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## APPENDIX TWO

### FIELD REPORT ON A SURVEY OF METIS AND INDIAN HOUSEHOLDS IN PRINCE ALBERT SASKATCHEWAN WITH SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

by

J P Brady

**Transcribed by David Morin**

#### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The document which follows is the chief interviewer's field report with his own interpretations written after finishing the Prince Albert survey. I have modified the original text in two small ways

- cutting out discussions which however defensible by themselves did not especially illuminate the Price Albert situation;
- editing the text in a technical sense – shortening sentences checking punctuation clarifying the meaning

Content wise there is nothing in the following document which is not Mr Brady's own thinking. No ghost writing has been done. Nothing has been added.

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## INTRODUCION: NATIVE GROUPS IN PRINCE ALBERT

The native community of Prince Albert comprises three main groupings

- ( ) TREATY INDIANS The city has been from early times a focal center for the adjacent reserves. Most Indian residents originate from the nearby reserves to the west of Prince Albert, notably Sturgeon Lake, Sandy Lake, Mistawasis, Muskeg, One Arrow and Beardy's. It appears there are few permanent Indian residents from the Churchill River region centered on La Ronge and to the East. The Dominion Census lists persons of Indian origin. A number must have migrated from the Reserves in the s. The constriction of natural resources and paralyzing atmosphere of economic stagnation on the Reserves impels this outward movement. They are dependent on "casual labor" for support. In actuality, social welfare allowances are often superior to the per capita real earnings on reserves and are a powerful inducement encouraging outward migratory movement.
- ( ) METIS: The resident Metis are separated into three categories
  - (a) First are the descendants of indigenous Metis families who were early settlers. This group is mainly of English and Scottish ancestry originating from the Red River Settlement and were already established in pre-Rebellion times. With few exceptions they have merged into the general population and have lost their identity by assimilation. They are unrecognizable as Metis. They no longer speak Indian languages and use English only.
  - (b) Second come the Metis and French origin from the South Saskatchewan settlements and the Willow Bunch region. During the depression years of the Hungry Thirties, an influx of French Metis occurred, displaced from their small farm holdings. This group has retained its identity and is mainly bilingual. The Cree language has virtually disappeared among the younger generation. English is the language most generally spoken to the children in the home. They retain a "nationalist" consciousness with an attachment to the Catholic religion. It affords them a social cohesion. They are not unmindful of their past. Their roots are still imbedded in the best democratic tradition which their forebears brought to the "Pays d'en Haut" and the North West.
  - (c) Third has come the post-war influx of families of both French and Anglo-Saxon ancestry. The French group originates mainly from the West side of the Province, mainly from the Green Lake area. A large number were concentrated in the latter area in the s, when a Metis rehabilitation project was established. Many of these Green Lake families originated from the Willow Bunch and Qu'Appelle regions. Due to economic pressure since World War II, there has been a constant movement to the towns in recent years, particularly to Prince Albert and North Battleford. The experiment has been a significant failure. The program was regulated with little consideration for local needs and problems. The original resource base was too narrow and limited in scope.

Included in the post war migrant group are a number of English speaking Metis originating from Glen Mary Kinistino and Fishing Lake who also settled at Green Lake. They too abandoned the Colony in the late 1950s and settled in Prince Albert. All informants with experience at Green Lake expressed intense dissatisfaction with governmental policy.

As with the Indians, there is very little movement of Metis to Prince Albert from the Churchill River basin. Only one Metis male from La Ronge could be found who could be strictly classified as a permanent resident. Two other females with White husbands and families were located. The Churchill River basin possesses better trapping and fishing potential. Under economic stress, both Indians and Metis of the region will secure a minimal credit and apply themselves to the task of living off the available resources. They are less inclined to movement toward the urban centers. Despite their harassed condition, they do not create as great a pressure on welfare facilities as the less plentifully endowed areas in the South.

- ( ) In addition, there is a group of both Indian and Metis ex-servicemen of both World Wars and the Korean campaign who, following their return to civilian life, have left their reserves and settlements. They are mainly migratory workers whose families live in the City and are established as permanent residents. This group represents an important fraction of the native community.

## CHAPTER I

### THE RESEARCH THE METHOD AND SOME INTERPRETATIONS OF THE INDIAN METIS "PROBLEM"

The plan was to study the migrational [sic] factor among Indians and Metis in a typical northern urban center adjacent to the frontier area and learn something about the manner in which they live; and to consider other intricacies of social structure peculiar to the minority and how it relates the individual to the dominant group

The groups under investigation comprise three main groupings: Treaty Indian the older established Metis families with agriculture backgrounds originating from a Prairie milieu and the more recent peripheric [sic] group from Northern settlements

To the Indian and Metis the White man forms an inseparable part of his life He is always omnipresent either in person or through influence He usually has a White employer and sometimes White friends and he lives by the rules they impose They are so joined that neither can be understood without the other This requires a perspective of the entire community and a knowledge of other extraneous factors The material collected serves to characterize the group structure and class relationships within the existent social order

Prince Albert is a small city in the Park Land belt of Saskatchewan It is the distributing administrative and communications center for a large contiguous agricultural area as well as the frontier areas to the North It has no industries of major significance which tends to make it an area of restricted employment

Settlement was already well advanced in pre Rebellion days and it was the largest settlement in Saskatchewan in the early 1800s The Indians and Metis have had a continuous association with the community since its founding The Canadian Pedlars had already reached the present site of Prince Albert before the American Revolution Paterson Holmes and Pangman were already at the Forks of the Saskatchewan when Samuel Hearne founded Cumberland House in 1771 There is extant evidence that James Isbister a Metis built a cabin on the site of present day East Prince Albert in 1800

The founding of Prince Albert is credited to Rev James Nisbet a Presbyterian missionary who located the first mission in 1805 The site became known to the Indians and Métis as KISTUPI NANI place of permanent residence from the Cree root Kistupi – to sit still

A large number of English speaking Metis were established in the town and district before the Riel Rebellion They owned land and many were engaged in the fur trade and other mercantile ventures This group has been almost completely assimilated

Of 1000 people approximately 400 are Indian and Metis The White residents are mainly Canadian born French Canadians comprise an important segment of the populace They display little racial animosity toward the Indian minority due to their historical and traditional association with Indian peoples

There is also a body of Slavic people of more recent origin who in the main have adopted the superior attitude of the Anglo Saxon majority toward the Indian minority. The median Indian household is made up of \_\_\_\_\_ persons.

The lack of industries, the agrarian surroundings, and the proximity of Indian reserves and northern frontier settlements have somewhat affected the social attitude toward Indians and Métis. Prince Albert, as most Indians and Métis aver, is not a "bad" town. Various informants referred to Lethbridge, Prince George, Kamsack, and The Pas as "bad" towns. There exists latent opposition to school integration, but it has little vocal support on the administrative level. The most discernible discrimination is expressed in the licensed beverage rooms. One establishment in particular will not permit any woman of recognizable Indian appearance to drink in their cocktail bar, although they may be permitted in the men's section.

The Indians and Métis comprise a large enclave known as the Fox Farm on the north side of the river. South of the river in Prince Albert proper, they are scattered throughout the city, mainly in the East and West end fringe areas. Central Avenue constitutes the boundary between these two divisions. Estimates of their total number indicate that \_\_\_\_\_ percent live in North Prince Albert, \_\_\_\_\_ percent in the West End, and the remaining \_\_\_\_\_ percent on the East side.

On the south side of the river, one does not generally see any unkempt or disorderly Indians and Métis except on River Street. In North Prince Albert, the housing is more rundown. The living quarters are smaller and mostly overcrowded. Rentals are cheaper and lacking in plumbing. The frequent outdoor privies indicate the area is not included in the City water system. The City does not favor the extension of facilities to the area. For fiscal reasons, the sale of building lots owned by the City is discouraged by the authorities.

Saturday is the most important day of the week. Indians and Métis come from outside points to shop and enjoy the stimulation of a "few beers." Sunday is a quiet day. During the summer months, most of them try to spend it in the country (many have relatives on the outlying reserves), providing they have steady work, the feeling of money to spend, and the prospect of a good "winter stake."

A focal center for Indians and Métis is the River Street area, especially at night when there is much walking and loitering. A number of unattached White males can be observed moving about in cars with the apparent purpose of accosting and picking up Indian and Métis girls. It is not true that the Indians and Métis are more disorderly in their behavior, but they are most often on foot and in motion, and more liable to police surveillance. Night life is concentrated along this "Skid Row" and it attracts the more disreputable among the Whites. White people say, "You should see the Snack Bar on Saturday nights and then you will know what these Indians are really like." Natives on business or visiting from the North congregate there with the alcoholics, prostitutes, bootleggers, and the White migratory workers with a hard earned stake. There is nowhere else to go where they are welcome. However, the area is no slummier than the business firms which front River Street. The problem has caused frequent protests to the City authorities. But there is little likelihood that police suppression can curb this undesirable situation until the Indians and Métis can

find a center which can deal constructively with the problem particularly as it affects Indian and Metis youth

The problem of field research is complicated by the natural suspicion of the Indian and Metis toward anyone representing authority even indirectly. Various reports were brought to my attention that the interviewer was ( ) a City Police stool pigeon; ( ) a Social Welfare "snooper"; ( ) and a White slaver. Some local people were suspicious of an investigator coming from the North perhaps to foment trouble. I heard the rumor that the survey was motivated by the nationalist pressure of organized Indians in Canada. I put into immediate circulation an exact account of the purpose of the survey. I explained that very little was known about Indians and Metis in Price Albert in contrast to the knowledge available about White people and that I was interested only in scientific information.

This explanation seemed to satisfy people. In most cases White people showed exceptional goodwill particularly when the emotional values centered around the question of race prejudice were understood.

There has been a major change since the post war White penetration into the more primitive Indian and Metis areas. Contact with Whites outside employment and welfare measures in the City have reduced some of the handicaps of Metis and Indians. But present economic factors do not favor integration.

It is an advantage to grow up in the North with native people but this can also be a disadvantage. I had a feeling that beyond the fringe of my immediate circle of friends and those Indians and Metis whom I had previously met in the North I was at first viewed with suspicion. Some people said they were glad to see me getting things straight since a great number of Whites did not see the problem at all. There was ridicule for those government personnel who spend a few hours or days among them and then go home as experts on the Indian and Metis question. I often sensed suspicion among certain Social Assistance recipients that correct replies were inadvisable because they felt retaliatory measures might be instituted against them. However White people under the same circumstances would talk with the underlying implication "You can do whatever you want about it."

But once identity had been firmly established and verified the informants talked freely and clearly on all subjects. Many were in full accord with the purposes of the survey and anxious to have concrete results emerge from the project. Others tried to show me how they really looked at the problem and still others tried to convince me of the correctness of their views and attitudes once they felt I was genuinely interested in knowing what their attitudes were. They felt they had little opportunity to affect the dominant White community. There is no doubt many feel emotionally in conflict with this structure.

The co operation of White citizens whom I contacted also aided in identifying the social situation in the city. They displayed an unflinching courtesy. They also talked freely about themselves and their concern with Indian Metis problems and thus showed an agreeable interest in the research. Particular thanks are due A H MacDonald Northern Administrator of the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources Inspector R W Duff of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police M Heseltine of Provincial Corrections N Deslauriers Social

Welfare Branch City of Prince Albert Sgt Gordon Larson of the Prince Albert City Police Magistrate E Z Anderson of Prince Albert Mrs Rowena McLellan Chairman of the Indian Metis Service Council of Prince Albert and Messrs Fred Yayahkeekoot B R Richards and Ian Fletcher indebted to Malcolm Norris of Prince Albert whose steadfast support never failed to encourage me

### INTERVIEWING PROCEDURE

No previous record of racial identities existed The Dominion Census for the year indicated persons in the City of Prince Albert having the recognized legal status of Indian ancestry A recorded listing of Social Assistance recipients was available but was rejected lest it create bias Many people of Indian ancestry are not physically recognizable as such and difficulties exist in establishing their identities The procedure adopted was to interview an informant who was in turn able to indicate people of his acquaintance who were of Indian ancestry A listing of all possible informants was thus built up personal contact established and followed up with interviews

The basic approach was to participate in the social life of the group under survey which affords the possibility of a greater number of contacts This involves a natural human contact with all the real feelings present and unguarded where the informant readily revealed experience fears insecurities and personal problems In this connection the previous experience and sensitivity of the observer can be important Some are very good at establishing genuine contacts while others may not One can be trained to see but lack a sense of intuitive perception and proper evaluation Emotional factors cannot always be fully recognized and interpreted The social experience of Indians and Metis has a common recognized psychology If they feel the competitive pressure of Whites they tend to react in identical ways They have good reason to mistrust those who in their minds appear as members of the White "ruling strata" and who expect a disguised if not actual hostility They are defensive in their cultural attitudes One learns by living and observing in the actual situation Indians and Metis may not always tell you what you want to know One must seek for clues and contradictions

Observation without discussion can be important – for instance conversations in restaurants and beer parlors chance meetings on the street and listening at social gatherings Some material cannot be gained by direct interrogation or the use of set questions Apart from the general identification of my work I appeared as a friend casual acquaintance or a visitor of racial affinity In many cases no effort was made to secure and interview until my presence was identified accepted and confidence gained after many meetings

An important aspect is to watch the feelings of the informant and his general tone of speaking People can say no when they really mean yes An interviewer can easily react so that he loses effective contact with the informant and learns nothing of his psychological reaction to a concrete social situation Thus a balanced interview is lost

The researcher must be a good listener able to make social contacts naturally If he participates in their social life everyone becomes in some manner a source of information Some people under pressure may say irrelevant things which can influence wrongly our judgment of the whole situation One must watch for the "nationalist" bias of the Indian and Metis informant Here a



knowledge of history and social structure can be useful. One must know his is biased and why he is biased otherwise a complete picture of the social situation may not emerge.

A modification of interview procedure was in some cases necessary to enable the informant to give a good account of himself. He could talk of his experience in ordinary conversation while no effort was made at written transcription. I intruded with no unseemly questions especially when something embarrassing had to be said. This method required recalling the entire web of conversation afterward – a skill which can be acquired but which creates additional work. This freehand interviewing leaves the informant relaxed and natural and avoids an inquisitorial approach.

To obtain really significant knowledge one must participate actively in the group social life. It means contact with its members, intimacy, sharing and mutual recognition of similar values. This involves confidence and care that the informant is protected. However, it may limit the scope of the interview. For example, a treaty Indian girl told of a group of Whites whose activities are directed toward the criminal involvement of Indian and Metis girls. She importuned me not to reveal her as a source of information. Actually, she was afraid of informing on these criminals and exposing them to the opprobrium of the decent members of the community. Retribution would follow as she knew from personal experience. Informants do not wish to be known as renegades.

An interviewer must necessarily have personal psychological, social and political biases. This was brought home to me on several occasions when I was asked "What are you doing here?" Idealistic bias supplied part of the answer. I was on the old errand of showing up the evils of the economic system in its treatment of the Indians and Metis, and I recognized an inner predisposition to make my research come out that way. The other part was a tendency to feel with Indians and be specially accessible to incidents of discrimination and oppression. This idealism, though useful to a social reformer, is inadmissible for a researcher whose business is to see clearly and report correctly.

A further tendency to error on the part of a researcher is the assumption that all Indians and Metis possess an outlook like his own. He will tend to see his own life experience as similar to theirs. He will interpret his own sacrifices, frustrations and neuroticism as applicable to them also, and attribute to them an unhappiness which they do not possess. Many Indians and Metis are free from the sense of utility. Their desires are immediate and related to the problem of food, shelter and clothing. They may have no grievances, but neither do they dream. One aged Indian woman put it quite succinctly in reply to the question "What do Indians really want?" Her answer was "We want more to eat."

Effective perception requires a clear understanding of one's own class interests – past, present and future. There has been a long and bitter history of White men going into the North whose prime motivation has been economic mastery, pecuniary advantage and self gratification. Many researchers who have gone North have been lured by the hospitality of the dominant Whites and pulled toward their views of the racial problem. This is partially unavoidable because a tolerable social life is conditional upon acceptance into this group and leads inevitably to some identification with it. On the other hand, he is also in danger of being influenced by friendly relations with the

superior or cultivated Indians or Metis. Both these situations can lead to a negative rapport with the "inferior" group.

In outlining these forms of bias, I do not state I have completely freed myself from them. I feel that some control is possible where there is some insight into the social, economic and political forces which animate the contemporary scene. Since the self or ego is formed by society, it is impossible to totally disassociate oneself from the world outlook of that society. Self-criticism should then indicate to every investigator the possibility of bias within himself and the need of a critical approach to the problems of research.

## CHAPTER II ETHNIC ATTITUDES

A White woman told me that all Indians are shiftless, drunkards and troublemakers, and that the Whites have to do everything for them. "They are all on relief. They should have some tough men in the City Hall who can say No, instead of those soft-hearted women."

The word "breed" is often applied to Metis – the very inflection with which it is used may convey a connotation of inferiority. "Squaw man" is not infrequently applied to White men. It suggests a person of low moral behavior and one whose fondness for Indians is degrading to his superior status as a White man. This epithet is often quite liable to be applied to White men who have theoretical ideas on the question of social equality.

Now it frequently happens that if a person hates the ones who cause an injustice but is incapable of retaliation, he will turn his hatred to someone else but not directly related to the hatred object. There are "fringe" groups within majorities who are never certain of their position and acceptability and vent their frustrations and resentments on minorities. A few informants expressed anti-Semitic views but were unable to specify concrete proofs in support of this position beyond vague generalizations which they received from politicians. A decided majority indicated violent dislike of Hungarian DPs, due primarily to competition on the labor market and the financial aid extended to them by the government. This antipathy was also noted in the case of Ukrainians. It was usually held by Indian and Metis migratory agricultural workers, exploited by Ukrainian farmers who must extract every possible value of labor return. Being themselves marginal farmers, the Ukrainian operators are affected by the "cost-price squeeze" and the constricted world market. Very little "socialization" of Indians and Metis with Ukrainians was noted. In all cases, they were Ukrainian males. Any intermarriage reported has been between Ukrainian males and women of the native group. Ukrainian females appear to have no contacts with Indians and Metis on social levels.

Racial discrimination is a restraint to assimilation because it is a categorical barrier to union between women of the dominant group and men of the inferior group. It does not result in an equivalent barrier between the dominant group men and the women of the inferior group.

Indian physiognomical (sic) forms are considered a mark of inferiority. But this attitude is rapidly diminishing and as a barrier to assimilation may in time disappear altogether.

Available statistics indicate that practically all Indian and Metis children in the survey area of Prince Albert now speak English in the home. The Cree and other Indian languages will grow and their culture flourish only when they are really free.

The more advanced Indian and Metis types tend to develop a distinct psychology. They reject the older Indian and Metis cultures. Many of them go to urban centers where they accept the social arrangements because they cannot stand out against White authority and sentiment. They can advance their personal economic interests by loyalty to the dominant group for there are potent pressures to induce them to accept an accommodative role and eventual cultural alienation from their own group. I do not believe the Indians really want to be White – but being White is the best evidence of status and the best guarantee of fuller participation in Canadian society.

The cultural inclination of the Metis is toward White society. He strives toward cultural identification because success is nearer if he is accepted by White men. Awareness of this occurs early in many darker Metis types. They assume that the lighter ones want to be Whites. If these display self importance or overbearing behavior it is said of them they are trying to act like Whites. An illustration concerns an Indian friend who during his babyhood received the appellation of Monias (White man) due to his refractory behavior which is untypical of Indian children. "When I was a child and misbehaved my parents told me I was acting like a white man."

Most of the Prince Albert respondents possess minimal skills and their personalities have been historically conditioned to accept a subordinate role in our economy.

The existence of a depressed White group is a feature of urban centers. This white group has neither the educational standards or superior income to claim any degree of social prestige. They find it difficult to gain status because they lack capital and have not the resolute determination of the more recent immigrant groups. Since their chance of obtaining power and prestige is relatively low they have little to lose by criminality and low moral behavior. Their personal attitudes on marriage, drinking, profanity and sexual relations tend to be more lax than the average White standards.

The superior Indian and Metis group follow a higher standard of sexual morality at least comparable to that of middle class Whites. It is not certain they all measure up to it but its legitimacy is accepted. In this respect they follow the valuations of middle class Whites. Their women are better protected against sexual temptation. It is this superior group of Indians and Metis who feel most keenly the pressure of racial discrimination. It damages individual self esteem and affronts personal dignity. It is this fact rather than the desire to be White which is cause of vexation to many Indians and people of mixed blood. It arouses a sense of injustice where the personal achievements of the affected party is categorically superior to that of lower class Whites and some middle class Whites. It wounds the basic sense of integrity where the individual concerned has so much negative view of his own character. It is one of the basic frustrations which engenders hostility toward the superior Whites. This hostility is constantly present but is submerged in passive behavior. Under stress the urge to aggression may reappear.

This superior Indian and Metis group also have a greater discipline toward the impulse of aggression. Some informants pointedly referred to the fact they had never been in jail or been arrested.

Many informants brought out family connections such as "My family were already here when Champlain came up the Ottawa River in 1613." Again there would be a strong tendency against remembering ancestry. One violent French Metis nationalist with an English family name was aghast when shown incontestable proof his great great grandfather had originated from Derbyshire. He acidly remarked "So you tell me I am Englishman. Sapristi I go jump off that Diefenbaker bridge." The problem with ancestry is however uncomplicated for most Indians and Metis as typified by the first three replies on self description: ( ) "I am a Cree woman" ( ) "I am just a half breed half Indian half French" ( ) "I am a Cree Indian in a way but more a half breed." All three are actually of different racial origins but are psychologically identical in self image.

It was observed that some middle class Whites showed some sympathy for Indian friends and associated across the racial line. This was noticeable among Indians, Metis and Whites. It is an ambivalent relation: tension on racial lines but loyalty where related economic interests were involved. An Indian informant said that educated Indians get much better treatment than uneducated ones. Whites appear more friendly and respectful. Still as she said they resent seeing an Indian dressed up and looking too prosperous.

The White man can have friendship with the superior Indian and Metis types where families can meet on a social level providing barriers against more intimate sexual contact by Indian and Metis males is maintained. The argument against marrying a "squaw" would come up quickly against an educated Metis type.

### CHAPTER III ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF METIS INDIAN LIFE IN PRINCE ALBERT

It is apparent that middle class Whites dominate Canadian urban centers. In larger centers the working class is decisively Euro Canadian in racial origin. In Prince Albert we have a native working class segment that is culturally and economically underprivileged.

It was observed that Indians and Metis dependent on casual labor worked in areas widely separated geographically – for instance sugarbeet (sic) work in Southern Alberta. This is a laborious backbreaking work done mostly during the hottest season of the year.

Another example is lumbering in Northern Saskatchewan where union conditions are nonexistent. At Squaw Rapids unorganized Indian labor is employed by private contractors and in cases paid less than White D P labor doing identical work. One sympathetic White informant, an unimpeachable authority, stated that among middle class housewives she had more than once noted the observation about Indian domestic servants "Why don't you get an Indian girl? They are just as good and they are cheaper."

Middle class people generally make use of Indian female workers as domestics cooks nurses and baby sitters Wages tend to be low One informant returned to her reserve after years employment because she was consistently underpaid despite repeated requests for a wage increase Another Indian informant stated "Why work for that White woman? I had to stay there seven nights a week with all those kids When I asked what White girls were getting she said "You are not worth it " Besides most White women get jealous over their husbands I can do better than that peddling my fanny on River Street " This story is not typical

The Indian seems to inherit the cast off clothes automobiles food and social customs of the Whites Indian women are the best customers at local rummage sales conducted by benevolent organizations Indian children are often marked off by a certain air of secondhandness (sic) Indian homes of the peripheral group seem bare and poorly furnished The median group homes are better The prestige symbol of the median group is to own a television set Invariably one is to be found although one may have to sit on a packing case to view the programs In the typical Fox Farm habitat bathrooms are unknown and indoor plumbing nonexistent The worst cabins are miserably plain and hard to keep warm in winter

Shellbrook Indian Agency which includes the area from which most Indian residents of Price Albert originate has an annual per capita income of Of this income percent is derived from transfer payments from Government sources including Social Assistance The per capita income for Saskatchewan residents in is given as As one motivational factor impelling the outward movement from reserves Social Assistance should be mentioned The difficulties of job placement improvident Metis and Indian habits in prosperity and seasonal employment are bedevilling (sic) factors from the viewpoint of welfare administration There seems to be a good deal of resistance to social assistance for Indians and Metis among White farmers in overburdened rural municipalities In Northern settlements Provincial Social Aid is notoriously below equivalent scales paid by city authorities A documented case of a deserted wife and children in the northern settlement of La Ronge reveals that she received less than the maximum of which is allowed for rent by the City of Prince Albert Inadequate social assistance is a powerful inducement to move to urban centers

Social assistance in the cities takes the pressure off Indians and Metis to seek employment on the farms The standard of assistance offered by the cities compares favorably with the local living conditions on the reserves and the incomes offered by sub marginal farmers Indians seem aware of this One commented "I don't do too bad on Social Aid – better than on the Reserve " Social Assistance in the cities is preferable to the economic insecurity of denuded reserves

Elsewhere it is said by some observers that the greatest hostility towards Indians and Metis exist among lower class Whites The Indian and Metis themselves in Prince Albert do not confirm this statement They say that hostility is more often expressed by property owning Whites For example River Street property owners are the most vocal

White people are puzzled and annoyed by the apparently incomprehensible way Indians and Metis often leave their jobs One local White

observer with a long Northern experience remarked "They know how to work but my big job is to keep them working and have a steady labor supply I have one crew coming one crew working and another crew going " Indians and Metis will leave a job if they feel they are being cheated or if they make too much money They will never announce they are leaving until after they are paid because they fear if they do they will not be paid

Indians and Metis will try and get all they can out of you and will move around even if they are well treated It may be a conviction that the Whites are cheating them no matter what they get Possibly they just want to wander In some cases they will move because they do not like the employer or the foreman Again the fact that some White employers chase their women is cause for quitting a job even where the best working conditions obtain There are of course families who have stabilized their activities and others who are "floaters " They have the moving habit and keep on moving always looking for something better Many White employers will deliberately discourage them so they will quit and move on Effective labor organization is difficult among this migratory type for no aggressive response such as strike action emerges Where there is confused distrust resentment and lack of hope he will quit As one Metis remarked "I will live as long as there is a jackfish in the Saskatchewan River "

#### CHAPTER IV SEXUAL PROBLEMS

The Sexual problem is an important aspect of the local pattern of racial relationships We are not concerned with the personal behavior of specific individuals The task is to describe how a person may act in a certain situation because of his racial and social position Facts are hard to secure and interpret realistically because they cannot be reduced to the simplicity of economic statistics But there is a state of affairs observed in Prince Albert which is highly advantageous to the White male

The prevailing opinion of relations between White men and Indian women was expressed by a White informant who stated that only lower class Whites go to Indian homes for drinking and women In actuality White men get down on the level of the degraded Indian and Metis group by drinking and whoring yet still want to be looked up to as superior Instead natives often make insulting remarks fights start and the racial issue is raised Undoubtedly middle class Whites have intercourse with degraded native women Many have been repeatedly observed following Indian prostitutes whom respectable Indians avoid This activity usually takes place after dark Evidence points to the fact that many White middle class adolescents also seek sexual experience with Indian girls usually in the youthful age range White girls are not so easily accessible Indian girls have greater opportunities in the sexual sphere because they usually begin to work away from home when adolescents

It would seem that the cohabitation has decreased compared with frontier times It is possible to have a mixed blood child without establishing cohabitation Cases can be shown of Indian Metis women and girls with numbers of illegitimate children born to White men No moral reprehensibility is attached to the unwed Indian or Metis mother by her own ingroup (sic) The idea of abortion is repugnant to the Indian mind likewise the giving away of her

child for adoption. The Indian community attaches no moral sense of opprobrium toward the illegitimate child and he is accepted and absorbed into the family and social policy. Our impression is that neither miscegenation or cohabitation has disappeared entirely. Modern welfare policies in fact promote furtive concubinage (sic). In reality, rising social pressure has brought about a more liberal attitude toward the problem of the unmarried Indian and Metis mother.

One might ask why in view of the derogatory attitudes Whites have toward Indian women they are still considered sexually attractive. Adherence to middle class social mores involves forbearance and self control. But if the opportunity arises to permit escape with Indian women there are many who will take it. The character traits of Indians may have a special attraction in this field – a recognition by the White man of the Indian's lack of dissembling in the sexual field. Some Indian women may take the sex more lightly, are less inhibited, tend to put less burden on the White man, and may react in a more positive and responsive way to sexual approaches. Among American tourists the remark is often heard that a man does not know what sexual experience really is until he has had an Indian girl. Another dominant element may be to show the inferiority of the Indian by making wanton use of his women. Again the Indian women may be prized because they offer a freedom which the White culture does not permit as respects sexuality. With them the White man can have a transient, irresponsible relationship, whereas relationships with White women (within their own social milieu) are loaded with cares, fears, threats and duties.

A number of Indian and Metis women work outside their homes and are more accessible to sexual approach than those who stay home. I encountered one case of an Indian girl with high personal standards who left a home where the husband was always "bothering me."

Some White men claim they will accept Indian women only when the compulsive drive of sexual starvation compels them. The lack of White women on the frontier is often considered as a hardship. A drunken White of my acquaintance once referred to Indians as "black bastards" and the like. Asked if he had ever had an Indian girl he replied "Sure, lots of them. You know what it's like in the North. No Indians, no poon tang (sex) either." But then he qualified it by adding it was always when no White women were available. When reproached by his White associates the following day he claimed not to remember the incident. The important point, though, is the sense of shame he attempted to conceal. This consciousness seems to be growing among Whites. It is likely to spread with the development of integrated education among Indians and Metis.

Considering the economic motive, what does it mean to the Indian girl who gets a week to have the man of the house offer her the equivalent sum for sexual intercourse? She may have a child or family to support and needs the money. In this connection, White women cooperate in seduction by paying them so poorly. If the Indian girl cannot live on these wages, she will be more accessible to sexual approach for money. It is difficult for an Indian girl to turn down such importunation (sic) from a White man. Secondly, it is flattering to receive his attention. These values may have an appeal to her in the sexual situation. A personal remark I once heard from an Indian woman illumines the point: "That White woman isn't so high and mighty. I slept with her husband and right in her own bed, too." There is probably an element of vicarious

revenge in the feeling that the White man is lowered and made to feel that he is not really a superior being

Important also is the fragility of the marriage bond among the depressed Indian and Metis group. Where lack of economic independence exists, confusion and impermanence is reflected in every aspect of social life. The Indian has less control over his wife than in middle class situations. Women with husbands having no stable incomes or left without money will take up with any man who will feed them and their children. Promiscuity receives an added impetus from economic pressures. Her husband may be jealous but he cannot revenge himself by threatening withdrawal of support, a threat which keeps many middle class White women compliant. In many cases the wife is the main support of the family. The older daughters gravitate to urban centers. It is not possible to give them the education, clothes and other requisites of a high living standard when the per capita income from trapping in Northern Saskatchewan is \_\_\_\_\_ per annum. On the Indian reserves with an entirely agricultural base the conditions are more desperate.

An ambivalent attitude toward physical ancestry showed up repeatedly among Metis informants on their genealogies. They are proud of their White ancestries but related to this is a feeling of rejection by White society. In the case of superior Indian and Metis group members who try to follow White moral standards there is a cogent rejection of the Indian view of sexuality where life is equated with sexual activity as a normal function of living. They tend to magnify the faults of the whites and stress any sexual looseness in their group as exceptional or forced on them by the Whites. It is difficult to find out from them the true state of affairs among their own group. Informants become very reticent. For example, members of the superior group will point out the low class Indians and Metis who pander to cheap Whites, drink with them, indulge in excesses. It was said I would see or understand very little of this class. They were lowdown, immoral and "bad" Indians.

It seems sexual attitudes among lower class Indian and Metis women are different and freer than among the superior group. The Whites take particular satisfaction in pointing to their "immorality" and do not consider the historical situation which brought it about. Without accepting the premise of inferiority we can nevertheless examine the evidence. In a conversation overheard in a café, two teen age Indian girls were talking of their dates of the previous evening. One commented she had been out with an awful "swell guy" who had a new car, blond hair, lots to drink and looked like Elvis Presley. The other said she liked White men better because they were more considerate and anyway Indians never had enough money to give them a really good time and besides they beat their women. The two girls were originally arrived in Prince Albert without funds, friends, employment or accommodation. No facilities existed for temporary accommodation or job placement. Their ignorance and naiveté were easily impressed by the novelty of a new car, flashy clothes and the promise of a good time which contrasts starkly with the sordid surroundings from which they were seeking to escape. They had visited Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg and were on their way home to meet the expected influx of American tourists. One of them had served a short jail sentence without option of a fine to enable treatment for venereal infection. The other had experienced sexual aggression under conditions traumatic in experience. We cannot adopt a cavalier attitude toward this problem of unprotected Indian juvenile girls for such instances do occur.



Despite these aggressive incidents relations seem to flow smoothly in Prince Albert. The official attitude is that sexual attraction and the exploitation of Indian and Metis women does not exist and this view is the one which White society prefers to accept.

#### CHAPTER V INDIAN PASSIVITY AND ACCOMODATION

From the standpoint of the White Canadian the steadily repeated fact of Indian passivity may gratify his sense of prestige. But from the administrative viewpoint passivity is a frustrating circumstance complicating administrative problems.

There are two motives behind this behavior. ( ) Repressed antagonism cannot be channeled into any useful social outlet and is replaced by servile behavior or by ignoring of the White viewpoint on any point involving contention. ( ) A desire for association and identification with the socially powerful White man may also make for a sense of idealization and a desire to emulate.

The belief in the superior racial integrity of the White man is one of the most powerful supports of the colonial attitude in the North. If the racial tension on the local level is not too acute a condition of accommodation inevitably develops. Benevolent paternalism by organs of church and state has been a major psychological factor in promoting compliant acquiescence among the Indian and Metis group. This situation among them has existed from the beginning.

The force of historical influence is still present. More than one informant referred to the Riel Rebellion, the military defeat, economic spoliation (scrip issue) and social intolerance still remembered. Indians and Metis are not lax in transmitting their version of past history. But where frustration without open resistance is accepted a policy of passive resistance and a technique of accommodation develops. It is one of the sources of imbalance in Indian and Metis life. It becomes an aspect in the personal life of all its members.

Nascent native nationalism was destroyed both in the end of the Red River and the Saskatchewan settlements. Indian and Metis nationalism was a phenomenon whose manifestations were quite different from any typical form of European nationalism. Nationalism denotes not only a consciousness of nationality and a sense of superiority to other people, but also an aggressive desire to impose the admission of that superiority on other less favored people. Metis nationalism found its earliest expression under Cuthbert Grant and was merged in the struggle for responsible government. The question of separatism was never raised by Indians or Metis for they showed a clear preference for British political institutions. The anti Americanism of the French Metis under Louis Riel is today admitted. Indian and Metis nationalism is negative; it may be more safely described as "particularism." It has no valid significance unless considered in the greater context of the problem of Canadian independence.

Deferential reactions tend to make the best of a tolerable situation at the price of concealed resentment and humiliation. This reaction is not the same among all Indians and Metis. Some act the role quite easily because it fits their mental character. Others are not psychologically fitted to express this attitude.

from their inner ego. In northern settlements this role may be thrust on entire communities but certain individuals accept it with internal reservations. Indians mentally oriented toward resistance cannot completely repress their hostility which seeks expression through pugnacity, alcoholism and social behavior inimical to community interest. Under stress the primary aggression reappears in the form of unsocial behavior.

The social attitudes of accommodation are visible in various forms among Indians and Metis especially those living under depressed conditions. They become built in personality traits marking the suppressed cultural environment which children inherit from their parents. This accommodative role establishes the native as knowing his place and increases his chance of getting what he wants from the White man. Many Indians are adept at handling White people by preying on their vanity and exploiting them the best way they can – sometimes by petty thievery, borrowing or securing advances without repaying. It reinforces the Indian ego. In such cases one often hears the remark “That White man wasn’t so smart as he thought he was.” It often happens that when politicians and administrators speak to Indians and Metis they show a visible attitude of tacit approval. The speaker assumes this as distinct evidence of agreement with himself when in fact it does not exist. In most meetings where no personal interest is involved they will by gesture and intonation convey assent with utterances of “Enh Enh Tapway Missin” – when they least comprehend the issue under discussion.

Let us also mention errors of speech and other “faux pas” of the Indians. Many Indians will not express an opinion which is foreign to their idioms of speech and risk what they consider ridicule. There is much opportunity of this since Indians are far from assimilated.

The wisest thing the Indians are doing is leaving the reserves for the cities where they have a better chance. For young and ambitious Indians and Metis to remain on the reserves and in depressed Northern settlements they must rest satisfied with pick and shovel, axe and saw and the archaic forms of trapping and fishing which gives them the lowest income standard in Canada. This is not because of any evil intent or specific meanness on the part of the Whites. Rather the economic system operates that way. The hundreds of thousands of unemployed White Canadians are equal victims. Only the implementation of a true economic democracy for all Canadians can overcome this block toward full integration of the Indian and Metis people.

## CHAPTER VI EDUCATION

Since World War II educational opportunities have increased among Indians and Metis particularly in Northern settlements. Education means their assimilation into a culture not originally their own. It is a process of indoctrinating them with the cultural mores and beliefs of the dominant White group. This means a radical change of life orientation.

During the fur trade era full participation of the native in the educational process had never been desirable. He was effectively isolated behind the language barrier. Supportive institutions like church and school intended to keep him behind the curtain. For example here is a opinion. Evidence of

Bishop Breynay O M I before the Royal Commission investigating the Alberta Metis problem Edmonton Monday April <sup>st</sup>

MR DOUGLAS: "What is your opinion regarding the value to the half breed of giving him an education?"

THE BISHOP: "I don't think he should be given too much education Too much is bad for some of them He needs a little to help I think just about until they are or years old probably "

THE JUDGE: "I agree with you there too much would be a bad thing "

This attitude was held years ago but is no longer defensible The change is partly due to World War II to the endeavors of White groups on behalf of Indians and to the increasing recognition by the Indians and Metis themselves of the literacy as a means toward economic and social advancement Today craft and vocational training is stressed as a type of training which will prepare the Indian and Metis for but not beyond ordinary White working class status

Prince Albert enjoys good educational facilities Indians and Metis students attend the two Collegiate institutes It was noted without exception in all Metis and Indian domiciles I visited that English was the main language spoken to the children in their home It was noted that some children lagged in their school grade because of the low educational standards of their parents In middle class families much of the crucial basic understanding required is won before the pupil comes to school at all This factor has been recognized at La Ronge and treated quite successfully Here pre kindergarten classes of exclusively Indian and Metis pupils receive instruction before entering the regular integrated school classes

Educative personal contacts between all racial groups has increased since World War II Formal contact with White culture through the schools has been intensified Indians and Metis are now more fully exposed to the Canadian ideal of social advancement There is a greater withdrawal from the older Indian cultural forms The social goals of the younger generation differ from that of their elders Increased education eventually lessens the cultural conflict for contacts on the same intellectual level tend to reduce the social limitations imposed by racial segregation However conversely these antagonisms may later reappear in the arena of economic conflict

Literacy is an important factor in everyday life It is an almost exclusive necessity for entrance to middle class status One Metis home visited showed clear evidence of lower middle class surroundings The informant spoke excellent English He was experienced with all types of heavy construction machinery He would read and understand technical manuals although he had left school at years He earned between and annually when employed He had broadened his education while in the army He writes and spells well and is an ardent crossword puzzle fan He claimed he would have advanced much further if he had acquired a formal education

Literacy is a protection for Indians and Metis in certain economic situations. It is more difficult for unscrupulous Whites to take advantage of them if they possess education. Indians and Metis repeatedly stated they could not afford to send their children to high school or university. This failure to continue in school is often because of an insufficiency of money on the part of the parents or a need for the earnings of the child. Social advancement for their children is possible only when they do not have to work in childhood. Lack of schooling and reduced opportunities maintain the present day group as it is. Indians and Metis, it was noted, lacked the skills, management and foresight to compete with White people.

The value of education, however, is well understood and earnestly desired by most parents. It is in large part the desire for education which impels them to leave the economically distressed reserves and northern settlements for urban centers. The passionate hope of "something better for the children" is a feature of the present day mobility of this group.

There is little authoritative data on this point, but it seems the older Indian and Metis cultural characteristics tend to disappear as the younger generation seizes the educational advantages afforded. Integrated school activity constitutes a force working toward cultural change. The Indian is slowly being transformed by the materialistic view of modern society. A latent element of conflict lies therein. An inferior position is more tolerable where wide cultural divergencies exist and a retreat to the security is possible. Educated Indians are becoming more aware of formal rights with the acquisition of the political franchise. As they increase their social efficiency by education, they compare themselves with White people and realize their lower status is not mandatory or based on immutable inferiority.

## CHAPTER VII POLITICS

Many Indian and Metis voters do not realize the significance of the franchise as a means of determining the direction of their personal life and interests. The percent who take advantage of voting is probably less than among the Whites. What they get is usually through the benevolence of the Whites rather than through the pressure exerted by voting. Some favored Metis and Indian individuals may get personal concessions by delivering votes to the politicians. But most natives perceive there is little likelihood of them as successful voters sharing in the spoils of office, for few are likely to be appointed to responsible administrative offices. Political understanding remains at a low level. On one occasion reference was made to Social Credit. The informant assured me "Yes, I know that man, Cecil Credit, and his is a damn good man, too."

Traditionally, the Conservative party has always been regarded as the party hostile to Indians and Metis. As one informant declared "They hanged Riel." He recounted an incident when Nicholas Flood Davin, an early Regina lawyer who, during the rebellion, had been sympathetic to the Metis cause. In he appeared at Willow Bunch to speak in support of the local Conservative candidate. He was wearing a fur trimmed overcoat. Following the Rebellion he had defended Hayter Reed, General Middleton's Chief of Staff, who had seized furs from Jean Louis Legare, a loyal Metis. Restitution was ordered by the court.

Contemporary Metis accounts described the bale of fur seized as feet by feet in dimension. When returned it measured inches by inches. Davin made a good impression at Willow Bunch because he had many friends. But his efforts were negated by a Metis who stood up and shouted "Look that Irishman is wearing the furs stolen from Louis Legare." Needless to say Davin's candidate was defeated.

The contention that Indian and Metis voters are ignorant and easily influenced is often repeated but the element of truth therein is exaggerated. Not all Indians and Metis are ignorant or morally corrupt. Again Indians and Metis are divided by factionalism and will not always vote for or be influenced by members of their own race where they actually dominate or have a nominal "balance of power." It is worth noting that local Indian and Metis residents are mostly renters with a minimum of personal property. Their socio economic position is weak. They experience momentary social equality through the electoral practice. They are slapped on the back by politicians and called by their first names. It is a period of free drinks and parties. We can then greet with understanding laughter the amusing spectacle of politicians in full tribal panoply wearing their new honors as adopted Indians. But voting patterns follow the local general political trends with little direct Metis Indian participation in active political work.

#### CHAPTER VIII RELIGION

Christian beliefs are held by the native community. Few survivals of paganism are to be found today. A few instances of belief in witchcraft, hexing and the potency of Indian love medicine were noted among older people. The Indian medicine man as a religious functionary has disappeared. The present generation are followers of the orthodox Christian faiths.

The Churches have been a powerful influence in the pacification of the Indians and their induction into the dominant civilization. With religious instruction was imparted some basic concepts of Euro Canadian culture. The Christian doctrine of equalitarianism was accepted. Segregation has never received formal acceptance in Canadian church bodies unlike the separate Negro churches in the United States.

The Churches have aided in the social training of the Indian and Metis. During the frontier period the missionaries were the only literate group who were actively proponents (sic) of education. In fact many literate speakers and leaders developed through the churches. The Churches of Rome and England early captured native allegiance with their first missionaries. But they did little outside the religious field. Evangelical groups later appeared with highly emotionalized appeals. Although evangelism affords a greater degree of religious and emotional gratification it does not receive spontaneous reception by the Indians. The psychology of Indians and Metis creates emotional resistance to evangelistic religion. In the social sphere drinking, dancing, fun making and enjoyment appear to Indians as a condition of living the full life. Self renunciation of these most mundane activities to the average Indian mind is incomprehensible.

It may also be true that the churches have been serviceable to the Whites in suppressing the old Indian culture and in offering consolation. And informant stated he had heard an African speaker who visited Prince Albert last year comment succinctly on White African missionaries: "When the White man came with the Bible we had the land. Now we got the Bible and they got the land."

Religion centered the attention of the Indian on a future life, minimized the value of the present one, and deprecated all organized effort toward independent social evolution.

Many Indian and Metis informants do not take everything their spiritual advisers say for infallible truths. They follow Christianity like their White brothers, but they have many private reservations, and often disapprove of their religious mentors. The natives in Prince Albert are invariably church members, but it is impossible to say what percentage are active participants in church activities.