in correcting this oversight. Now that the ground work has been

done, a more extensive long-term commitment by the provincial government is possible, and certainly ought to be encouraged.

Sixth, Ft. McMurray domiciles a labor pool some 50 kilometers from the GCOS and Syncrude sites. Ft. MacKay domiciles a labor force approximately 20 kilometers from these plants. The companies make it possible for the Ft. McMurray labor force to get to work by providing transportation. Also, community amenities and improvements are provided for Ft. McMurray (over \$400,000 annually by Syncrude alone). In terms of company benefits, Ft. MacKay does not exist. According to one Syncrude official, "Ft. MacKay is the responsibility of government". Even though there is a great deal of truth in this statement, we assume that a responsible attitude would focus upon stopping the "passing of the buck". If government and industry continue to throw stones at each other, the problems of Ft. MacKay will only intensify.

Seventh, in terms of future resource development, including Shell Oil, GCOS expansion and Syncrude expansion, the Provincial Government has a responsibility to ensure that the problems and concerns of Ft. MacKay are heard directly from the community level, not only from provincial or regional organizations. The legitimate issues must then be translated into action and negotiated into company contracts or legislation, whichever method appears appropriate. If these concerns are not cared for before company operations commence, they certainly will not be confronted except at the leisure of the companies.

Eighth, Ft. MacKay has some real problems and needs. Experience in other northern Alberta communities teaches that if these needs are not met according to the "politics of cooperation", they will be cast into the mold of the "politics of confrontation". Ignorance and neglect are the only excuses to radicalize communities in the "have" province of Alberta. Why not make sure that the "politics of confrontation" which were born in the turmoil of the Sixties die with the Seventies. History also teaches that nobody from the "grass roots" community wins in the context of confrontation.

WORLD VIEW

Introduction

When we speak of "world view", we refer to the way in which people explain or rationalize their relationship to the cosmos. It is an attempt to integrate various aspects of life and to provide them with meaning. The need to provide meaning to one's existence appears to be a common trait in all cultures. As a result, the central focus of world view addresses the question, "who am I?" "What is the meaning of life?" To repeat, people of all cultures address this issue in some form in an attempt to provide an explanation of why life is as it is.

Ideology

Aspects of traditional ideology are difficult to find in Ft. MacKay at the present time. As suggested by informant comments in a previous chapter, ideology tends toward the pursuit of materialism in the community. The only two indications that even remnants remain are that a small amount of "Cree medicine" is still practiced and some scattered traditional beliefs concerning the supernatural still prevail.

The strongest symbol of religious belief in the community is the existence of the Roman Catholic Church and the presence of the priest. Also, some evangelical Protestant sects occasionally enter the village in order to proselytize. However, the prominent role of the Catholic Church appears to be diminishing. Only two or three families in Ft. MacKay remain strong adherents of the Church, though the residents of the settlement are nominal Catholics. Visible signs of religious affiliation tend to be reserved for funeral or other special events, though the village priest teaches religious education classes once

a week in the school. Nevertheless, the church has played a strong historic role in the community.

Treaties

To the majority of the people of Ft. Mackay, Treaties are not "contracts" made in a historical legal context, but are a category of person. There are "Treaties", Metis and Whites. The concept has assumed almost "racist" rather than legal overtones.

One of the great services which could be done for Ft. Mackay would be to educate residents concerning the true meaning and implications of Treaties, particularly Treaty number 8. If this could be accomplished in a factual and unbiased context, the positive implications for inter-personal interaction in the community would be incalculable. Not only should it be taught to the youth in school, but also to the adults in workshops.

Old/New

In order to gain an insight into the world view of people of Ft. MacKay, we asked school children to consult with their parents to compare the old way of life to the new way. Following is a rendering of the results.

(1) The EnvironmentNEW

- Sometimes we can smell the sulphide fumes from GCOS
- The river water is dirty and can't be used for drinking.
- The trees have been all cut down at GCOS and Syncrude.
- There are fewer animals now.

(2) Where People Lived

- People lived in Ft. MacKay.

(3) Types of Homes

- They live in nice houses, but some people live in old houses.

(4) Locations in the Village.

- There are houses scattered on the north side and on the south side of the village.

OLD

- The air was fresh and clean.
- The river water was used for drinking.
- The land was all bush.
- There were more animals before.
- Some people lived across the river in the bush. Some people lived in tents up the river in the summer and moved back to MacKay in the winter.
- The people used to live in cabins, shacks, tents and teepees.
- There were houses near the church and on the north side. There were only a few houses on the south side.

(5) Language.NEW

- Old people speak Cree and Chipewyan. Our parents speak English with some Cree and Chipewyan.

OLD

- Everyone spoke Cree or Chipewyan with only some English.

(6) Transportation.

- Most people use cars and trucks and there are a lot of planes and helicopters. In the winter most people use skidoos, but there are still a few dog teams.

- Most people travelled by canoes and boats in the summer. In the winter, they used dog teams. Some people had horses. There were a few planes. Freight was brought in by barge.

(7) Education.

- There has been a school in Mackay since 1950. The school now goes up to grade eight.

- Parents would teach their kids skills like hunting, trapping, cooking, sewing and so on. Even when the school started, some people went only for a few years because they spent a lot of time in the bush.

(8) Work.

- Some people work for companies like Bechtel. They work on government projects. Some people have jobs like teachers aides. In the summer, many men fight fires. Some people hunt and trap.

- Most people hunted and trapped. They also fought fires in the summer. Other people worked on barges and at odd jobs.

(9) Entertainment/Recreation.

- Most people go to town for their entertainment. In Mackay, there are sports for younger people. At home some people watch TV and some people have parties on the weekend. Cards are played a lot.

- Most people made their own entertainment. The old church was the centre for entertainment. Everyone played baseball. People made their own music and danced square dances and jigs.

(10) Medical.NEW,

- nearly every day a government taxi takes someone to the doctor or the hospital in McMurray. The health nurse has her own trailer and comes into Mackay once every two weeks.

(11) Police.

- The R.C.M.P. patrol the village regularly. They come immediately when called on an emergency.

(12) Store.

- There is a store and a cafe. It is easy to get food from town if you have transportation.

(13) Clothes.

- Most clothes are bought in stores in town or from catalogues. Moccasins, mukluks and mitts are made by some people in the winter.

OLD

- In an emergency, a plane would be sent. Some old people knew Cree medicine. Mrs. Faichney was the health nurse at her house. In the summer, a boat could be used. Sometimes in winter a road had to be plowed on the river.

- The R.C.M.P. came only about once a month or when called in an emergency. They came by boats, plane or by car when there was a winter road.

- The Hudsons Bay Company ran a store for a long time until 1975. People hunted and trapped for some food, but bought basics like flour, sugar, tea, lard, tobacco, etc. as well as hunting equipment.

- Most people made their own clothes from moose hide or cloth they bought from a store.

Following are the self-explanatory views of people of Ft. Mackay concerning the change in life style which they are experiencing.

- M - I have lived most of my life in the bush. I raised my children there until they had to go to school. One could make a good living in the bush by trapping and fishing.*
- M - More plants will be good because they will provide more jobs for the children who are now growing up. They will*

be able to live here and work. There will be more jobs available for educated people so we all don't have to be laborers.

- M - Before the plants came, it was a quiet community. Since the plants and the roads, drinking has increased 100%. I don't want to see change. Look at McMurray. It used to be really nice. Now I could not stand to live there. Change has occurred too suddenly. Everybody in the village has had good jobs at one time or another, but people can't cope with the pace.

There is really very little that MacKay can do to cope with change except face up to the inevitable. There was little trouble prior to the plants. Since then, some lives have been ruined and even some people have died because of alcohol. Things are rough now and will only get worse. It will be hard to adjust to more intrusion from the outside. Dangerous strangers come into the community now. They cause trouble and then leave.

- M - Now there are too many people coming into MacKay. Rough guys from the camp come here and get in fights. There is more money and more booze. A lot of white people are trying to buy land here for speculation. We have to learn how to plan for better housing and better leadership. I would stay here even if great changes took place because I'm scared to live elsewhere. The plants are good because they have brought more work.

- W - If MacKay continues to exist, people will find the village so unlivable, that they will urbanize. More white people are invading the community. There is nothing the village can do to keep the place as they like it, knowing the "due process of government". If they don't get us this year, they will get us next year. It is only a matter of time.

- T - There is work available now for people who want jobs. We get a good highway only twelve miles away. If the Treaties and Metis cooperate and work in one group, there should not be any problem keeping the village the way we like it.

- T - More people are working. The standard of living improved. The young people will have a better life.
- T - Since opening the plants, people have had a lot rougher and tougher life. The road brought too much drinking and broken homes.
- W - Too much money has come into the community too fast.
- W - The attitudes of people have changed in the last ten years. Before everybody was together and worked together as a community. Now they are individually for themselves. Community life is breaking down.

There is nothing the people in MacKay can do to keep the village as they like it. Now they are "tied between two plants". Eventually there will be more plants. Things are now to the point where we are "tied between two worlds." People want to keep the old ways, but at the same time, they like the comforts that the white man's life has to offer. They can't have it both ways. The old way is dying with the old people. The new way is growing with the young people.

- T - If more plants are put up, things will get even worse. White men will probably evict us and MacKay will eventually disappear because the land is not ours.

There have been killings even. Welfare has not been good; government has imposed. MacKay is getting worse even daily. Each morning I get up I think it will be a better day, but nothing changes for the better -- always for the worse.

- T - Since the road came in, it has been easier to get to Ft. McMurray to hospital and shops. Prior to that travel was only by airlift or dog team. Living is a lot easier now. I would like to see a townsite close to MacKay to have better access to food and other supplies. Through trapping I just eked out an existence. I couldn't buy everything I wanted or needed. I don't want my boy to trap.
- T - I have more white friends now. Jobs have been created for women as well as for men.

Growth and the Future.

In the context of working with the community to establish a Community Plan, residents of Ft. MacKay were asked to give their views concerning the possible future and growth of the settlement.

- M - We have to say that we want more people because that will happen anyway. We would like the services that more people would bring, but we would also like the village to stay as it is.*
- M - For my part, I would open the village to create a little town here. There would be no discrimination between whites and natives.*
- M - I prefer to keep MacKay the same way as it is, but we would like running water and sewage.*
- M - I don't mind it growing a bit, but not too much. Nobody bothers you now.*
- W - The community should not be phased out. There should be a certain degree of freedom of movement for people. Services requiring a slightly larger population will not be available if there is no growth. Moderate growth should be allowed if services can sustain it. I am afraid that the Community Plan is just a way to legislate boundaries for the village so that the companies can mine right up to the outer limits. I don't approve of that.*
- T - I think there should be a community plan. I would favor moving to an urban area for myself. For the people, they should be here for another 100 years. If I had a family, I would stay in MacKay or go to Namur. If a person from MacKay moved to an urban center, after a while it would not matter any more what he did. Not too many people will want to move from this location.*
- W - The community should stay the same. Leave it as it. One cannot have segregation such as allowing only native people to move in. It is not practical. If segregation is to be enacted, growth should be cut off now. The people need time to decide their future. Let them work it out themselves. Don't change the village even through provision of basic amenities.*

- M - Just keep it like it is. Don't even let other native people move in.
- W - The village will obviously have to conform to some degree to the resource development pattern of the future. Yet, the preservation of the area as a village is necessary. We have no right to destroy family units like this.
- W - The community cannot stay as it is. Thus, a restricted growth pattern should be allowed. The people coming in should be the type of persons the community wants. The influx must be done on a "trickle" basis rather than a sudden large influx.

Dwellings should be permanent rather than mobile. The influx should be restricted to native people. Growth should be regulated in quantity and quality. If MacKay is to be phased out, there should be some provision for relocation of the Metis. If it is eliminated, the Metis and Treaties should be allowed to relocate together.

If MacKay is eliminated, the new community must be properly planned.

- W - If people are moved without full knowledge of the implications, it would be the end of the community. If I were them, I would move to Namur Lake as soon as possible. But this doesn't consider the fate of the Metis. And another move for any of them, and they would not survive. The community was hit with encroachment about ten years ago. Adjustment has taken place at an incredible rate. Can more be expected? I personally prefer modest growth to get services.
- W - I can't see relocation because I can't see the older people moving. Therefore, leave the older people here and allow more native people to move in. People here will not integrate into an urban setting and Namur Lake is too far from amenities.
- W - Ft. MacKay should stay as it is because it is the only home that people know. They will not move away.
- T - The village should be kept just the way it is now. We have been here since the beginning, so we should not have to move if the issue were forced because we are not on

the Reserve. But I would rather stay here.

- T - Keep the village as it is and add services. If we let people come in, we will be crowded out. We are fighting enough among ourselves without bringing more people in.
- W - MacKay should be left as it is. If it is going to fade away on its own, that is OK over a long period of time.
- T - The bigger the population, the better. There will be better services.
- T - My grandfather was the first to come to Ft. MacKay. I don't want to have to leave. Why should white men come and kick us all out?
- T - MacKay should stay as it is. Don't even bring the native guys up from the south. We have enough trouble of our own.
- W - It can be viewed two ways.
(a) Let the village stay as it is. It is an escape route where they do not have to face reality.
(b) If they are moved, there has to be something like Namur Lake which is predeveloped. You can't just kick them back to the bush to fend for themselves.

Conclusion

Hoebel (1966:559) defines acculturation as:

The process of interaction between two societies in which the culture of the society in the subordinate position is drastically modified to conform to the culture of the dominant society.

The material presented above provides a good index of acculturation in Ft. MacKay. We gain an insight into the attitudes of people toward change, growth and the future of the settlement.

Acculturation tends to be a debilitating process for many members of the Little Community and a process taken for granted by

people from the Larger Society. From the comments above, we see indeed the tension and stress produced especially by extremely rapid acculturation.

On the other hand, some people have acculturated to a relatively great degree and appear to be close to accepting the new way of life of the Larger Society. Conversely, these people are the most marginal or deviant in terms of the way of life of tradition. They are truly on the periphery of their own society.

This is an important point, as the implications are far-reaching. The thing we must recognize concerning these marginal people is that because they are opting for the lifestyle of the Larger Society, they begin to feel uncomfortable in their home community. People in the home community will see to it that discomfort is felt. However, in the process of drifting away from the conservative core of their society (that is, of turning their back upon traditional values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours), they tend to lose prestige, influence and power internally within the community. Paradoxically, they gain prestige in the Larger Society because as they operate in the way the Larger Society demands, they are elected to, or placed in, "positions of leadership" within their community. The problem is, the Larger Society believes (and often really needs to believe) that such persons are in the "mainstream" of their society. In fact, the Larger Society could not interact with the real conservative core (the actual seat of power and influence) of the community even if it wanted to because the individuals at that core do not manifest the qualities and characteristics which "outsiders" expect of "leaders". Nor would the "conservative core" desire interaction with the Larger Society. Consequently, the Larger Society finds the "leaders" it is looking for and the real core elements of the community remain invisible.

As overall change continues within a given society, "formal" leaders gain and consolidate more and more power as understood by the Larger Society. In the meantime, they do function in the community

to deflect the focus of "outsiders" from where "the real action" occurs.

If we recognize that the people interacting openly with the Larger Society are marginal to their culture, we can make a realistic appraisal of "where we are" in relation to the Little Community. It is when we fail to realize that acculturation creates marginal people that our assessments of what the community "is all about" leads us astray.

EPILOGUE

This document presents a very selective rendering of a vast body of data and knowledge from Ft. MacKay. Many portions of the document may appear to be negative or critical of the stances adopted by the Larger Society in relation to Ft. MacKay. This is partially true for two reasons; (a) the focus of the work is itself a response to the difficulties which residents of the community are experiencing. Indeed, many positive aspects of community life are readily apparent. And (b), criticism of the manner in which the Larger Society reacts to, or sometimes appears to ignore, the plight of Ft. MacKay is justly deserved. Nevertheless, a new consciousness of the needs of Ft. MacKay seems to be pervading government and industry so that the future appears much less pessimistic.

We would warn that anybody who reads only selected portions of this document without providing for the integration of the entire body of information and views presented will be misled. Both appreciation and solutions of the problems faced by the community must be attained holistically.

Furthermore, we return to re-emphasize the point made in the Preface. This document tends to focus upon providing an insight into "the world" as seen "through the eyes of the people of Ft. MacKay". It is equally imperative that the people of Ft. MacKay be made aware of "reality" as seen through the eyes of members of the Larger Society, and particularly as these versions of "reality" are articulated by governments and industries. But the latter is not the purpose of this document. This study attempts only to educate agencies, organizations and individuals from the Larger Society concerning some basic aspects of life in Ft. MacKay. The reverse process of education is occurring at present through continued work in the community in terms which hopefully are effective and meaningful to residents of the settlement. We are attempting

to bridge the gap of understanding in both directions through means which will communicate accurately and honestly to both the Larger Society and the Little Community.

Again, some readers may object to the perspectives of the residents of Ft. MacKay, arguing that these perceptions are not "true". To such objections, we would respond in two ways. First, as suggested above, we have the obligation to present the perspectives of the Larger Society to the Little Community as clearly, directly and honestly as possible. Differences then may be assessed and perhaps in some cases may be reconciled.

Second, and of far greater importance, we must recognize that people of all cultures (including our own) may coincidentally base their behaviour upon what is true, but much more frequently act upon what they believe to be true. In other words, one key to understanding the behaviour of people is to know not "what is true", but what they believe to be true. This document attempts to make possible at least the elementary foundations of such understanding.

The people of Ft. MacKay must take the responsibility for initiating solutions to their own problems. But, for everything in which the community takes the initiative, government and industry must be willing and prepared to respond. When people in Ft. MacKay choose to sit back and place the responsibility for solving community issues in the hands of government and industry, they are party to perpetuating their own problems. On the basis of past performance, we know for sure that neither government nor industry is capable of unilaterally solving the problems of any community. The saviors of the community must ultimately be the residents themselves.

But the community can only take the initiative. It does not possess the required knowledge and skills to organize and sustain independence and self-determination. It does not have the financial resources to acquire the amenities needed to support an industrial-

ized lifestyle. This leads us to the responsibility of government and industry.

First, governments and industry have the resource expertise to impart the knowledge and to teach the skills. The primary objective is to equip the people of Ft. MacKay to participate in, or to cope with, the encroaching lifestyle of the Larger Society. This process, however, must be in response to community initiative in order to maintain a pace which is meaningful to the residents. A special program is required on this level. But a short-term, large scale, high budget "community development strategy" would be destructive to this process. On the contrary, only a patient, low profile, "high commitment" response would be constructive.

Second, government and industry alone have the financial resources to provide the community amenities and infrastructure required to enhance and to support participation in an industrialized lifestyle. However, in this instance, special programs are not required. Indeed upgrading of infrastructure should proceed hand in hand with skill development rather than taking precedence. Consequently, this also will be a long-term, incremental process, the specific aspects of which should remain tied to the normal function of line departments over a reasonable number of years. The most compelling requirement concerning amenities and infrastructure is not a special "crash" program of assistance, but is for government honestly to inform the community what facilities are possible (or impossible) to provide, under what conditions, and according to what approximate schedule may they be anticipated. The key issue is community knowledge of government commitment and intent, not immediacy.

One final word. Some say that in relation to the dynamics of oil sands development and the overall provincial or national socio-economic well-being, the 204 people of Ft. MacKay are a mere drop in the bucket. "Why should 204 people be allowed to stand in the way of a project that affects the lives of tens of thousands?"

If the question is posed seriously, the answer is that the people of Ft. MacKay are adapting to change at an amazingly rapid pace. They do not appear to desire to stand in the way of "progress". All that they ask is that if they are going to be deprived of their way of living, that they be afforded the opportunities and benefits of the Larger Society.

If the question is capricious, we have noted that to leave the leather chair in the high-rise office building to participate in a traditional lifestyle is an amazing stimulus to sobriety.

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APPENDIX A

HOUSE DESIGN EXERCISE

Instructions

This paper is your yard. Draw your house and any other buildings where you would like them. Design your house as if a helicopter had lifted the roof off and you were looking down from the helicopter.

- Things to consider (suggested by students)
 - logs, plywood, stucco, frame, trailer.
 - heat - propane furnace, fuel, wood stove.
 - rooms (How many people will live in your house?)
 - doors and windows
 - furniture
 - cooking (oil, propane, wood, electric)
 - bathroom (sewage, water lines, outdoors)
 - storage

- (1) List the people who will live in the house.
- (2) From what materials will you build your house?
- (3) Who will build your house?
- (4) What kind of bathroom will you have? Will your house have a toilet?
- (5) How will you heat your house?
- (6) What kind of stove will you cook with?
- (7) What furniture will you need?
- (8) Who would you like to live near you, but not in your house?
- (9) How close together should houses be?
 - (a) Rod's trailer from Marilyn's (15 ft.)
 - (b) James Gradejambe from Jerry Boucher (150 ft.)
 - (c) Modeste's house from Gary's old log house (300 ft.)
 - (d) Henry Shott from Narcisse Shott (one third mile)

Responses

- (1) My wife and I - 1
 - Granpa/Grandma - 3
 - Dad/Mom - 2
 - Kids - 2
 - Relatives - 4
 - Friends - 1

- (2) Frame - 5
 - Cement Foundation - 1
 - Plywood - 3
 - Logs - 1
 - Stucco - 2
- (3) The company I rent it from or the Associations - 3
 - Carpenters - 3
 - Friends - 1
 - Treaty people - 1
 - Government - 3
 - Grandpa - 1
- (4) Inside bathroom - 5
 - Outside and inside bathroom - 5
 - Outside - 1
- (5) Propane furnace - 9
 - Oil Stove - 2
 - Wood - 1
- (6) Electric - 5
 - Wood - 1
 - Propane - 6
- (7) Table - 11
 - Chairs - 8
 - Couches - 11
 - Television - 8
 - Reds - 10
 - Coffee Tables - 5
 - Lamps - 2
 - Shelves - 3
 - Stereo - 7
 - Armchair - 6
 - Radio - 1
 - Dresser - 3
 - End Table - 1
 - Refrigerator - 1
- (8) Anybody - 4
 - Mom - 1
 - Relatives - 3
 - Friends - 1
 - No newcomers - 1
- (9) (a) We could have our relatives near - 1
 - (b) Not too far away - 1
 - Not close like Ft. McMurray - 1

- 158 -

Not close enough to burn - 1

If one drinks, the others won't sleep good - 5

(c) Closer would be noisy - 2

(d) There could be a big playground - 1

It would be quieter - 1

The rooms or items included in the house plans included:

(a) Living room - 12

(b) Warehouse - 6

(c) Garage - 5

(d) Closet - 3

(e) Washer and Dryer - 1

(f) Kitchen - 12

(g) Bathroom (inside) - 6

(h) Hallway - 6

(i) Bedrooms - 11

(j) Visitors Bedroom - 4

(k) My room - 4

(l) Furnace room - 4

(m) Outside bathroom - 1

(n) Inside and outside bathrooms - 4

(o) Dog House - 3

(p) Dining room - 1

(q) Porch - 1

(r) Playroom - 1

(s) Storage - 3

(t) Skidoo Shed - 1

(u) Girls Bedroom/Boys' bedroom - 1

(v) Parking lot - 1

(w) Gate/fence - 1

APPENDIX B

RECREATION PROJECT

PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING

FT. MCKAY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Prepared by

The Ft. McKay and District Recreation Board

October 10, 1977

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Objective:

Construction of community recreation facilities in Ft. McKay and establishment of a Youth Involvement Program to acquaint residents with various forms of organized sports and use of recreational facilities.

Constraints:

The proposed project requires only initial funding and consequently is not a recurring, annual program.

Sponsor:

The Ft. McKay and District Recreation Board.

Endorsed by:

The Ft. McKay Band Council.

The Ft. McKay Metis Association.

Requested Funds:

Community Improvement Program	\$24,000.00
Youth Involvement Program	4,200.00
Administration and Contingency	<u>2,000.00</u>
PROPOSED PROJECT BUDGET	\$30,200.00

PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING

FT. MCKAY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

The Community

The village of Ft. McKay is situated on the Athabasca River approximately thirty-five miles directly north of Ft. McMurray. While the number of persons living in the settlement tends to vary somewhat in relation to the seasons, the permanent population is about 255, roughly 40% of which is Metis, 55% is Treaty and 5% is White.

Ft. McKay is accessible by air or river during certain seasons or by a single road link to Ft. McMurray.

The present settlement has a relatively long history linked closely with the fur trade and to the century-long presence of the Hudson's Bay Company. However, in recent years, traditional life styles have been altered drastically, in general by the exploitation of the oil sands by major industrial groups, and specifically by the extension of the all-weather road to Ft. McKay.

At present, the village is experiencing rapid and demanding social change from the combined impacts of the two

existing oil extraction plants. Other plants expected to become operational during the next twenty years will increase and accelerate the social upheaval to be confronted by residents of the village.

Ft. McKay is not situated on an Indian Reserve. Both the Metis and Treaty segments of the village reside on their respective leases obtained from the Province of Alberta. However, the fact that a legal distinction in status exists between two segments of the village increases the difficulty of obtaining or coordinating adequate provincial or federal funding to meet the needs of the community as a whole. At the same time, the ability of the residents of Ft. McKay to cope successfully with rapid change (and consequently, the future survival of the community) depends absolutely upon enhancing the unity, rather than reinforcing and perpetuating the division, between the Metis and Treaty factions.

The Board

The people of Ft. McKay recognize this problem and have taken the initiative in attempting some solutions. One of these initiatives led to the formation of the Ft. McKay and District Recreation Board. This group is

recognized by the Department of Municipal Affairs as officially representing the recreation and related community interests of the total community, including the surrounding district. The Board consists of Metis, Treaty and White representatives. The current executive includes:

Andrew Boucher - President

Clara Shott - Vice-President

James Boucher - Secretary-Treasurer

Rod Hyde - Member-at-large

The sole objective of the Board is to provide for the recreational needs and general improvement of the community through:

- (1) construction of community social and recreational facilities;
- (2) provision of recreational and social programs for residents of all ages.

To date, the Board has initiated or participated in the following projects:

- (1) Rough construction of a baseball field;
- (2) Total reconstruction and repair of an outdated skating rink at the site of the present school;
- (3) Purchase of hockey equipment for general community use;
- (4) A regular water pumping project to move water

from the Athabasca River for flooding of the existing rink;

- (5) Introduction of new games such as volleyball and football, and improvement of individual skills related to familiar sports such as hockey.

Funding, even for these modest projects, has been difficult for community residents to arrange. In some instances, local labor from other projects has been diverted toward these endeavors. Limited amounts of capital have been provided from Board funds and from the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife.

As these monies have been inadequate even for minimum needs, community residents (particularly the young people) have raised several hundred dollars inside the community through sponsoring of weekly feature movies and occasional bingos. All aspects of these projects (from book-keeping, to the technical skills of movie projection, organization, etc.) have been used formally as practical education projects particularly for school children. The projects have relied also upon organizing a wide variety of assistance from diverse segments of the village.

However, the facilities and programs able to be supported even by this type of total community initiative and effort are minimal. Current funds are exhausted. At present, the sole facilities for recreation in the village include only

the outdoor skating rink (with only an uninsulated shack for changing) and a very primitive baseball field. No playground or indoor recreation facilities are associated with the school in Ft. McKay. Even the skating rink is situated on property owned by the Hudson's Bay Company and notice "to vacate on demand" was received approximately one year ago.

A new school is presently under construction in a new location in the village. This building will be available for occupancy for the 1978-79 school year. The facility will include a small gymnasium, but no playground or outdoor facilities are anticipated.

PROPOSED PROJECT

Scope

The following project is proposed in light of four important issues:

- (1) The relocation and construction of a new school;
- (2) The need to provide adequate playground and general recreation facilities of a varied nature;
- (3) The need to relocate and to integrate all facilities in a central location;

- (4) The need to expose members of the community, particularly the children, to the understanding and use of social and recreational amenities and activities typical of the society currently encroaching upon, and changing, the traditional life style of Ft. McKay.

In accordance with its objectives, the Ft. McKay and District Recreation Board proposes a two-part project consisting of:

- (a) a Community Improvement Project for construction of new facilities;
- (b) a Youth Involvement Program aimed at educating local children in alternate forms of recreation and in use of recreation facilities.

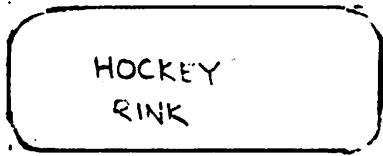
A. Community Improvement Program

Construction of new recreation facilities would serve the additional function of providing a limited number of short-term jobs for local residents. Also, to the greatest extent possible, local materials would be used to maximize the effective use of capital funds.

The project would focus upon the construction of a central playground and recreation area in proximity to the new school. The specific facilities would include:

- (1) A proper baseball diamond;

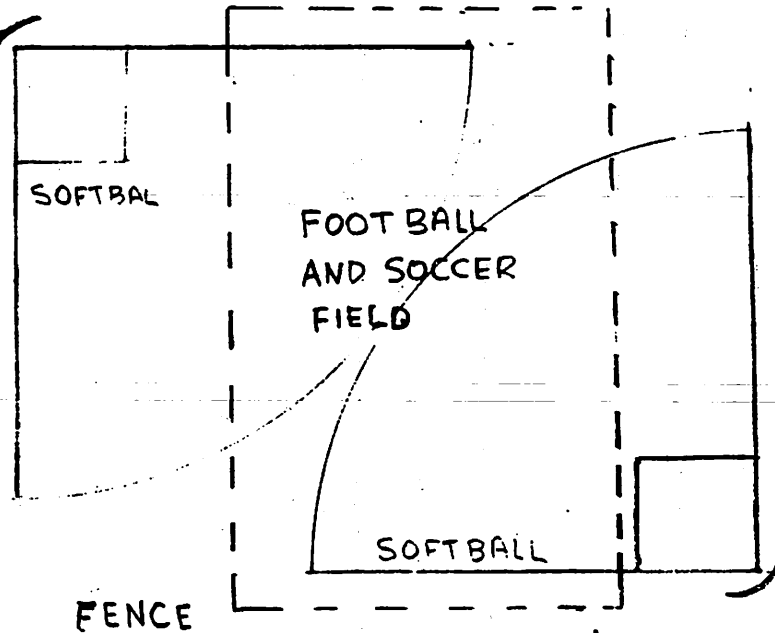
NORTHLAND SCHOOL DIV. #61



MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING, HORSESHOE PDS

SWINGS,
SEE SAW,
SLIPPER,
MONKEY BARS,
AND OTHERS
APPLICABLE

HOLLEY BALL



ROAD ALLOWANCE

PROPOSED RECREATION
IMPROVEMENT AREA

FT. MACKAY AND DISTRICT
RECREATION BOARD

- (2) A combined football/soccer field;
- (3) Installation of swings, see-saws, monkey bars and climbing apparatus, etc.;
- (4) Relocation of the outdoor skating rink to the central recreation area;
- (5) Lighting of the rink;
- (6) Construction of a modest, insulated, multi-purpose building to serve as a heated change room for skating and hockey, as well as for year-round storage of recreation equipment;
- (7) Provision of adequate fencing for the area;
- (8) Construction of an outdoor volleyball court and horseshoe pitches.

B. Youth Involvement Program

In order to teach the basic concepts, rules and skills of games such as hockey, baseball, football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, etc., and to expose the children of this relatively isolated community to participating in the learning and playing of these games with other children, field trips to other communities are proposed. To make this program financially and strategically feasible, these field trips would be conducted in conjunction with, and under the guidance of, local school teachers and parents. Approximately twenty older children would be involved in one major trip to Edmonton, Calgary and

Drumheller. Younger children would engage in recreational day-exchanges with schools in Ft. McMurray perhaps five or six times during the school year. This program would provide young people in the village with the basic skills and concepts needed to channel energy into constructive recreational and social activities.

Cost

Following is the suggested budget which includes both phases of the proposed project.

Community Improvement Program

Clearing and Brushing

100 hrs. @ \$5.00/hr.	\$ 500.00	
Grading and heavy equipment	4000.00	
Playground equipment and multi-purpose building	12000.00	
Relocation of skating rink and provision of lighting	5000.00	
Fencing	<u>2500.00</u>	
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION	\$24000.00	\$24,000.00

Youth Involvement Program

Field trip for senior students	\$ 3000.00	
Junior student exchanges	<u>1200.00</u>	
TOTAL INVOLVEMENT	\$ 4200.00	4,200.00

Administration and Contingency

		<u>2,000.00</u>
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET		\$30,200.00

Acquisition of Land

The land required for the proposed recreation and play-ground area is adjacent to the new school. These lots are controlled primarily by the Ft. McKay Indian Band. As an active endorsement of the proposal, the Band Council has stated its willingness to make the required land available to the total community for the proposed facilities as another major local contribution to the improvement of Ft. McKay (See letter in Appendix A).

The Metis Association of Ft. McKay also expresses active endorsement of the project through the letter in Appendix B.