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**REGAINING CONTROL:
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-DETERMINATION
IN FORT ALBANY FIRST NATION**

By

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A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

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SELF-DETERMINATION AND FORT ALBANY FIRST NATION

**Dedicated to Becky, Joey, Meshan, Cedar, Lynsey, Ralphie,
and to the memory of Riel.**

**Ph.D.
McMaster University
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TITLE: Regaining Control: Community Development and Self-Determination in Fort Albany First Nation.

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ABSTRACT

This study documents the social process of economic and community development in the Omushkego (Western James Bay Cree) community Fort Albany, Ontario in the period 1994-1997. Informal and formal development planning defines the settlement's relationship to various other locations or social structures: regional and national economies; federal and regional levels of government; the territory drawn together in the traditional mixed economy. I examine these relationships through the experiences of day-to-day life in the settlement, where all community members participate in the mixed economy. The mixed economy encompasses harvesting and market oriented production within codes of reciprocity within the extended family. Residential households are thus interdependent in every feature of daily life, and this sharing ensures economic stability. Sharing resources, technology and work permits households to achieve self-sufficiency while individuals demonstrate their competence. The significant features of the mixed economy are thus at once economically and socially valuable, features that are promoted in community and economic development in the settlement. It is by making a link between the existing, distinctive settlement economy and development that the community strives to achieve social, political and economic authority within relations that often exploit and marginalize the settlement. Formal development strategies improve settlement infrastructure, and strengthen settlement institutions in ways that are consistent with the values of the mixed economy: increasing access to the means to be self-sufficient and to acquire competence. The settlement's entrepreneurs perform informal development, providing for their extended family, reproducing the values of the mixed economy and reducing outside exploitation of the settlement's cash economy. At both levels, locally invented development is a route to settlement self-sufficiency and self-determination, a conclusion framed here in the recommendations of the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

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My gratitude to Dr. Feit is matched by my indebtedness to my close colleagues in Fort Albany, especially Alex Metatawabin without whose collaboration this project would not have proceeded.

All of the entrepreneurs, named and anonymous in this study who spoke with me are owed a great debt as well, and without your assistance, the conclusions drawn in this study could not have been made.

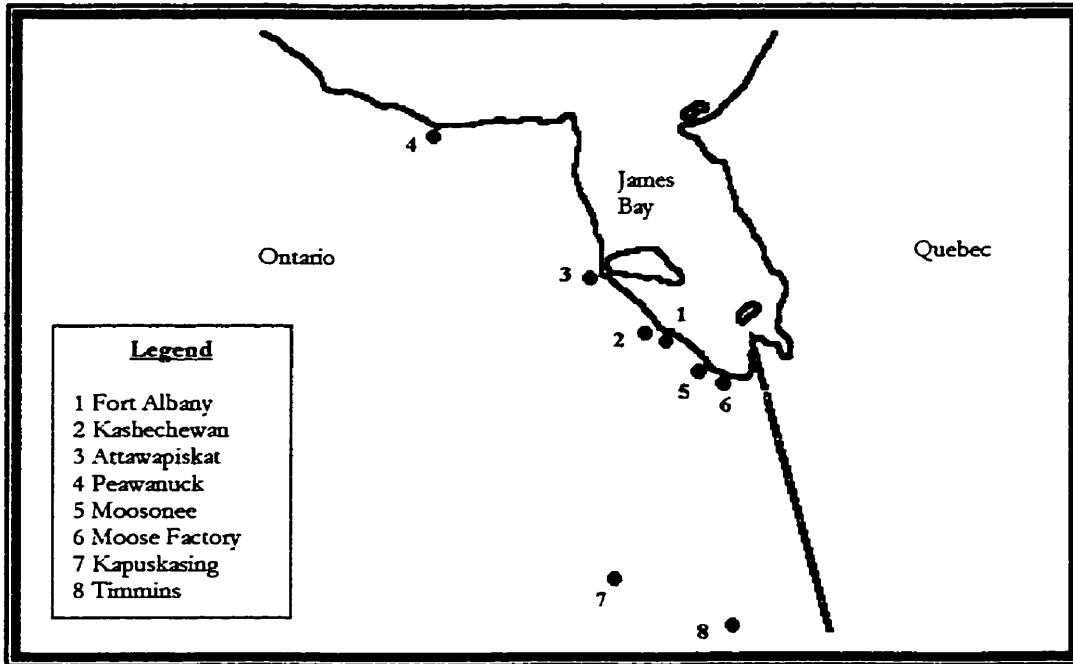
This project has also been shaped by the example set by many people's lives. On this count, I owe a very special thank you to Abraham and Theresa Metatawabin. Meegwetch.

And for their support everyday, I am especially thankful to the families of Joan and Ed Metatawabin and Mike and Eva Metatawabin. Your contributions to this work of time, insight, advice, information and feedback on each draft have laid the path for this project, and shown me the possibilities for this kind of scholarship. Your gifts of friendship enrich all parts of my life.

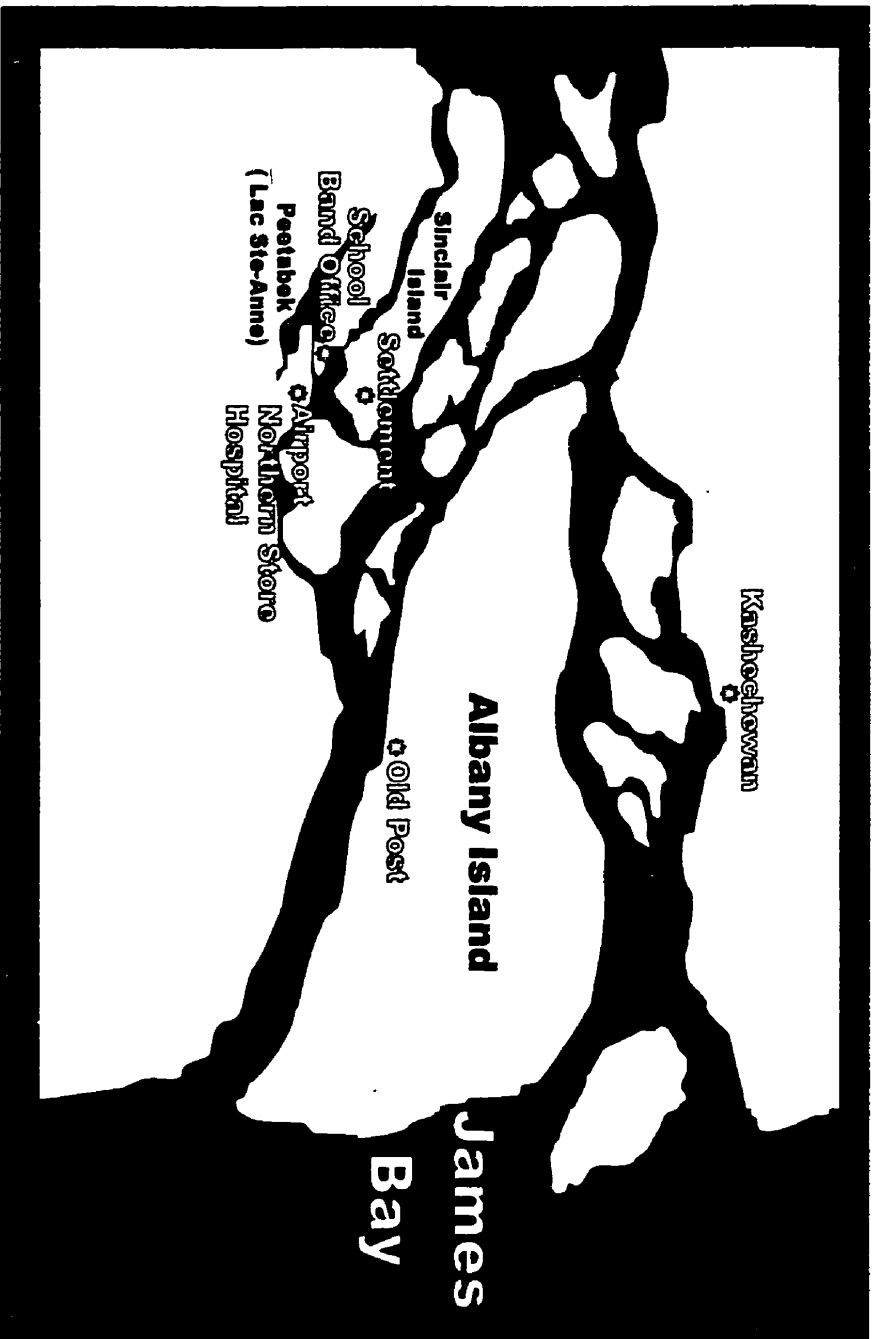
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MAP 1
Mushkegowuk and Surrounding Region



MAP 2
Settlement Area



INTERPRETIVE CONTEXTS: FORT ALBANY, THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES AND ANTHROPOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of economic development planning as a social practice that embodies community values and ideals. My argument is that through economic and community development Fort Albany is being transformed: from a trading post where colonial entrepreneurs took in the region's resources, later a mission settlement, into a Cree community, where Cree cultural and linguistic sovereignty, and economic self-sufficiency are development goals. Fort Albany today is the site for economic and institutional change through new and innovative strategies for community development.

SETTINGS FOR RESEARCH

The research for this thesis was done through a combination of formal key informant interviews, informal discussions, and participant observation. Participant observation has been particularly key to grasping how the settlement economy operates, and I have lived in the settlement for a total of ten months between 1994 and 1997, the shortest visit eight days and the longest five months.¹ On these visits I have lived in a wide range of

¹I have had somewhere around one hundred hours of informal discussions with Alex Metatawabin, the Band Economic Development (BED) Officer in Fort Albany during my

circumstances: I have stayed in teacher's houses, in the nurse's residence, with friends in the village, in a small residence behind my friend's house (a 'skidoo shack'). All of these locations placed me in various material relationships with other people in the community: when I stayed in a teacher's house I was physically close to the Band Office, the Northern Store, the other transient White people in the community, close to Georgette Edwards and her family, and a twenty minute walk from the village where the majority of Cree people live. When I lived in the village, with friends, in my shack or 'sitting' the homes of acquaintances, I had neighbours and very different responsibilities and duties.

As a single, childless, White Anglophone woman around thirty years old, however, my experiences making a home in the settlement are not very similar to those of my friends who maintained permanent households with children. Any self-sufficiency I ever achieved in a household was through the assistance of my friends who gave me places to live, got me wood, lent me their vehicles, axes and clothing, showed me where and when to get water and generally assisted in the work of keeping day-to-day life together. I found some specially cut logs outside my door one afternoon, short enough that split pieces would fit in my tiny stove. I took care to split and stack that wood before it got wet. I went and stacked some wood for my benefactors, though I suffered some ribbing

research. I have conducted sixty hours of more formal discussions with trainers and trainees in development programs, somewhere around twenty people, and interviewed another fifteen entrepreneurs. I conducted around ten interviews with bank managers, store managers, shippers and other representatives of the 'outside' institutions that are daily linked to the settlement as well, though all of these tended to be very formal compared to ongoing discussions I had with community members.

when I looked around their house for a picture I had seen there of what a stacked cord looked like. When I got sick because I had been collecting contaminated drinking water, warm meals and a warm bed were available until I had the energy to get more water. I should have known better than to get my water where I had been getting it. When I had running water, and thus laundry and bathing facilities, I bugged my friends constantly to avail themselves of these services, just as I showered at a teacher's house Saturday afternoons when I did not have running water. Comfort and community are dependable, and yet simple requirements of daily life are complicated.

Key pieces of participant observation have been such daily events, and more: friends looking for jobs, writing resumes, sending letters to federal and provincial agencies, trying to cash a cheque, trying to get something fixed, filling out forms, and so on. Participant observation showed me how individuals in the settlement live their lives within constant connections, within connections that are always shifting. Everyday, people deal with settlement institutions (like the hospital, the post office or the Northern Store), and frequently with the world 'outside' the settlement, the other communities, towns and cities linked to Fort Albany by air and water routes, by fax and telephone and by satellite television. Satellites are easy to see here where little ground level lighting hazes the night sky.

People in Fort Albany, excepting those from outside the community working in the community, also belong to households, which are daily linked to other households in the settlement. The work of keeping the household running is shared by these

interdependent households, and in turn this work ties households to the landbase within which the settlement is located. Travelling around the region, closer to the bay, or inland along the shores and islands of the Albany River, people are connected: to the people in the other communities in the region, to their traditions of mobility, to their ancestors who reproduced these maps of movement, to their language, to their living family, to the history of the fur trade (which has left its traces in the names of settlements and the Ministry of Natural Resources maps of trapping territories), to the national military that sends planes on high level air-to-air refuelling exercises over northwestern Ontario and to the countries and businesses that fix satellites above the earth. Fort Albany is a point on a massive map of interconnections.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS

In the first four chapters, I profile the Fort Albany settlement as a place where economic, political and cultural streams meet, conflict and compete. In the first chapter I introduce the settlement as an intersection, where international and regional economies met first at the beginning of the fur trade, later integrating the national economy. This strategy allows me to introduce the settlement as an artifact of colonial economic and political influence

while focusing on the continuity of Omushkegowuk² in the region, and their relationships with settlement institutions.

It was Omushkegowuk and their descendants who brought the trading post economy into the sway of the existing harvesting economy. The harvesting economy was regional in that it encompassed the territory throughout which Crees pursued their livelihood, and integrating the economy of the trading post (trading and waged labour) resulted in the mixed economy. The mixed economy is defined by the authors of the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) as follows:

In the mixed economy, households combine cash from a variety of sources (wages, social transfers, arts and crafts production) with income from the land, shifting their efforts from one sector to another as conditions dictate. ... The mixed economy is the dominant economic form of most aboriginal communities, and it is by far the most stable. The stability of the mixed economy is evident in its persistence since the earliest days of the fur trade. The central reason for this stability was its flexibility and adaptability, allowing producers to take advantage of a variety of economic opportunities (Canada, RCAP 1996a: 389).

It is the combination of resources from discreet sectors in this general definition that makes the mixed economy distinctive from either independent sector. This study argues

² Omushkegowuk is the term I have chosen to represent the traditional inhabitants of the region, typically referred to as Swampy Cree by anthropologists. I use Cree as a shorthand for Omushkegowuk for most of the text, in a fashion consistent with daily usage in the settlement during my research.

I am using Aboriginal, First Nation and Native as equivalents throughout this document. All three terms are to be understood through two premises: first that Aboriginal people have a continuous presence in North America from the distant past, and second, Aboriginal collectives (nations, cultures) have experienced the colonial era as the colonized, a premise which captures the ongoing oppression and marginalization of First Nations relative to the colonizer.

that such an implied separation of land and cash sectors is not clear, for in everyday life, both are governed by social values particular to the mixed economy.

It is the social, historical and cultural milieu of Fort Albany and the region that best defines the mixed economy and not economic features alone. First, Omushkegowuk have been central to the mixed economy throughout its development, and so the mixed economy is indivisible from social and cultural practices. Values of self-sufficiency, individual competence and reciprocity are constantly reproduced within all aspects of the mixed economy in the everyday work of providing for the household. Second, the mixed economy, as both socially and economically productive has been the structure through which Crees negotiated and continue to negotiate European and Euro-Canadian institutions, economies and politics. The mixed economy, as described in this study, is a vital social tradition, practised and valued for social and economic reasons equally.

Centring Cree people in my analysis of the economy allows me to situate the settlement in the history of Cree people from this region. To view this idea from a different direction, the history of the Hudson's Bay Company or the Roman Catholic Mission at Lac Ste Anne (the site of the present settlement) is not synonymous with the history of Fort Albany. Various forces have come together with Cree people, and these together explain aspects of the contemporary settlement: geographic location, existing infrastructure, relationship to the mainstream industrial economy and the mixed economy.

The lands around the contemporary settlement were a feature in the regional economy before the fur trade: spring and fall goose hunting, summer fishing, berry

picking and camps where food was preserved were the traditional uses of this area when the English arrived to trade furs. Fort Albany quickly became a prominent post in the Hudson's Bay Company's system, and the location proved strategic, because local food proved necessary to the functioning of the post. This local food was available through arrangements with families at the settlement to both trade and harvest. Most important to my argument, the trading post drew on a regional economy within which Cree trading partners, hired workers and hunters were uniquely positioned: the Cree economy quickly adapted trapping, trading and 'wage' work at the post, creating a mixed economy of subsistence and market-oriented production and exchange. The mixed economy was a regional economy within which the trading post at Fort Albany was only one point: traplines, harvesting areas and pathways for travel around the region were linked to Fort Albany through people and economic practices. The settlement has been the place where the regional economy joined international and national economies, and where the mixed economy emerged within Cree negotiations of these relationships.

The mixed economy endured throughout the mission era (1848-1974), though the mission was developing a parallel economy as an alternative to harvesting. After 1932, Fort Albany was developed as a model agricultural community in the framework provided by the Roman Catholic mission. The most significant feature of this era is the mission's rigid control of institutions in the village. The mission was initially funded by its own missionary society to run a residential school and hospital, and after 1905 it was supported by the federal government of Canada on behalf of the Cree people in the

region. Fort Albany became a 'self-sustaining' mission settlement through an economy similar to the Hudson's Bay Company's because the mission built much of the settlement's infrastructure and farmed with the assistance of Cree families, who received in-kind payments. These in-kind wages were paid as daily rations, or with money coined by the mission itself for use in the mission store.

The mixed economy paralleled these developments and endured the collapse of the mission's settlement economy. The contemporary settlement is marked by these historical developments, though the settlement is much more than a sum of the history of colonization. While theirs is also a history of oppression, exploitation and conflict the history of Cree people in the region and in the settlement is continuous and not encompassed by either government, mission or trading histories.

In the second chapter, I present perspectives on change and history. This chapter presents the settlement as a site of change, through three personal history narratives from Abraham Metatawabin, Theresa Metatawabin and John Scott, a photographic essay and my own reflections as a researcher. The three personal history narratives are particularly valuable for understanding the role of choice and opportunity within the mixed economy, and how families are central in the regional mixed economy. Chapter Two also reflects the process of transformation that is everywhere in the settlement today: old local businesses, the new Hudson's Bay Company (the Northern Store), new local businesses, the contrast between the mission's style of development and the ideal for the renewed settlement are represented through text and photographs.

Chapter Two also provides a context for the discussion of the contemporary economy in Chapters Three and Four. In Chapter Three I discuss the social structure of the mixed economy, and how household self-sufficiency and individual competence are the dominant goals of daily life. My analysis views the settlement economy through the residential household, the smallest economic unit in the community. Each household uses all of the resources available in the mixed economy, including cash and land based resources (such as food and wood). Each household is also a place where members of the household prove their competence in providing for the household: everything from the often time-consuming work of getting wood and water, to other forms of harvesting to providing cash income.

The mixed economy is a community economy because the household, through bonds of kinship, is linked to other households that share work, incomes and technology. This sharing extends the use value of any particular item (such as a chainsaw), and contributes to the stability of separate households who can depend on one another. The mixed economy includes resources that traditionally have to be shared through the links between households, such as game meat. The household is central to the mixed economy, and it is in and among households that the distinctive social and community values of the mixed economy are articulated.

An ethic of sharing is the basic mechanism of the settlement economy, and I argue in Chapter Three that sharing promotes self-sufficiency at the level of the household, despite the fact that the overall settlement economy does not provide for settlement self-

sufficiency. In Chapter Four, I show that instability enters as a trait of the settlement economy because cash investments in the settlement are drained off by outside businesses. Some leakage is prevented by small businesses in the community, family run enterprises who use their incomes from their businesses to provide for their households and extended kin group. This vitality in the economy that links households is simply dwarfed by the scale of operators like the Northern Store. Fort Albany, and other communities like it, have become a stable income base for investors like the Northern Store. While there are benefits to the community (a convenient store, some employment), they are far outweighed by the barrier the store presents to economic development.

Chapters Three and Four demonstrate what 'development' means in Fort Albany: development encourages community control over their economy, increasing opportunities for the settlement to benefit from the exchanges that take place here. Chapters Five and Six address where development is happening in the settlement. In these two chapters, I explore how economic development in Fort Albany is consistent with the mixed economy, in that local development is promoting settlement self-sufficiency.

The development policies I describe in Chapter Five each demonstrate how innovation in planning is a process of negotiating between external prescriptions for development (in the form of funding programs) and the interests of the community. Local development is occurring constrained by the very limited frames of funding agencies, but this chapter shows how locally invented development planning can be coherent with goals of self-determination. Chapter Five also shows how the structures and institutions that are

part of settlement life can be elaborated in the interests of the community, despite constraints. Economic and community development in Fort Albany are processes of rebuilding the settlement in manners that provide and expand opportunities to members of the community.

Chapter Six is similarly about active economic development, here through an examination of the settlement's small business sector. Small businesses in Fort Albany work within links to the industrial economy, and within links between cities and towns in northwestern Ontario. Unlike the Northern Store, small business operators in Fort Albany are part of the settlement economy through their households. Through the provision of services to the community, small businesses are uniquely positioned to prevent some leakage of cash out of the settlement economy, thus strengthening the settlement economy, in addition to providing opportunities for community members to improve their families' incomes.

Chapter Six records some of the unique and innovative skills that entrepreneurs in the community have developed in the process of running their businesses: knowing processes for shipping goods to the community, knowing community tolerances for certain kinds of enterprise, being responsible to social networks in the settlement (and beyond) that contribute to the business. Existing businesses in Fort Albany provide the template for future development in the business sector, proving that privately owned enterprises can be operated within the settlement.

Like all forms of development in Fort Albany, entrepreneurs face major obstacles in building sustainable, profitable enterprises, and this chapter also details these limitations. The limits of growth in the business sector of the settlement economy were made especially clear to me because I began my research at the end of a training program (administered by the regional government) intended to establish new entrepreneurs through business training and assistance with funding applications. While this program proved that there are many willing to start businesses in the settlement, the outcomes have made the real needs of development very clear: funding to assist businesses to lower start-up, including high shipping costs, are a minimum requirement. The limitations on development are for the most part out of the hands of entrepreneurs, because few have access to enough capital to meet start-up costs, while the settlement's band economic development office is not sufficiently funded to develop business facilities.

Between the success and viability of small enterprise (as proven by existing enterprises) and the major changes required for substantial new development in the settlement is a middle ground: the potential for coordinated, cooperative development. The regional government is in a unique position to act as a focus for the coordination of shipping, bulk buying and storage for entrepreneurs in the settlements along the James Bay coast. These settlements are already linked by major transportation routes (especially by air and water travel) and the four settlements north of Moose Factory face similar challenges in business development: lack of infrastructure appropriate to housing a business, isolation from suppliers, and limited capital for start up and operations.

Cooperative action exists both at the settlement level and throughout the region, in informal links among entrepreneurs, and between entrepreneurs and their family and friends. These informal cooperative strategies are 'invisible' in terms of the economic development policy promoted by the regional government's Entrepreneurship Training Program, though these links are central to the existing small scale, independent businesses in each of the region's settlements. This study explores some of this invisible structure that gives entrepreneurs, households and individuals security within the settlement, at the same time acknowledging the other forces that challenge that stability.

WRITING AND RESEARCHING

My approach to ethnography has grown out of my dedication to understanding what value anthropological research has today. I enter the field of anthropology in an era when the authority of the researcher has been exposed as a garment woven out of lies. Among these deceits is 'objectivity', the idea that the professional apparatus of research unlocks the truth (Smith 1987). Ethnography takes place within a specific historical, political and epistemological world: "Anglophone [W]hite anthropologists" write within "institutionally sanctioned power relations between interpreter and interpreted that determine the politics of meaning in the first place" (Mohanty 1992: 124).

I encountered a discipline well into the recognition of its history, its implications, its tyranny. Satya Mohanty shows that larger changes in social worlds enabled new

insights not only about the practice of anthropology, but of the relationship of its practices to the world:

If it was possible to see anthropological description and interpretation of 'Third World' cultures during the heyday of imperialism as largely complicitous with the exercise of power and the discursive mapping and manipulation of powerless others, the self-criticism of Western anthropology needs to be understood not simply as the natural maturation and intellectual coming of age of a discipline, but rather as the result of both political challenges presented by these others and the related demystification of the West's recent history by its own progressive intellectuals (1992: 120).

Most pressing for me is that the premises of anthropology have fallen apart: unselfconscious generalizations about human economies, religions, languages and so on are simply not adequate. For the 'self' to be conscious, the analyst must attend to the analytical models they receive, models that come from within a discipline that is always enmeshed in the politics of making, sanctioning, limiting knowledge.

There is now a recognition of the politics that get played out in the social territory of researching, writing and disseminating ethnography, what Patricia Hill Collins and Sandra Harding recognize as a dialogue between socially and politically grounded subjects, who cannot claim one another's experience and knowledge (Harding 1993: 68). Research can ideally be in the service of "collaborative, democratic, community enterprises" (ibid).

There are better ways to do research, better reasons to do research than "the discursive mapping and manipulation of powerless others" (Mohanty 1992: 120). More productive, politically committed and grounded ways of viewing knowledge, history, truth

take place, are made real, in conversations between human agents where voices contend to be heard. Paul Farmer, 1992, and Lila Abu-Lughod, 1993, write entire ethnographies that analyze the tension between received models about the research subject and the research subjects themselves. Farmer and Abu-Lughod delineate the specific histories of their research subjects (marriages, jobs, residence), including in that history the representations of those lives that simultaneously come from another context: Western anthropology, American newspapers, world health policy, the shifting meanings of those places and lives in global politics. The conversation that Farmer and Abu-Lughod place at the heart of their work demonstrates the limits of anthropological thought (the impossibility of generalization) while demonstrating that the facts of life are different from where you are located in your life. The facts of life may conflict with the generalizations made about your life, or the generalizations you are trying to make about your research subject.

I see these strategies as responsive to and indicative of the challenges to social scientists, responses and reflections that show 'knowledge' is a product and process of lived lives. This is a shift in epistemology - the theory or idea of what knowledge is, where it comes from, and how to find it. Feminist epistemologies are built to account for the subjective nature of knowledge, the uses of knowledge in the service of oppression and the uses of knowledge in the service of exposing oppression.

When the dominant group is homogenous, its shared assumptions stand little chance of identification [for critical analysis], and when this group benefits from maintaining these assumptions, there is even less chance that

assumptions will be critically interrogated. As a remedy, [Sandra] Harding advocates a methodology that involves "starting thought from the lives of marginalized peoples." (Alcoff and Potter 1993: 6).

Harding calls her methodology "strong objectivity", emerging from the insight that in racist, classist, sexist societies

the activities of those at the bottom of such social hierarchies can provide starting points for thought - for everyone's research and scholarship - from which humans' relations with each other and the natural world can become visible. This is because the experience and lives of marginalized peoples, as they understand them, provide particularly significant problems to be explained or research agendas. These experiences and lives have been devalued or ignored as a source of objectivity-maximizing questions - the answers to which are not necessarily to be found in those experiences or lives but elsewhere in the beliefs and activities of people at the centre who make policies and engage in social practices that shape marginal lives (1993: 54-55).

Harding's methodology is also an epistemology, as she acknowledges that research agendas themselves must also take into account the structures that determine what is knowledge, what is 'real'. Racism is real, for example, while it may be invisible to those privileged by such a structure. Where we researchers (and evaluators of research) believe knowledge comes from shapes how we do our research.

Methodology and epistemology are linked in my research practice: keep the conversation going, keep the process of learning, explaining, discussing alive. All of my research for this dissertation took place as a conversation. Sometimes the conversations have been with texts (missionary accounts of the settlement for example), but those texts have also been the subject of conversation with friends and colleagues in Fort Albany. As I hope is apparent throughout this thesis, it was especially things like 'texts' that I needed

to have interpreted for me from the lived experience of being from Fort Albany. Mission texts, Royal Commission reports do not make sense without the context of Fort Albany. This research has taken place through all of the forthright conversations about what kind of place Fort Albany is and has been.

The methodology, participant observation and key informant interviews in the language of social scientists, have been shaped by my understanding of what knowledge is in a world of conflict. Knowledge is power, but knowledge is also the first victim of silence. Everyone who has knowledge has power, but those who are systematically silenced will always experience their knowledge as contradictory to dominant representations, will experience knowing as struggle, and will be knowers of conflict.

Literary critics, post-colonial critics and post-modern anthropologists have turned again and again in the past twenty years to these realities. The critics I refer to are the likes of Beth Brant, Gayatri Spivak, Lee Maracle, Trinh T. Min-Ha, Judith Butler, bell hooks, Haunani-Kay Trask, Chandra Mohanty, Greg Sarris. Readers may have just noted in the margins that I am eliding a number of separate themes, breaking (new) disciplinary boundaries, undermining geopolitical boundaries, ignoring and erasing cultural, historical and gendered identities. And yes, I am. But for a reason that is not mere convenience, but in fact paralleled in the academy itself by cross-listed courses, courses taken by students from within disciplinary boundaries.

Post-colonial, feminist, First Nations (and so on) theorists address subjectivity, as much as who writes (and from where), as who reads from where, and what that reading

implies within analysis. Chandra Mohanty places reading and writing subjects and their practices within the widest contexts possible, and illustrates that material, historical and geographic facts make up subjects' places and practices:

In spite of the fact that growing demand among publishers for culturally diverse life (hi)stories indicates a recognition of plural realities and experiences as well as a diversification of inherited Eurocentric canons, often this demand takes the form of the search for more "exotic" and "different" stories in which individual women write as truth-tellers, and authenticate "their own oppression," in the tradition of Euro-American women's autobiography. In other words, the mere proliferation of third world women's texts, in the West at least, owes as much to the relations of the marketplace as to the conviction to "testify" or "bear witness". Thus, the existence of third world women's narratives in itself is not evidence of decentering hegemonic histories and subjectivities. It is the way in which they are read, understood, and located institutionally which is of paramount importance (1991a: 34).

This passage reminds me that the very labels, categories and boundaries that are liberating are potentially marginalizing: a 'post-colonial theory' course may acknowledge these positions from which to view, interpret, experience (or know) the world, while disciplinary boundaries might limit what we think these theories illuminate. This is the simple idea of 'ghettoizing', a metaphor from human geography, which I am familiar with from considering the place of Women's Studies, Indigenous Studies, Post-Colonial Studies and Queer Studies in academic institutions in North America. But what boundaries also imply is a perpetual marginality, also speaking from a place of little power to express knowledge, glad of the opportunity to speak, never invested as a centre of knowledge, manifesting authority to know, make knowledge, and political criticism. Only a voice to struggle.

So I want to see these critics as speaking about how all research can (and should) be done, to actively marginalize the theory that is not adequate to the task of being radical, critical and unsettling. These theorists and the critical tools they create (now potentially centred) will always provide a productively radical critical view: by radical I mean attention to the conditions under which your writing takes place, the processes that bring it to be and the consequences of that process and the product.

Writing is powerful practice, a practice of being authorized to create knowledge, and writing takes place within politics, real world limits and opportunities. I have come to this task of writing this thesis through a chain of events that bring me, an urban, working-class, Anglophone writer, raised White in downtown London, Ontario to the work of pursuing knowledge about economic development in the Fort Albany settlement. My place in a (southern) academic institution made some research funding available to me, especially the Northern Studies Training Program which provides travel money for students of Canadian universities to research in the 'north' (a place above the line on their map inside the application, a line above which there are no universities). I am writing and interpreting from a privileged position, privileged in myriad material, political, social ways; my person enacts differences, distances, relationships of here and there, traces of then and now within which I am making my way.

But my epistemological grounding is not just about 'me', it is about how this research itself has been part of a real world. Thus both finding knowledge in and making knowledge about the real world has grown out of the problems and concerns that were

alive when I was in the settlement. Central to my research are people's lives, lives that are rich and full, the integrity of ideas and values, actions that fulfil daily needs and long term needs, all of these strengths conflicting with other facts of daily life. For example, education is highly valued as an individual achievement, especially for young people, while the school itself in Fort Albany presents a health hazard (because of lead pipes). Teachers come and go, are hired and fired. Some community members find themselves in the position of having to lobby for Cree language instruction, confronting a conflict in the community: literacy and spoken fluency in English is seen as a way of securing success in highschool and post-secondary education, while the same fluency and literacy in Cree is seen as being lost as a trait of the community. Education is highly valued, but few parents in Fort Albany can provide it to their children under conditions that they would choose. But challenges are met and overcome everyday: the day-care is a totally Cree environment, kindergarten and grade one classes have Cree speaking teaching assistants with them at all times; the school has a water purifying system; high school students leaving for school in urban centres in the south are seen off by a gathering at the airport, greeted in the same way. It is actions of people who everyday are aware of the goal to change, and who seek the opportunity to act, that make the development scene on the ground, day-to-day in Fort Albany.

These social agents are also householders, parents and children and wives and husbands and cousins doing the work of running their own households, of providing for other related households. The settlement is a social community, a social community with

a shared history, shared place, shared experiences of everyday life. This is a community of speakers of Cree, of hearers of Cree, of young and old people communicating across their differences, of extended families who maintain boundaries and build relationships across those boundaries. The settlement was an intellectual community I had to actively engage, learn about and function within to grasp exactly what choices people seek in their daily life, and how those choices are conditioned by their own and other societies.

So this definition of my own notion of where 'knowledge' comes from, and how it has been shared in this research also defines the view I take of the settlement's economy, economic problems and economic developments: from the centre. However, this is a centre that most economic development literature sees as the periphery, marginalized to the most powerful parts of the mainstream industrial economy. This specific aspect of the project brings the work into a relation with development discourse.

As Arturo Escobar argues, development discourse creates both underdevelopment and development, manufactures the categories that are then measured and remedied, measured and remedied and so on. He writes of the genesis of development:

The objects with which development began to deal after 1945 were numerous and varied. Some of them stood out clearly (poverty, insufficient technology and capital, rapid population growth, inadequate public services, archaic agricultural practices, and so on), whereas others were introduced with more caution or even in surreptitious ways (such as cultural attitudes and values and the existence of racial, religious, geographic or ethnic factors believed to be associated with backwardness) (1997:87).

These general features of a discourse that diagnoses problems and prescribes solutions fits the growth of economic development literature about First Nations in Canada. Attentive to both state policy and economic relations within Aboriginal communities, this literature borrows frameworks conventional to the development discourse Escobar outlines every time it refers to "underdevelopment" or the measures of 'poverty' common to all development models (Wien 1986; Elias 1991; Coates and Morrison 1992).

Conventional economic development discourse performs another act as well, to create a level of authority over the object of development:

Everything was subjected to the eye of the new experts; the poor dwellings of the rural masses, the vast agricultural fields, cities, households, factories, hospitals, schools, public offices, towns and regions, and, in the last instance, the world as a whole. The vast surface over which the discourse moved at ease practically covered the entire cultural, economic and political geography of the Third World (Escobar 1997: 87).

As an all seeing eye, the discourse itself becomes the point of the analysis, dismissing the something in the world that should more honestly provide its own analysis. This 'something' in the world is the social life, social world, experiences, knowledge from the vantage point 'below'. 'Below' is invented by the vantage point of the analyst only.

Development discourse becomes the point of doing the analysis when Marie-Anik Gagné uses conventional underdevelopment literature to anchor the Crees of Northern Quebec in the mire of the peripheral, underdeveloped industrial economy, her shocking trick to bring the 'Third World' home in order to perform her analysis (see Gagné 1994). But Gagné's argument takes place within and accounts only for the terms it is built out

of, because when underdevelopment theory sets off to look for itself, it conveniently finds itself, and the entire process takes place materially, ideologically and politically distant from the vantage point of people that this very discourse puts and keeps 'below'. Gagné's underdeveloped industrial economy exists only in her theory, entirely in the absence of experiences of people whose lives contradict her theory.

Development is a very different discourse from 'the centre', from the experience of life in the settlement. I thus use a strategy in this study with implications described by Stephen Gudeman and Alberto Rivera:

Contemporary conversationalists situated at the periphery of economies have models of livelihood, too. ... When we turn to problems and puzzles of "economic development," we might think first about expanding and democratizing the community of modelers. Rather than using the various forms of power - from monetary control of capital to the writing of texts - that subjugate and exclude these other voices, rather than offering prescriptions for "deepening capital" or raising agricultural productivity through doses of technological improvement ..., we might try to develop an "appropriate economics" that would expand the community of conversationalists by drawing upon the work of both the marginalized modelers and the inscribers. (1991: 190).

If among the prescriptions for economic development you import the concept of 'lowering unemployment rates', this passage reveals how local strategies and goals for development in Fort Albany are invisible and muted as a consequence of the settlement's status as periphery. This study cannot replace economic development logic, and cannot be louder than economic development literature, but it can act as a reflection on the conflicts that are being built-in to prescribed development plans. This study can describe where success is happening, and how that success is meaningful in the settlement.

By focusing on the potential for expansion of the settlement economy, this study contributes to economic development literature in small communities by describing specific local strategies for growth and change in the economy. By examining those strategies within the moments at which they occurred - what needs in the community the strategy filled and how goals were confounded by external influences - this research shows both the integrity and fragility of local strategies for change. For example, accomplished entrepreneurs are offered assistance in the form of training instead of capital to meet their actual requirements. Their integrity is fragile in the face of limitations, and those limitations are not of their own making.

This study thus does not offer specific development solutions, unless part of the solution is to strive to recognize that

economic development is about much more than individuals striving to maximize incomes and prestige, as many economists and sociologists are inclined to describe it. It is about maintaining and developing culture and identity; supporting self-governing institutions; and sustaining traditional ways of making a living. It is about giving people choice in their lives and maintaining appropriate forms of relationship with their own and with other societies (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996: 780).

The study I present proves this basic assertion that economic development is not separable from self-determination, while also showing some of the strategies through which an Aboriginal nation today shapes and enacts their goals for change.

SELF-DETERMINATION

This dissertation was proposed, researched and written between 1993 and 1997, and consequently has been informed by the presentations made to an RCAP conference on economic self-reliance, collected in the volume Sharing the Harvest (1993). In that work, presenters address themes of renewal: of control over economic institutions in First Nations communities in Canada (Lyll); of the roles of traditional economic practices and ideals (Brascoupé); of First Nations peoples' place as equal partners in economic exchanges taking place in Aboriginal settlements (LeDressay). As will be apparent in this thesis, the theme of 'renewal' encompasses what development means for Fort Albany, and I would argue more generally for similar First Nations settlements. The notion of renewal represents a shift in the paradigm through which development is understood: heavily biased notions like 'progress' out of 'underdevelopment' are being side-stepped in a move to acknowledge the existing strengths within settlement economies, the potentials that exist in each economy, and how these must come together under the direction of community-based leadership.

The conclusions and insights that are brought together in this dissertation echo those of the RCAP final report. In the sections on economic development, the report acknowledges that development is not merely an economic issue, but a process that addresses the ability of a community to take meaningful action in their own interest:

Aboriginal governments need to regain effective control over their economies if they are to pursue their own culturally and situationally appropriate forms of development. To do so, they need general powers in

the economic realm, but they also need to be able to shape their economies through the design and delivery of economic development programs (Canada, RCAP 1996b: 836).

This study demonstrates that this development process is underway in Fort Albany, while the limitations on meaningful action are equally addressed.

Of the RCAP's fifty-two proposals for new and renewed action on economic development of First Nations communities, a number are especially relevant to this study. The first three recommendations refer specifically to the goal of putting control over economic development funding in the hands of settlement and regional governments (1996b: 840). If enacted, these proposals would create long-term, multi-year funding agreements for projects that would be evaluated within measures relevant to First Nations settlements (for example, the achievement of household self-sufficiency or individual competence). Programs would be executed in manners designed by the Aboriginal organizations, as goals would be specifically defined by the Aboriginal party. In this way, for example, the goals of renewing participation in the land based harvesting economy would be formally supported in a development project which could take a concerted approach to the goal: returns from trapping could be channelled through arts cooperatives; 'trainees' could have more than one term of training; forms of education could be formally integrated into the project. As it stands, Fort Albany is using Employment Training funding for such a project, an innovative use of these funds made possible by existence of a regional Employment Insurance body. This project, Trapper Training is described in Chapter Five.

One of the greatest ironies of the economies of many First Nations settlements in Canada, and of Fort Albany, is that cash has very little value in the settlement economy. Most cash goes to support businesses that invest very little in the community, beyond the requirements of doing business in the settlement. Cash incomes spent at a locally controlled, locally owned enterprise create income and profits that will be consumed or reinvested locally: either in the family network of which the entrepreneur is a part, or (in the case of co-ops) in community development projects. In part, this demonstrates a need for locally controlled enterprises, but also points to the fact that First Nations settlements are important markets in the industrial economy. The RCAP report directly addresses how this relationship is a meaningful one for Aboriginal communities, and how the onus is on leaders and businesses in municipalities and regions where communities do business to recognize the value of these relationships. "Leaders of municipalities, counties and larger regional bodies and their Aboriginal counterparts [should] consider how to reduce the isolation between them and develop a mutually beneficial relationship" (1996b: 849 proposal 2.5.8). Agreements could amount to an empty incentive if a business has a monopoly on a service provided to the community, however it is clear that even the recognition of this economic power is an important step, for the settlement and for the businesses that benefit from their spending power. Fort Albany is in no way isolated from the processes of the industrial economy. This is obvious in the benefits to businesses in Timmins from the large amounts of money spent on hotel rooms, in restaurants and on goods during shopping and business trips. The importance of all of the communities in

the Mushkegowuk region in the economies of centres like Timmins deserves attention as a potential source of economic authority.

The "isolation" between settlements and the businesses that profit from those settlements described above is addressed in another recommendation from the report. Recommendation 22, especially relevant to Fort Albany, is that banking services be made more available to First Nations communities with the "regulatory and financial assistance of federal, provincial and territorial governments" (1996b: 911 recommendation 2.5.22). As described in Chapter Four, the lack of banking services in Fort Albany supports the Northern Store's near monopoly on retail sales, while the lack of banking services is indicative of a wider problem: banking institutions are willing to benefit from handling band budgets, but not to reciprocate for that benefit. The 'isolation' of Aboriginal communities like Fort Albany is political in the sense that no responsible action is expected from institutions like banks, responsibility that governments could encourage in the interests of development for First Nations communities.

The RCAP report also demonstrates that existing economic institutions must be strengthened and improved at the settlement, the regional and the national level. The report calls for the expansion of support specifically for enterprises in First Nations communities or run by Aboriginal people, recognizing the special potential and needs of these enterprises. Recommendation 23 provides a structure for a community loan circle, a fund to make equity loans available to a circle of entrepreneurs who assess and approve another entrepreneur's loan (1996b:912-3). The loan is guaranteed by the other

entrepreneurs who have agreed to pay back the loan if the borrower defaults. A community loan circle builds on the existence of the cash sector of settlement economies for guarantees, while it specifically provides for local control over that cash resource. Local control further expands through the growth of locally controlled enterprise.

Similar to a community loan circle, revolving community loan funds (recommendation 2.5.23) are cash funds held for the collective, which can be loaned out to members of the community. The fund is reproduced as it is repaid, and so remains a constant source of investment for some development in the community (1996b: 913). Generally, however, the RCAP insists on continued support for development in Aboriginal communities tied to equity grants, insisting that this funding be available under a national program for at least ten more years (1996b: 914-916). Equity funding programs, like Aboriginal Capital Corporations, have been successful making low-interest loans accessible for business development, and need federal commitment to expanding their role as financial organizations (for example, extending mortgages and operating capital with that interest) (1996b: 916-919). Finally, the RCAP recommends that Aboriginal communities assert their potential collective cash power by establishing a National Aboriginal Development Bank (1996b: 921-924).

Community loan funds, Aboriginal Capital Corporations and the National Aboriginal Development Bank can be seen as building on the strengths of settlement economies, while setting specific goals of improving levels of control over cash resources within settlements. The vision of a national economic link among Aboriginal communities

underscores how development will depend on interdependence within a collective. If RCAP's recommendations became national policy, the effects for Fort Albany are predictable: barriers to settlement-level community and economic development would be reduced, even within attendant problems of dealing with a massive bureaucracy. The goals outlined in the RCAP final report are consistent with the goals of development in Fort Albany. This study illustrates the need for immediate change, while the ideas, values and experiences of people in Fort Albany demonstrate the urgency for self-determination over (and through) economic and community development.

Throughout this thesis, I argue that self-determination is much like resistance as defined by Scott (1986). Self-determination is implicit in actions that people take locally in determining their own futures. Self-determination is inherent in the vision for development in Fort Albany, as each act of economic and community development is self-determination. But a full realization of how this is happening is invisible, because it disappears in the process of funding a program.

Local development agents must apply for approval from outside the community on a project-by-project basis, and so projects are isolated and short term. Also, the specific focus of individual funding agencies means that development officers must often piece funding together from two or more sources. Project-by-project and piecemeal funding for development projects imposes limitations on the potential of development offices in settlements across Canada. As the commission states:

A further compelling reason for transferring economic development policy and program delivery to Aboriginal institutions is the array of federal and provincial programs, each with its own objectives, criteria, decision making procedures, and bureaucracy. Designing an economic development project to fit the criteria of these programs often results in proposals that meet no one's needs. Further, the few people responsible for economic development in Aboriginal communities, rather than being able to concentrate on assisting Aboriginal entrepreneurs, spend inordinate amounts of time dealing with government agencies, filling out forms, and negotiating with and reporting to distant bureaucracies (Canada, RCAP 1996b: 836).

Throughout this study it will become apparent that these funding arrangements require a remarkable level of innovation in order to accomplish specific (if any) development projects.

Clearly, a coherent development policy, one in which all projects can be seen as part of a whole plan to fulfil the wide range of needs in the community, is nearly impossible. Despite the integrity of specific development programs in Fort Albany, despite the adequacy of these plans and developments to the tasks of providing for the community, each program or project that depends on multiple funding arrangements is a risk, and easily undone by changing policy from funders. Worst of all 'development policy' as something generated by leadership in the community disappears beside the arguments the funders put forward about what their investments are supposed to do. It is a community that suffers for somebody else's power to make arbitrary decisions.

It is clear in the development process taking place in Fort Albany that economic development requires more than financial assistance, it needs concerted efforts to build the capacity for social and economic development in First Nations communities:

everything from support for individual harvesters and entrepreneurs to institutions that respond to the specific barriers to development for Aboriginal entrepreneurs operating in their home communities. Building capacity to make change involves removing barriers to making meaningful decisions, and removing the barriers to taking meaningful action to develop aspects of the economy. In short, building the capacity to be self-determining.

CHAPTER ONE
TERRITORY AND SETTLEMENT: A HISTORY OF FORT ALBANY'S
REGIONAL ECONOMY

INTRODUCTION

In October 1995, a locally designed research project began in Fort Albany First Nation under the title of Shabotowan. The project crystallized the themes of continuity and innovation that I had been studying in economic development planning and action in the settlement, at a moment when I was preparing to begin writing this dissertation. As innovative, the 1995 Shabotowan project was funded as a training program, and the eight students in the program studied communications: reading and writing in Cree and English, production aspects of television, radio and print media. Cultural continuity was at the core of the project, however, as trainees were studying oral tradition, which in this case refers to both the form and content of Cree discourse. The initial Shabotowan project, focused on this traditional discourse, engaged trainees in the order, meaning and shape of life from the point of view of their elders. The normal social process of respecting honoured elders in their role as teachers and leaders became the core of Shabotowan, making it much more than a training project: more recent extensions of Shabotowan have moved beyond this initial project, further defining Shabotowan as, first, the entire philosophical, moral and scientific world of elders, and second, the act of imparting this information to community members (Alex Metatawabin 1998). Social process, discourse structure and

content are melded into one, and the 'act' of creating Shabotowan asserts that Omushkego knowledge, social structure, language and history are at the centre of life in Fort Albany.

The first Shabotowan project was indicative of the new era of Omushkegowuk control over the social life, institutions and economy of the settlement. Discussed with other development projects in Chapter Five, in this chapter about the historical development of the settlement, Shabotowan is a larger symbol, encompassing both the continuity and innovation of Omushkegowuk in this territory. It has been through the consolidation of local authority over the settlement's formal institutions that these institutions are being transformed to accommodate the institutions that Cree people have maintained for generations, institutions that have sustained Cree people: the mixed economy, family structure and language. The settlement is becoming the central location for the assertion of Cree autonomy and distinctiveness from the dominant social and economic matrix of Canada. The settlement itself, though, is not the boundary of influence and interest for people in Fort Albany, but rather a single location that remains continuous with an entire territory, woven together in a complex history.

This chapter is a window on the forces of change, negotiation, violence, oppression, marginalization and struggle that animate the history of the settlement. I have chosen to explore the economic relationships that emerged within the settlement as it was integrated into the regional economy through the mixed economy. The mixed economy is the Cree side of the colonial era in a way, because it emerged as Omushkego people integrated trapping, trading and forms of seasonal work into the traditional harvesting

economy. Many other threads and themes of history deserve attention in Fort Albany, and so I acknowledge the limits I have imposed on my presentation: this is a study of the mixed economy and the settlement.

DEFINING THE SETTLEMENT

During the second week of the Shabotowan project I was asked to do workshops on writing in English with the group, and in our first meeting we were talking about the kinds of questions to ask in the community. Thomas Hookimaw, one of the trainees, suggested "how did the community come to be?". I have taken my lead from this, though I do not want to disguise the complexity of the question. For example, even a fairly straightforward description of the settlement's history demonstrates divisions established early in the federal administrative creation of the settlement:

Families of the Fort Albany First Nation have lived on lands along the Albany River, its tributaries, and along the adjoining James Bay Coast for hundreds of years. The Fort Albany reserve was established in 1905, when some area families signed Treaty Number 9.

The community is located about 120 kilometres north of Moosonee (or 580 km north of Timmins) 10 kilometres upstream from James Bay on the Albany River, in Northeastern Ontario. Fort Albany is situated about 52 degrees latitude, and 81 degrees longitude. (Community Economic Development Operational Plan 1993-94 Chris Metatawabin Band Economic Development Officer).

Treaty 9 categorized a certain area of territory, and a certain group of people, adding a layer of definition within a territory that had been mapped and remapped since long before the fur trade began and adding definitions separating family groups that sometimes

endure today. Parallel maps remained, however, independent of treaty territories and English or French place names, just as family and social structures were maintained by Cree people.

The territory around the contemporary settlement of Fort Albany was a feature in a regional economy before the fur trade, where Omushkegowuk camped together, harvested and preserved food. In the immediate area of the present settlement, people came to the lake on the mainland to harvest fish and berries, and spent some of the spring and fall in goose camps near the flats where the Albany River meets James Bay. This traditional, regional economy eventually joined people from the region to the English fur trade, and by the 1680's this place was on European maps: Fort Albany for the English and Fort St. Anne for the French. French influence is still apparent in the alternate name for Peetabek, Lac Ste-Anne, the lake near the settlement.

The existing regional economy proved strategically important to the Hudson's Bay Company trading post, which depended on Cree people's skills to bring the region's resources into the post, while Crees adapted European goods to their own purposes. This is the mixed economy, a Cree response to the opportunities available at the trading post in which trapping, trading, and labour at the post were integrated into the existing land-based economy. The mixed economy was still a regional economy, however, because the trading post was only one point in an Omushkego map that included pathways for travel, harvesting areas and other trading posts. The settlement was the location where this region became part of an international (and later national) economy.

Roman Catholic missionaries to the Crees in the region around Fort Albany ended itinerant missions in 1892, and set up permanent residences alongside the Hudson's Bay Company trading post. Like the traders, the missions participated in the mixed economy by hiring Cree families as seasonal labourers and harvesters. As at the trading post, the efforts of Cree people as harvesters and as labourers were crucial to sustaining the activities of the mission. The difference between the trading post and the mission's settlement however, was scale: the missionaries envisioned a town and in the early twentieth century created a 'new' settlement for Catholic Crees. I show here that the mission's settlement was the locus of Euro-Canadian attempts to control the economic, cultural and spiritual life of Cree people. But the mixed economy, Cree language and culture persisted.

From the earliest fur trade era the settlement has been integrated into the traditional regional economy through the mixed economy, a unique development within which Cree people hold a central position. The mixed economy has been highly adaptable for people from this region, and it has afforded Cree people a degree of autonomy and self-determination despite oppression. This is as clear today in the settlement's mixed economy as it was two hundred years ago when summer labour at the trading post was but one option for Cree trappers in the region. Thus my view of the development of the Fort Albany settlement is as one point on a larger 'map' of cultural, economic, social and political links around the region, and between the region and international and national interests.

Contemporary patterns of harvesting¹ and settlement throughout the north reflect the unique history of Aboriginal people in northern regions, as described in the RCAP final report:

The northern Aboriginal community is not just a collection of buildings. It extends beyond dwelling places to include land for fishing, gathering, visiting, trapping and hunting, and memorable places where important events occurred. Northern Aboriginal peoples' tenure in the settled communities of today is relatively recent; they have lived in more mobile, family-centred communities for centuries. In modern times, the attachment to the land and the strong sense of collectivity remains (1996a: 400).

In Fort Albany, spring and fall goose hunts take some people closer to James Bay, and fall moose hunts take people inland. Wintering in the bush, to hunt and trap, is one option for people today, as are extended summer camps for fishing. Cutting wood is done close to home, for some along a new road (built in 1994-1995 to construct a dyke) that runs a short way inland along the south branch of the Albany River, or on islands up river, logs towed home by boat in the fall. Plants and berries are collected on islands in the river, on the mainland, wherever anybody travels either close to the settlement or farther away. The branches of the river not affected by the new dyke project are used for net fishing throughout the summer, both on day trips and during late summer camp. The branch of the Albany River that flows along the mainland was used for net fishing until a small hydroelectric dam was erected in 1928 by the Catholic mission to supply their buildings.

¹ I am using the term 'harvesting' throughout to refer to all activities that make land based resources available for consumption by individuals, family groups and communities. 'Harvesting' thus includes subsistence hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering.

From the point of view of participants in the mixed economy today, like their ancestors, the settlement is one part of a larger territory.

There are other interpretations of these historical developments, however, which place the settlement and not the region at the centre of contemporary life in the north. In such arguments, contemporary settlements reflect a new norm of life in the James Bay region, where seasonal migration has changed into settlement:

[The] contemporary hunting pattern is the outcome of a policy of settling indigenous populations into centralized communities, a policy motivated by the belief that a land-based economy was not viable, and that indigenous peoples should be integrated into the modern wage economy. But wage opportunities were scarce, and large development projects were not significant providers of jobs for aboriginal people...Located far from game, people were able to provide for themselves only by channelling cash from transfer payments and wage employment into mechanized, rapid transportation for access to traditional resources (Berkes et al. 1995: 92).

This model of change reflects the consensus view in anthropology that settlements have disrupted seasonal migrations by hunter gatherers, with an implication that settlements reflect a comprehensive change in Omushkego life, and ultimately a loss. A community like Fort Albany is not just described, but also explained as the outcome of specific, irresistible forces when calling it a settlement in these terms.

My concern with the question of description becoming explanation is the potential for making absolute truths out of much more complex realities. In comparing the RCAP definition of community with the quote about settlement, it is clear that what community is and means today is not static, because settlements are coming to be adapted to the needs of Aboriginal people. Community means more than just a settlement, but also land,

resources and collective history. The discussion of history in this chapter emphasizes the role of innovation on the part of Cree families in the Fort Albany region through colonial history, so that the settlement at Fort Albany can be seen as a point in a web of economic, geographic and cultural relations.

Since before the fur trade, Cree people traced routes over great distances and more intensively in relatively small areas, adding to their seasonal rounds connections with trading posts, missions, hospitals and schools, building links between places all around the region and well beyond. These links have been created for diverse reasons, some of which continue to today, like education and work, while others are past, such as treatment for once widespread tuberculosis. Over three centuries, fur trade companies, federal and provincial governments have mapped and remapped the region. Missionaries followed routes established in the fur trade, and the federal government became involved in the community through the mission. And still, Cree people have made different maps, based in traditional uses of the land, and today, based in the move to renewed self-determination.

1650-1799: THE EXPANSION OF THE FUR TRADE INTO JAMES BAY

Fort Albany is the name given in 1683 to the trading post established sometime between 1674 and 1678 by the Hudson's Bay Company (Kenyon 1986: 11), which had been given charter to pursue their interests in Rupert's Land in 1670 by the King of England (Ray

and Freeman 1978: 25). Thus, Fort Albany was one of the first three Hudson's Bay Company posts in North America, the other two being Fort Charles and Moose Factory.

The French fur trade had been concentrated around Lake Superior, and thus had skirted the Hudson's Bay watershed. Before 1650, the fur trade was mainly carried out through inland travel from New France into and at the margins of these river systems (Ray and Freeman 1978: 23-25). A coastal fur trading post was a novel idea, and the Hudson's Bay Company's plan reoriented the inland fur trade (Ray and Freeman 1978: 42-43). As early as 1674, Bayly, then Governor of James Bay, found that people in summer residence at this point on the Albany river would be willing to meet the next year to trade (Kenyon 1986: 59). According to Ray and Freeman these coastal posts were quickly established and accepted because they provided a better selection of goods than the inland traders offered (for example, including cumbersome articles like kettles) and better returns for furs (1978: 33).

As a result Fort Albany was the busiest post by 1682, cementing the Hudson's Bay Company's decision to make this the governor's residence and to expand operations here. Between 1701-1715, Fort Albany was the most prosperous and active post for the English fur trade (Ray and Freeman 1978: 167). By 1682, English men were regularly wintering in the three posts, creating tensions with fur traders centred in New France. At the very least, James Bay and the English trade represented a leak in the French system that taxed furs as they left North America.

Fort Albany thus became an object of intercolonial warfare, taken over on behalf of the French government in 1686 by an overland expedition from New France. Fort Albany was renamed Fort St. Anne in 1686 by Father Silvy, a Jesuit who accompanied the raiding party. Their raid had taken place on the feast day of St. Anne, the patron saint of the party (Kenyon and Turnball 1971: 91). Today, the lake on the mainland, Peetabek, is called Lac Ste-Anne on most maps. The trading post was retaken by the English in 1693, when the five French who were running it were taken prisoner (Kenyon and Turnball 1970: 38).

POST ECONOMIES AND ALLIANCES WITH TRAPPERS

Without supplies from European ships, the trading posts were too frail to stay open. Despite this weakness, the trading posts remained vitally important to English and French commercial interests. But the posts were dependent on locally harvested food, and on Cree families to supply some of that country food.

The earliest surviving Hudson Bay post journal is for 1705-06 at Fort Albany (Brown 1980: 23), and it gives some important details about the situation at the post, offering some idea of the relationship between the maintenance of post life and local families. During 1705 to 1706 there were between 27 and 46 English men stationed at the post (Kenyon 1986: 91). This rather large population was necessary to maintain the post itself as a site for trade. The men maintained the buildings, tended to the herd of over thirty goats and fifty sheep, worked in gardens, sewed, worked at the forge, and many

other activities (Kenyon 1986: 88-89; 91). These men also hunted and fished throughout the winter on short excursions to the interior, and hunted in seasonal goose camps at the mouth of the Albany River (Kenyon 1986: 87). Despite all of this effort to self-sufficiency, the post was still heavily dependant on supplies from the company ships that visited annually, and from the arrangements with local harvesters that provided them with meat, fish and geese.

The local Cree harvesters who supplied country food to the company were among the families who came to goose camps and for summer fishing along the Albany River near James Bay, and around the lake on the mainland. The families Bayly met here in 1674 were here for that purpose, as were the families Governor Beale found camped in the area when he arrived in 1705 (Kenyon 1986: 86). The arrangements for the supply of country food were carefully managed. In 1706, the Chief Factor at Fort Albany distributed shot and powder to local hunters, and for each pound of powder and five pounds of shot, each harvester would return 15 geese to the post (Kenyon 1986: 90). These geese were all prepared at the goose camps before they were returned, cleaned (and in the spring, plucked) by the women in camp (Kenyon: 86-87). In 1744 Dobbs stated that Fort Albany depended on country food to feed post personnel and the home families (who he calls "friends") over the winter (1967 [1744]: 53). These home families are also local families, though wintering on the coast indicates that they had not moved inland in the fall to winter hunting and trapping camps.

The practice of stocking the posts through arrangements with local families involved relationships different from the fur trading relationship which was highly formalized and invoked social contracts between trader and trapper. As part of the fur trading relationship, bringing food to the posts was part of the process of building bonds with traders and Chief Factors, as described by Beale who received various gifts of food from trappers who came in the spring of 1705 (Kenyon 1986: 89, 90). On the other hand, the seasonal arrangements with hunters produced much larger quantities of food, enough to be stored and used throughout the year. The Chief Factor in Fort Albany in 1706 reported only one family employed year round, but does not specify the number of families bringing in country food (Kenyon 1986: 90). In 1790, based on his duty in James Bay between 1771 and 1779, Umfreville complains that the Hudson's Bay posts do not provide nearly enough of their own food, but instead wear down the Cree families employed as harvesters (1954 [1790]: 14). He claims that the posts could produce more from farming, instead of keeping trappers busy with hunting. He states that in Fort Severn some Indian families were engaged as hunters and for carrying furs down to Moose Factory for as much as six months of the year (Umfreville 1954 [1790]: 36).

The needs of the trading posts were part of the fortunes of the Cree people who were working there, either on a temporary or long-term basis, and as the post's needs changed, contracting and expanding in the 1700 and 1800's, these changes influenced the Cree families in the immediate area and the region. The mechanisms of English dependency on local families were firmly in place at Fort Albany by 1705: furs and food

were brought to the posts, and then redistributed among home families, post personnel and to other posts. From Dobb's account, and from Beale's, some of the country food was redistributed to local families, what Beale refers to as emergency rations. There were a number of families that lived around the post over the winter of 1705-6, described as destitute by the governor (Kenyon 1986: 88-89). Rabbits were scarce in the winter of 1705-06, and the Governor argues that this is the source of what he calls these families' destitution. Governor Fullartine had written in 1703 that similar conditions led one camp in the interior to resort to cannibalism (Kenyon 1986: 89). By "destitution", Beale and Fullartine mean that the families did not have the means to winter in the bush, lacking powder and shot and enough food to make the trip further inland to trap, nor were they provisioned for a winter in the bush. In the spring, Governor Beale sent these families up river, with minimal supplies of fish, oatmeal, powder and shot (Kenyon 1986: 88). Beale's actions suggest his concern was over the dependence of local people on the trading post, and that his interest was that they should pursue subsistence harvesting and trapping. His actions also suggest the complicated relationship between the post economy and the land-based economy.

While I am not able to reconstruct other reasons for the destitution of the families Beale describes, by 1706 the post system was part of an uneven exploitation of local families. That is, the imbalance appeared in the form of 'destitution' in the face of a well provisioned and prosperous trading post, able to sustain a large number of formal

employees while also exploiting the seasonal efforts of the harvesting families, offering assistance to these families only as 'emergency'.

As to the volume of trading activity at Fort Albany, in 1706, between April and June, there were eighty canoes through to trade, and over 16,000 beaver pelts taken in (Kenyon 1986: 90). In 1730, a total of 118 canoes come through Albany to trade: 35 canoes of Western Indians, 31 Upland Indians, 10 French Indians, 1 of "strange Indians", 22 Sturgeon Indians, 9 Jack Indians, 5 Moose River Indians and 5 Home Indians (Dobbs 1967 [1744]: 13). These two records demonstrate both the volume of activity in the region, but most important, the large distances travelled, and the mobility of trapping families throughout a vast area. Families most closely associated with the posts, as suppliers of food and middle men, played a decreasing role as suppliers of furs to the legal trade throughout the 18th century (Ray and Freeman 1978: 41), already apparent in Dobbs' report that each year some families worked extensively for the post.

Ray and Freeman argue that because the immediate area near the coast, the Hudson's Bay Lowlands, is not rich in furs, the "Home Guard Cree", as they were called by the Hudson's Bay Company Factors, were employed chiefly in providing food, and not as trappers (1978: 41; Brown 1980: 18-19). Gerhard Ens argues that the Home Guard Cree were heavily involved in the "illegal trade" of furs, from at least as early as 1716, but maybe as early as 1688. This trade was between families that lived in the region and men from the post who later traded these furs to ship's captains who stopped at the ports (Ens 1987). It was considered illegal because the furs were traded outside the Hudson's

Bay Company network, and so the Company did not profit from their sale in England. The illegal trade was particularly troubling at Fort Albany and Moose Factory in the mid-eighteenth century, according to Ens, having developed during the tenure of either weak or corrupt Chief Factors (1987: 394-95).

Illegal trade depended specifically on long-term associations between *mistigoshuk* (Englishmen) at the trading posts and Cree families. In a particular eighteenth century case at Moose Factory, the post employee Augustine Frost was reputed to have married a number of women, linking him to Cree families in the area. When Duffield took over to break this corruption at Moose Factory, he tried to contain Frost's activity, but Frost's trading partners just took their furs to the official trade at Fort Albany, by-passing Moose Factory (Ens 1987: 404-405, f.n. 67). The Cree partners were somewhat autonomous from both the trading post at Moose Factory and their trading partner, Frost.

Taking Ray and Freeman's analysis with Ens', both show the interdependence of traders and trappers in this region from the very beginnings of the English fur trade. Both underscore the complexity of the relationship, though Ens' argument shows negotiation, choice and autonomy on the part of the local people, whether they were acting as trappers themselves or as middlemen for more inland trappers. Ens, as well, underscores the mobility of families in the region.

The Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Albany lost its status as the most productive post by 1720, when inland traders travelling from Montreal began to apprehend trappers coming down the river to trade. The Hudson's Bay Company responded

eventually by opening Henley House in 1743, an inland post on the Albany River, but by this time, there was a great deal of competition for the inland trade, and the posts closer to James Bay never regained their footing as the most productive posts (Ray and Freeman 1978: 189).

REGIONAL INFLUENCES IN THE PRE-MISSION ERA: TO 1855

The Hudson's Bay post served as one point on an ever strengthening web of European influence in the region. O mushkego built relationships with this point on the larger map of trapping and harvesting areas, travel routes and other trading posts. The mobility of trappers through the region around Fort Albany was regular and patterned, and people's movements included visits to trading posts through the region. Mobility around the region is particularly important to understanding the parallel history of Cree people during the nineteenth century, and the history of the spread and use of syllabic writing was facilitated by Cree networks that covered the region.

Berry and Bennett argue that syllabics were disseminated by person-to-person contact from northern Manitoba, where the system had been introduced in 1840 by the Methodist minister John Evans at Norway House (Berry and Bennett 1989: 432). The events of a dramatic and short-lived syncretic Christian religious movement in this region in 1842-43 show the swift transmission of syllabic writing throughout northwestern Ontario. Reconstructed by Jennifer Brown, the movement included some of the families gathered in 1843 in Fort Albany for the spring goose hunt and summer camping (Brown

1982: 53). The major practice of adherents, as interpreted by the Hudson's Bay personnel ignorant of syllabic writing, was "painting books" (Brown 1982: 53).

Other examples of the spread of Cree literacy come from observations made by missionaries visiting the region. In 1852, the Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land, David Anderson, notes repeatedly in his trip down the Albany River to James Bay that people asked him for paper and pencils, and at Fort Albany that some men and women were literate (Anderson 1967 [1854]: 93, 96-7, 98). When Father Garin arrived in Fort Albany in 1855, he reported that the local population wrote Cree (Berry and Bennett 1989: 432). As an episode in the history of Cree people, the spread of syllabic writing is an indication of the social, linguistic and cultural links throughout the region. These cultural and social structures existed independent of the social structure of the trading post at Fort Albany, demonstrating that the overarching features of Cree life encompassed influences introduced in their territory, not necessarily the other way around.

Social organization in the trading post, however, was constantly developing in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company's interests, and before missionaries arrived in 1848, Hudson's Bay Company policies demonstrate both the pressure to manage the 'trading post' as a settlement-like community, and their reluctance to take on this role. In Fort Albany, the Hudson's Bay Company opened a day school in 1808 for the children of Cree women and company employees and the children of the "Chiefs of Trading Tribes friendly to the Company" (Brown 1980: 165). A former principal of the Fort Albany day school told me that the school once had records of a day school that opened in 1710, and

students had the surnames of post employees (Koens 1996, personal communication), but now all school records before the late 1970's are missing. In support of this report, Brown notes that the situation at Fort Albany in the early 1700's prompted an order from the committee to "hinder as much as possible" relationships between post men and Cree women due to the burden their children created for the trading post and the conflicts that erupted over such partnerships (1980: 13). In 1737 and 1771, British men stationed in Fort Albany requested permission from the committee in London to bring their country children to England (Brown 1980: 53, 56-57). These requests show that unions between local women and traders created significant populations and social bonds at the posts. Koens' report that a local school opened in the 18th century conflicts with Brown's findings that the first Hudson's Bay Company school opened in 1808 in Fort Albany. But both reports point to the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company took some role in modelling a settlement at Fort Albany. The company was therefore forced to accommodate to the social structure that emerged at the posts. The company's interest in the wider social structure of the post settlement was passing, however, as in 1811 the Hudson's Bay Company's attentions moved to supporting a colony at Red River (Brown 1980: 168).

Brown and Long both note that employment policies between the late 1700's and the arrival of missionaries indicate the existence of an otherwise unidentified Metis population, the children of trading post personnel and local women (Long 1986; Brown 1980). For example, in 1800, the Chief Factor at Fort Albany reported having apprenticed three children for permanent employment with the Fort (Brown 1980:160). However, by

the 1840's Metis families met with racial discrimination in the form of limits to their advancement through the ranks, reflecting pressure to improve profits for the Hudson's Bay Company (Long 1986: 141)².

The way that company policies changed to deal with Metis families around Fort Albany shows those families' importance to the post, but also their marginalization to the economic interests of the enterprise through the invention of colonial racial categorizations. As Brown argues, race and class were introduced into Company employment strategies in the 1820's, reserving lower paying jobs with little opportunity of advancement for country born and educated children (1980: 216-217). In this, the Hudson's Bay Company became a preserve of middle-class, British and White influence, as promotions were accessible only to men (and the sons of men) favourably measured in England's rigid class system (Brown 1980: 213). The Company's sphere of influence on social matters, however, was limited in some ways, given that fathers were not the only source of family ties, and the Company's social world was somewhat naturally limited by the practice of moving Company men after a number of years service. Not integrated into a trading-post settlement or into the mixed economy, fathers could disperse, with or without their country families, all the while not diminishing the social and family ties of the territory. The invention of racial and class categories to manage social life in the posts could easily fall into the hands of those profiting the most, the

² Sixty years later, the Hudson's Bay Company released outright a number of 'company families' at Fort Albany, creating an "exodus" to other posts and railway lines in 1902 (Long 1984: 142-43).

Hudson's Bay Company, if the need arose for such control. The Hudson's Bay Company's policies are most notable for this study, however, because other social structures coexisted within the regions around the trading posts.

In general before 1848 the Fort Albany trading post remained dependent on local resources for its survival, although it did expand agricultural production. The growing importance of Metis families to the operation of the posts did not displace the post's dependence on country food, or the seasonal migrations and mobility of Cree families, regarded as the conditions of Native life by missionaries in the mid 1800's. In fur trade history, anthropologists and historians argue the pre-mission era was a period of economic change for the Cree.

It is argued that during this era, Native populations in north western Ontario were separated into distinct segments by the fur trade, the Home Guard and more distant trappers. Bishop argues that the Home Guard Cree in the Mushkegowuk region were trapped by the arrangements whereby they received supplies from the post for their efforts as harvesters, because they were not able to move back inland as the winter came on after the fall hunt, not having enough provisions for the trip (Bishop 1984: 48). Ray and Freeman characterize the relationship as one of a growing dependence on trade goods by the Swampy Cree, thus a broader region-wide change in the economy (Ray and Freeman 1978: 41). However, Long argues that dependency of some kind was widespread only in times of famine throughout the region (Long 1986: 139), and so the Aboriginal population was constantly in a shifting, changeable relationship to the trading post.

Because my interest here is in the patterns of a settlement economy, it is difficult to balance the perspectives listed above: the Home Guard were not the only population attracted to Fort Albany, nor were they the only ones who were engaged as seasonal labour. Many characterizations imply that the Home Guard were part of a post economy that was separate from the regional land-based economy. Long's point that relationships between people in the region and the trading posts were influenced by other factors (such as famine) underscores my point: Cree people's relationships to the Fort Albany post were variable.

In order to understand the trading post as a pre-cursor to the contemporary settlement, it is important to understand the post's economic relationships as primarily motivated by the economic interests of the Hudson's Bay Company, and that Cree people pursued their own economic interests, both with and away from the post. My thrust is that the Hudson's Bay Company (and sometimes other traders) had access to resources otherwise unavailable to the Cree, and this was thus an inherently unbalanced relationship. While the post strived for self-sufficiency, the posts were in fact building partnerships in which they controlled access to European goods, benefitting from the combined efforts of the post's trading partners and the local people who supplied food to the post.

Black-Rogers has pointed out that describing economic change during the course of the fur trade is a complicated problem. The debate hinges on arguments about the perceived 'dependence' of Native populations on the Hudson's Bay Company, through dependence on European technology, goods and food (Black-Rogers 1987: 630). As one

answer to that problem, most contemporary authors explore the range of choices available during the fur trade for coastal families, and the range of responses. Francis and Morantz and Long argue that the families attached to the fur trade were neither aimless migrants nor ultimately dependant on the fur trade (Francis and Morantz 1983; Long 1986). Francis and Morantz attend to the dependence of trading posts on Native people, specifically dependence on indigenous technology and existing social practices for travelling and harvesting that made the trade possible (Francis and Morantz 1983: 168).

As described above, the most apparent feature of the first two centuries of activity in the Fort Albany settlement is European dependence on Cree families. Part and parcel with this conclusion is the exploitation of Cree people inside the fur trade, though this should not be mistaken for a complete passivity: many sources stress that Cree people in this region created complicated partnerships with traders.

Most important is to not mistake the exploitation of Cree people for the forces that have ultimately led to 'settlement': Cree people have adapted the economies based in migration to the market oriented economy associated with settlement in complex ways. In the same way, the choice of settlement living should not be taken as synonymous with economic change, where one economy replaced another. The mixed economy was the mechanism through which the cash economy of the settlement was integrated into the regional economy, and so even today the settlement's economy operates within this wider sphere of cultural and economic influence.

The migrations of Omushkego families continued throughout this region until the twentieth century. The trading posts continually built partnerships (both temporary and long-term) with families moving around the region. The Catholic mission built similar social and economic relationships, but their activities changed a trading post into a mission settlement with very different implications for Cree people.

1848-1902 - EARLY MISSION ACTIVITY

In the region around Fort Albany, Wesleyan, Anglican and Catholic missionaries were active from the middle of the nineteenth century, though the history of the Fort Albany settlement is most intimately linked to the Roman Catholic mission. The first missionaries to make a concerted effort to work around the trading posts on James Bay were Wesleyan missionaries, who arrived in Moose Factory in 1840 (Paul-Émile 1952: 79)³, but left some time before 1852 (Snyder 1976: 122 fn 22). The Wesleyan Reverend Barnley had made at least one trip to Fort Albany, but the Anglican Anderson reports his contact with the post was brief (Anderson 1854: 94-95). The Roman Catholic Jesuit Garin was alerted to the presence of the Wesleyans in 1847, and by 1848 had Governor Simpson's permission to hold the first itinerant Jesuit mission to Fort Albany (Paul-Émile 1952: 79-80).

³ Passages from Sister Paul-Émile 1952 La Baie Trois Cents ans d'histoire militaire, économique, missionnaire, Jean Nicholas Laverlochere 1848 "Mission de la Baie d'Hudson: lettre du R. P. Laverlochere a Mgr. l'évêque de Bytown", and Jules Leguerrier "École Résidentielle D'Albany: Réflexions Historiques (1944-1994) translated by the author.

Laverlochere, an associate of Garin's, made the first Roman Catholic religious mission to Fort Albany in 1848. He met with a warm reception from the Chief Factor at Fort Albany, an Irish Catholic who informed him of the protestant's activities (Laverlochere 1848: 17-18). Laverlochere met with a cool reception from the Cree families he visited, however, which he blames on the propagandizing of the Wesleyans (1848: 21-23). He did record his first baptisms in 1851 (Paul-Émile 1952: 86).

This kind of skirmish between Protestant and Catholic missions in Fort Albany was repeated again and again. The Hudson's Bay Company, or rather the governing Committee in London, was implicated in this ongoing rivalry by their formal decision in 1851 to support the Anglican Church Missionary Society at their posts (Paul-Émile 1952: 86). Despite recorded tensions, the Jesuit and Anglican missions coexisted in Fort Albany for many years. From 1860 the Anglicans had a permanent mission in Fort Albany (Snyder 1976: 126), and the Roman Catholics made annual visits.

Jesuits made itinerant missions to Fort Albany during the summer for services, baptisms and marriages, in 1848, 1851 and each year between 1853 and 1891 (Paul-Émile 1952: 88). These itinerant missions extended up the James Bay coast and inland to the other posts linked to Fort Albany (Paul-Émile 1952: 89). The missionaries' goals were to end polygamous marriages and baptize infants, though declarations of faith from adults were also sought. Finally, in 1892, the Roman Catholic Mission established a permanent Oblate residence (Leguerrier 1994: 1).

SETTING THE STAGE: MISSIONARY ACCOUNTS OF FORT ALBANY

Permanent Anglican and Roman Catholic missions grew out of the itinerant missions, and these missions were intended to start settlements where missionaries could attend to the needs of the Cree people. These needs, as I show below, were defined by the missionaries, and shaped each mission's practice. Each mission had its own plan for their work, and I include two visions here to show that the arguments for opening missions were woven into the politics of colonial rule. I think the missions' plans show that their ideas were tied to the immediate historical circumstances facing a colonial government: 'civilizing' Omushkego people, as is clear in the following, meant providing them with European civilization, with a particular emphasis on economic structures.

Laverlochere's account of the region between Moose Factory and Fort Albany borders on hysteria, framed in his terror of the 'wilderness' he encounters. I cite him at length here to show what I see as the opening of a discourse about poverty and civilization that the competing missions exploit for over a century.

All of these Indians, no matter what tribe, appear grimy and disgusting, and the first impression they make denotes their deep poverty. They still have their hunting territories, it is true, endowed with the animals whose precious furs are the wealth of the English company; but the flesh is as inedible as the skin is valuable. Black, brown and grey bears, hares, and beavers, plus some other mammals, are about the only meat that they can eat. All the rest, like the wolf, black and red foxes, martin, otter, weasels, etc, do not provide enough food during times of extreme famine. Deer, buffalo, and caribou which live on the prairies to the North West do not live in these parts. So the Indians who live far away from the Hudson's Bay posts are forced to devour one another in times of crisis. They may even eat the bodies of their own children! (Laverlochere 1848: 20).

Laverlochere's evaluation of the condition of Native life is most strikingly a condemnation of the harvesting economy, itself a mark of the Crees' lack of civilization.

After telling the story of one cannibalism, Laverlochere hurries to add: "This scene would be repeated everyday if it was not for the generosity of the Hudson's Bay Company, and I never saw them refuse to give a little bit to someone in need" (Laverlochere 1848:21). For Laverlochere, it was this charitable role that made the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Albany a stronghold of civilization in an otherwise uncivilized wilderness, a role that a mission could better fill. While Laverlochere does not outline specific plans for a mission in his report, his descriptions support an economic intervention as the path to civilization, especially an intervention that displaces the fur trade: the Hudson's Bay Company is also viewed as an agent of Cree misery, for the pursuit of furs reaps few benefits for the Crees in Laverlochere's view. Civilization and a particular style of economy are one and the same for Laverlochere.

The next earliest mission account of Fort Albany is from David Anderson, Bishop of Rupert's Land, who visited the Hudson's Bay post in 1852 on a round trip from Lower Fort Garry to Moose Factory via James Bay. Anderson's observations in 1852 starkly contrast with Laverlochere's from four years earlier, but they indicate similar economic justifications and motivations for creating a settlement. Here is his primary argument for installing a permanent mission at the company post on James Bay:

It will be comparatively an inexpensive mission. The proximity to the Bay and ships saves a very large outlay on inland freight, which presses heavily on the Red River, the Saskatchewan, and Fairford. All the Indians, too, are

in the employment of the Honourable Hudson [sic] Bay Company, and therefore their support does not weigh so much on the minister and the Church Missionary Society (Anderson 1967 [1854]: 273).

By linking up with the Hudson's Bay Company, the mission would have access to both existing supply routes, and a population of Crees to proselytize. Tellingly, the availability of employment to Crees is a positive aspect of life in the country, even a prerequisite of civilization for Anderson, who, like Laverlochere projects the need for economic reforms into the process of civilizing the Native population. Anderson, like Laverlochere who lauds the trading post as a point of civilization in an unformed and dangerous wilderness, proposes the structure of a settlement as necessary to the work of providing civilization to the Crees:

[A settlement] would be especially desirable for the aged, for orphans, and young people. I know well that the circumstances of the country, the want of provisions, the difficulties of agriculture, are very formidable barriers; but still I hope that there may gradually be some spot selected and marked out where, while the husband hunts, he might leave his wife and children, near the means of grace (Anderson 1967 [1854]: 274).

Anderson's view of potential settlement is consistent with colonial ideals of settlement, which prescribe year round residence, education and agriculture. He identifies the 'wants' of the Cree people in the region through this ideal of settlement, and identifies what were to become the major themes of missionizing in Fort Albany: employment, settled nuclear families headed by a working man, and Christian education. It is important to note here that this is not intended to be a European settlement, but rather a settlement for Crees who will be civilized by the shape of life in a settlement. Most importantly, Anderson and

Laverlochere both build economic relations into their plans for missionization, in manners that discount, even dismiss the harvesting economy.

An uncomplicated view of temporary economic hardship appears in an excerpt from Thomas Vincent's journal, and while it underscores other missionaries' themes of poverty, it does not necessarily act as a justification for settlement, only for charity. Vincent built the permanent Anglican mission in Fort Albany in 1860, and wrote in his journal in 1862:

Taking the Albany Indians collectively, I do not suppose that another tribe will be found between this and the Rocky Mountains as poor as they are. In winter it is a miracle how many of them live; with very scanty clothing and that generally in tatters they are obliged to seek a livelihood where there is very little to be found. Where there used to be an abundance of game there is now very little to be got. Rabbits, the Indian's staple food, have disappeared entirely from the coast within the last few years; but now that they speak of them in the interior we may have a few on the coast next winter (Vincent, quoted in Snyder 1976:128).

Unlike the Roman Catholic Laverlochere, Vincent argued that harvesting had only recently become an inadequate livelihood. However, by characterizing the land-based economy as a desperate pursuit of subsistence, I think his statements align with the justification of missions as a means of providing charity, which is always an economic justification. The motivation to provide charity was linked to these characterizations of Cree people as suffering hardship as a consequence of their lack of culture and economy, a simultaneous justification of the permanent missions.

In October 1995 when we read the passage from Vincent's journal in the Shabotowan writing workshop in Fort Albany, the first comment Mike Solomon, one of

the trainees, made was "Nothing ever changes. We're still poor." Our collective analysis in that session pointed to the relationship between judgement and representation, and the ways that people make representations from within their own models. Collectively, missions saw Fort Albany as the sum of 'needs', and what was lacking was a form of economy centred in a settlement. Fort Albany was never viewed as a European homeland, but rather as an outpost of charity that would encourage 'civilization', since missionaries viewed the Cree people as lacking a culture and economy. The missions saw their role as managing the process of civilizing the Native population, by providing the charity necessary to the mission's view of material comfort: charity would make up for what the missionaries believed was an inadequate (even nonexistent) economy. The mission's agenda is a direct contrast to the Hudson's Bay Company, which had early established that their role as 'settlement builder' was minimal, and so the company had continued to encourage the land-based economy. For missionaries, even Vincent, it was the inadequacy of the land-based economy that kept Cree people 'savage'.

PATTERNS OF MISSION SETTLEMENT

For the missionaries, the Hudson's Bay Company was the thin edge of the wedge that would provide civilization to Omushkegowuk. Through intimate association with the Hudson's Bay Company, missions benefitted from the supply routes, regional contacts and infrastructure that the company had become part of and created. Missions added a layer

of 'settlement' at Fort Albany that the Hudson's Bay Company had reserved for the Red River colony.

Despite the contrast between missions and the Company, the practices of the posts and the missions overlapped in their desire to be self-sufficient, depending as little on imports as possible. The missions built an infrastructure at Fort Albany that they hoped would sustain more than the mission itself; it would also support a Cree community. In building this settlement purportedly on behalf of Crees, I argue that the missions expanded the scale of the post's practices of hiring seasonal labours, and thus expanded the role of the settlement as a source of resources for Cree people who visited the post seasonally.

When Anderson arrived in Fort Albany in 1852, he noted that the Hudson's Bay Company had hay fields in which everyone at the post worked (1967 [1854]: 93, 99, 273). This is the seasonal labour in which families worked while camped at the post over the summer. The hay fed the company's cattle in Fort Albany, cattle that supplied all of the posts in the James Bay region (Anderson 1967 [1854]: 180). The company had also continued the practice of harvesting country food. Anderson reports that the hunt the year before, the fall of 1851, was 20,000 geese (and maybe waves) which were the staple food most of the year. This preserved food was also used to pay the Cree people who worked for the trading post (1967 [1854]: 181). Instead of having the game brought to the trading post, the company sent one of their boats out to the coast to collect the geese there (Anderson 1967 [1854]: 181), indicating the scope of the company's share. Finally,

Anderson also mentions household employees at the trading post, two young women, presumably domestics employed year round (1967 [1854]: 95).

On his visit in summer 1848, Laverlochere encountered a summer tent settlement of Cree families at the trading post, and trappers from Osnaburg and Lac Seul, both inland on the Albany River (1848: 18). His report underscores patterns of migration through the region, and the integration of trading posts into seasonal migrations. The Hudson's Bay Company, thus, was still a trading enterprise when the missionaries arrived, and posts continued to offer seasonal employment to some camped at the posts during the summer. The pattern of depending on local families to provision the posts changed to incorporate expanded agriculture, and some Metis families were integrated as post personnel. It is this economy of 'self-sufficiency' that the missions replicated as they expanded in Fort Albany, and with permanent missions came seasonal wage labour for Cree families.

Between 1848 and 1902, the two missions competed to expand their operations, though their influence in the community and the region was minimal in this period compared to later developments. Anderson wrote to George Simpson in 1852 to request assistance to build a permanent Anglican-run school in Fort Albany (1967 [1854]: 183). An Anglican summer day school was in place by 1867, under Thomas Vincent, who taught students from Cree bibles and to read English (Snyder 1976: 129-130). The Roman Catholic missionaries used syllabic religious texts starting in 1854 (Paul-Émile 1952: 88), and like the Anglicans, their adherents would copy the texts to show to the missionaries

(Anderson 1967 [1854]: 99). The style of missionizing was thus no longer itinerant, with short visits to Cree encampments, but was by 1860 a rather formal process. Formal education through missions on the James Bay coast thus reappropriated Cree literacy (which had spread to the coast by 1842) into the process of gaining Cree support for their missions.

Both missions were funded by the larger organizations to which they belonged, Anglicans depending on the Church Missionary Society (Snyder 1976: 121) and Roman Catholics on the Oblate brothers and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (Paul-Émile 1952: 273). Both missions were also closely tied to the Hudson's Bay Company, and used the company for transportation, accommodation and purchasing supplies (Paul-Émile 1952: 93, and *passim*; Snyder 1976: 123). These links were the source of some tension when the Roman Catholic priest Fafard arrived to start the permanent mission in 1892. While the company assisted him and the brothers with food and accommodations, soon after he announced that he was setting up a permanent mission (1894), the Chief Factor declared that it would be treason for any of the Native families to visit this new Catholic mission (Paul-Émile 1952: 96). The Roman Catholic's intimate connection with the post began to fade after 1894, and it became more and more independent as it built its own infrastructure.

The charitable interests of the Roman Catholic mission were apparent before the permanent mission. Between 1870-73, Father Nedelec distributed food and provisions that he purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company to widows, orphans and "have-nots" (Paul-

Émile 1952: 89-90). In 1884 the itinerant missionaries began a practice of distributing food and hunting supplies each day of their services (Paul-Émile 1952: 91). The Catholic mission was established early on as a source of resources, and, by at least 1901, as a source of seasonal employment like the Hudson's Bay Company (Paul-Émile 1952: 99-100).

Thus missions became permanent, and developed strategies to attract and keep parishioners before the introduction of the residential school system to the region (1903 Fort Albany and 1905 Moose Factory). Paul-Émile argues that itinerant missions by the Roman Catholic missionaries eventually gave way to permanent missions so that people came to the posts to practice their religion (1952: 93-94). In 1957, Renison, formerly an Anglican missionary at Fort Albany also noted that posts at Albany and to the north were primarily Catholic, while the Moose River region was Anglican, and that this division was created by the patterns of the separate missions (1957: 63). In fact, the Roman Catholic mission had established itself in the region at the coastal Hudson's Bay posts, from where they could also travel inland. The Anglicans had focused on Moose Factory and west to newer company establishments.

The apparent separation of missions does not imply that their spheres of influence were completely discrete, however, because any individual's adherence to one church or the other is not demonstrated as absolute, at least not until after the residential school system was created (Edmund Metatawabin, personal communication 1995). Instead, the major expansions of the two missions at the turn of the century coincide with hardship

caused by a decline in the fur trade in the James Bay region, part of the motivation for Treaty 9, signed at Fort Albany in 1905 (Long 1986: 144). After 1905, the missions in Fort Albany and Moose Factory were funded in part by the federal government, providing health care and education on the part of the Canadian government.

The expansion of mission settlements is thus coincident with federal support for the provision of health care and education in northern regions of Canada. Despite official annual support from the national government during the twentieth century, these missions pursued settlement level self-sufficiency from the earliest mission era. The missions thus added a layer of economic activity at what had originally been a trading post. Like the Hudson's Bay Company, missions were a source of European goods, food and cash for the region. Like the trading post, even early missions depended heavily on local resources, and on the work of Cree families. The Roman Catholic mission attributes its successes in early years to the brother's dedication to harvesting and farming (Paul-Émile 1952:), though there is no mention of seasonal employment until 1901. Renison, posted at Fort Albany after Vincent in 1899, makes a strange and contradictory set of statements about this issue:

Every ounce of provisions and every yard of cloth came over in the little sailing vessel which reached Albany every year about the middle of August (1957: 37).

He is either not talking about food, or blinded to his dependency, as earlier he had written: "in my larder there were usually five or six deer, two or three hundred ducks, and

dozens of geese" (1957: 36). While missions were dependent on local resources, it is not clear from Renison's writing if he was depending on local hunters for this supply of food.

The missions offered local families access to some resources, seasonal employment and 'charity', similar to the Hudson's Bay Company. The missions, however, had very different 'returns' to make, as they were motivated by their visions of civilization, and not by maintaining trading partnerships. This becomes clearest during the residential school era at Fort Albany, when the Roman Catholic mission created an extensive settlement.

1903-1974 THE MISSION SCHOOL ERA

The Roman Catholic mission expanded all of its operations in 1903 and opened the residential school run by the Grey Nuns who had arrived in 1902 (Leguerrier 1994: 2). This first expansion took place two years before Treaty 9 made provision for education and health care to the Fort Albany Band. Over the next seventy years, the Roman Catholic mission managed the building of a whole settlement infrastructure: residences, a hospital, a school and town services. Throughout this era, the mission depended on donations from Catholic organizations, funding from the federal government and the labour of Cree families. After the turn of the century, the mission replaced the Hudson's Bay Company as the most influential colonial institution at Fort Albany, building a monopoly of control over the practices at the settlement.

In 1901 Thomas Vincent's official Census noted that there were 375 members of the Church of England and 275 Roman Catholics in Fort Albany (Snyder 1976: 130 fn

75). That same year, Cree and Metis families in Fort Albany were employed for the summer by the mission as labourers building a hospital and housing for the nuns (Paul-Émile 1952: 99-100). The hospital run by the Catholic mission served the whole community. Established by Fafard in 1894, it was expanded in 1904 by the Grey Nuns (Leguerrier 1994: 3). The Anglican mission had continued to provide parallel services. As Renison notes in 1899 his first act was as physician (1957: 35-37), though this must have been displaced by the formal hospital.

The scale of the fur trade was changing in the region as well, and Revillon Freres entered in 1904, ushering in an era of free traders and a new kind of competition within the bounds of the post (Paul-Émile 1952: 101). The wage economy was expanding at Fort Albany, and the economy of harvesting continued. Cree families incorporated the expanding wage economy and expanding services at the post, continuing patterns of seasonal employment, and using the school and hospital.

When the residential school opened in 1903 it had 32 boarders, a small number if the Roman Catholic population in 1901 was 275 (Leguerrier 1994:1). The missionaries promoted school attendance, arguing specifically that they would take care of children who were unable to accompany their parents to the bush. Their argument that children required the protection of the school was part of the mission's self-justification. The issue of how and why children were put in residential school is very complicated, mostly because the mission had one view of 'how and why', and the Cree families had another.

Schools had been a part of mission activity in Fort Albany since at least 1847, under Wesleyan missionaries, and after 1862 under the Anglicans Vincent and Renison (Snyder 1976: 126; Renison 1957: 34-40). Vincent noted that many of his students were adults, many who specifically wanted to learn to read English (Snyder 1976: 130). In the mid-twentieth century, Leguerrier reports: "Sometimes people arrived saying 'I am happy to bring my child. He knows Cree, I want him to learn religion well and a bit of English'. We received hundreds of students in this way" (1994: 6). Generally, education is highly valued in Fort Albany today, though it is not measured merely by 'the ability to speak English' or in any way that might be familiar to Leguerrier. Cree people saw use and value in the kind of classroom education the missions provided, but the Roman Catholic mission had different reasons for the school.

The school would ensure the conversion of Cree people to Christianity. The earliest missionaries (both Anglican and Roman Catholic) complained that their conversions were temporary (Snyder 1976: 130-131; Anderson 1967 [1954] 188; Paul-Émile 1952: 91-92). Arthur Bilodeau, the principal of St. Anne's school from 1919-1938 (Paul-Émile 1952: 124) linked the goal of conversion to the self-justification of the school. Leguerrier writes: "During his time as principal, Father Bilodeau demanded the attendance of the children in the school for at least three years. This permitted instruction in preparation for the sacraments" (1994: 5). After 1905, the residential school was funded annually by the Department of Indian Affairs (Paul-Émile 1952: 102). The mission's role

as educator was thus also on behalf of the Federal Government, to administer services to 'needy Indians'.

The mission argues for the school's charitable role in a way that depends on the portrayal of Fort Albany people as poor and dependent on the mission, a theme that began with Laverlochere in 1848 who portrayed people as dependent on the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1932 a new school opened, with sixty students, double the enrolment in 1926 (Paul-Émile 1952: 120). Sister Paul-Émile links 'poverty' to the practices of the school when she writes:

The rising number of Catholics in Fort Albany is not the only explanation for this increase. The Indians understood the benefits of the school. Further, since 1928 food shortages were common in their camps, caused by the scarcity of game and the inadequacy of the hunt. Sometimes a 'famine' is a good thing (1952:120).

The increase Paul-Émile is explaining occurred during Bilodeau's tenure as principal, and he was the first to impose a minimum term of school attendance, which also contributed to the increase in enrolment. Most important, Paul-Émile shows that the mission justified the residential school system by portraying Cree families as dependent on the mission.

In 1994, Jules Leguerrier, principal at St. Anne's 1945-1957 (1994: 4) acknowledges today's awareness that residential schooling disrupted the student's family lives and therefore the student's education in the family setting. When he writes about Bilodeau's practice of demanding three years of school, Leguerrier confirms that children were removed from an important learning environment:

At the same time, it did not pull them away from their culture and the way of life that would be their future. As much as one might be cautious about the future of the fur industry and the ability of families to survive through trapping and hunting, it is not possible to hurt this industry. Very often I remember hearing: my child has done three years, and he is finished. (Leguerrier 1994: 6).

Considering that students came to attend for eight years in 1957, it is not surprising that one of his concluding remarks acknowledges the devastating disruption caused by school attendance. Leguerrier responds to the "accusation" that Cree people were prevented from learning their language and culture in residential school: "the accusations regarding the culture are more complex [than the language issue] and require greater consideration. I will leave it to others to further this subject" (1994: 12).

Others are addressing the subject. Susan Metatawabin wrote about her experience of coming down to St. Anne's residential school while she was working on the Shabotowan project. This happened a few years before the residential school closed in 1974:

While we were walking in the bush one day, my father told me that I had to start school soon. He took me in the bush so he could teach me those things, and so I would remember. And that was the last time I went to the bush, because that following summer we came down to Fort Albany by plane. I had to leave my puppies, six of them. And I forgot my baby snowshoes too. I used to love those and carry them wherever I'd go. I didn't have a baby doll, what I cared about was those little snowshoes. While I was in school, I kept thinking of going back to the bush (written for the Shabotowan project 1995: 2).

By this time students had to attend school under Indian Affairs regulations, and so Metatawabin's parents had little choice in the matter. Her father's concern that his

daughter was losing her contact to him as an educator points to his awareness of the devastating effects of residential schooling, which most adults from the region had experienced by 1970.

Thus, missionaries were not the only ones with an opinion about 'education', or the residential school in Fort Albany. My argument is that there is a parallel story here, about the value that Cree families placed on different kinds of education, and about their resistance to the disruptive effects of residential school. Susan Metatawabin's story above shows her father's explicit resistance to the effects of residential education on family and cultural life.

There are other examples from the missionary record that Cree people resisted the residential aspect of the school, and the school's imposition of care taking. Leguerrier reports that the number of boarders dropped sharply after three children disappeared from the school one winter (maybe 1945), never to be found (1994: 2). Parents would remove their children after three years, even after Bilodeau was gone. The records from the residential school are missing (Leguerrier 1994: 12). They would be a source of information on the amount of time parents chose to keep their children in school. All in all, the motivations and strategies used by local families to negotiate their children's education with the mission are poorly documented at present, though it is clear that the mission's interest was to enforce longer terms of attendance, and to have the largest possible number of children in school.

Looking at the missionary argument for the value of formal Euro-Canadian style education, Leguerrier acknowledges that the school intended to displace the Cree way of life:

With the closing of the school in Fort Albany and the other changes today, I am left with many questions. It is undeniable that the present system has its benefits and drawbacks. It has certainly improved the education of the Indians. In the case of Fort Albany specifically, it was the only way to deter the nomadic life of the families. This hope of settlement is what made the system of schools possible in Indian villages in the North (Leguerrier 1994: 14).

The mission's intentions were to displace one economic and cultural system and replace it with another. Leguerrier's evaluation of seasonal migrations is also reflected in his overall evaluation of harvesting when he arrived in 1944:

The Indians lived on Sinclair Island, in cabins and tents. The island had a population of about 300, the majority leaving for the winter for their hunting territories. Their burden at that time was still obligatory nomadism. In fact it was impossible to live in the village; we had not entered the era of social services, old age pensions and family benefits. Widows and the infirm lived from hand to mouth with the meagre rations they were given by the Hudson's Bay Company in the name of the government. The others were forced to search for food in the vast wilds (1994: 2).

The argument for the mission's role in Fort Albany, as made by missionaries themselves, never failed to link their role as 'benefactors' to a negative evaluation of the trapping and harvesting culture and economy. As demonstrated above, this bias to view harvesting as a consequence of 'poverty' is consistent with the earliest missionary accounts. This bias serves to support the mission's argument that Cree people were dependent on the mission. This assumption of dependency, in turn portrays Cree people in the region as taking no

role in their own history, as if they simply accepted the economic and political direction set by the mission.

Leguerrier makes a statement in 1994 that underscores how powerful the mission's own logic about its importance can be:

Some have accused the schools of preventing them from speaking their first language. This is certainly not the case in Fort Albany. The language was used in the school every day for teaching. For a long time our liturgy has been in the Indian language, and it was the language of our classrooms in the boarding school (1994: 12).

The mission however cannot take credit for maintaining the Cree language in Fort Albany.

It is true that Roman Catholic missionaries in colonies around the world chose to work in the indigenous language. This may be a stroke of luck for Fort Albany, but the Roman Catholic mission is not responsible for the value Cree people put on their own language, as is demonstrated by Annie Ashamock. Ashamock's mother taught her Cree syllabics before she came to the residential school so they could carry on a correspondence when they were apart. Two other people told me how their mothers had taught them to write Cree syllabics when they were children in the bush. Cree literacy is a tradition in this region, as discussed earlier, and not dependent on the mission. Instead, the mission overlaid formal education on a regional practice of teaching and learning syllabics, which may have endured from the mid-nineteenth century.

MISSION ECONOMY

The alliance between the Federal government's practice of providing for the region's population through other agents and the Roman Catholic mission's religious and economic interests in the region meant that the mission received annual funding to run the school. At the level of the settlement (coupled with the hierarchical structure of the mission itself), this arrangement meant that control over many aspects of social life in the settlement was consolidated in the mission, especially in the Principal of the school. In fact, most of the activities that made the mission in Fort Albany central to life in the settlement were based in its control of a number of economic structures, administered from a 'town' site. The Roman Catholic mission's control over life in the settlement became most apparent during Bilodeau's time as principal at St. Anne's (which also put him in control of all developments in the settlement), when the Roman Catholic Mission moved away from the site of the old trading post and started a separate community (see Map 2).

The original mission at the Hudson's Bay Post was prone to flooding, and so in 1932 the Roman Catholics moved their mission to the mainland, near Peetabek (Lac Ste-Anne), the present site of local administration (Leguerrier 1994: 1). The move to the mainland separated the Anglican and the Roman Catholic missions, and the Anglican mission remains to the north in Kashechewan.⁴ After the move, families who had children

⁴ The Anglican mission later moved to the present site of Kashechewan. Contact is still regular today between the two communities and some families have residences at "halfway", on the river between Kash and Albany. The organization of Mamawehitowin

at the school, and who worked during the summer for the Roman Catholic mission made their summer residence on the mainland. These families were forced to relocate to Sinclair Island in 1937 by Bilodeau. The division of the mainland and Sinclair Island communities created an administrative base on the mainland, and a separate Catholic Cree village.

By the time the community was moved to Sinclair Island, the mission had a number of economic structures in place, which were central to life in the settlement. The missionaries had always cut their own wood, for lumber and firewood, and they expanded operations to build the new hospital and school in 1932 (Paul-Émile 1952: 110, 115, 116). A sawmill was started in 1927, converted to steam in 1933 (Paul Émile 1952: 117, 121), and the mission ran this enterprise until around 1970 as the Oblate Brother Charpantier described to me in Fort Albany in 1995 (Charpantier 1995 personal communication). Besides providing lumber to all the Catholic missions in the district (Leguerrier 1994:2) the missionaries would cut the wood people brought for their houses, keeping one log for each one planed in the sawmill (Charpantier 1995: personal communication).

Around 1960 Indian Affairs began to pay the mission to cut lumber for housing, but this practice was discontinued shortly after (Charpantier 1995 personal communication) when pre-fab houses were shipped from Kapuskasing (Edmund Metatawabin personal communication 1995). While the sawmill operated on a co-op basis, it could provide lumber for development of mission infrastructure in Fort Albany and in

(the annual traditional gathering at the old post) has some years been co-organized by representatives from both communities, and is one example of how they recognize their shared history outside mission influence.

other Catholic mission settlements in the region. While it operated for Indian Affairs, it was a commercial operation.

The mission's plan of building also always depended on hiring Cree workers, first for the school and the student's residence in 1903 (Leguerrier 1994: 1), later and more intensively for the existing cement block school on the mainland, completed in 1959 (Leguerrier 1994: 6-7). The intensive building projects attracted workers from throughout the region (John Scott 1995 personal communication). Workers were paid with rations (Paul Koostachin 1994 personal communication) and with "mission money".

The mission paid workers with its own money, coins minted out of barrel rings, and these were exchanged at the mission-run store for the goods the missionaries transported by barge down river from the rail line in the interior (Leguerrier 1994: 3; Abraham Metatawabin 1994 personal communication; John Scott 1995 personal communication). The mission money could only be used at the mission store and bakery, and when people required goods that the mission store did not carry (like a tent for example), they were given chits good for the item at the Hudson's Bay Company post or the free trader's store (Abraham and Theresa Metatawabin 1994 personal communication; Mary Jane Stark 1995 personal communication). The mission would then reimburse the store with cash (Mary Jane Stark 1995 personal communication).

Leguerrier says that the mission money provided a further benefit for the mission, though he frames it as a benefit to Cree workers: "With the fruit of their labour, they could procure powder and shot to hunt geese and wavees at the mouth of the river, as a

supplement to their diet. The surplus was purchased by the mission and preserved for the winter" (1994: 3). The geese and wavees preserved by the mission were used to feed children in the residential school. Additional to the work of building the mission, these people were also feeding their own children in the residential school, while the school received grants from the federal government.

The arrangement with the mission also recalls the Hudson's Bay Company's practice of trading for geese and wavees and similarly shows the dependency of the mission on Cree families. The Cree families continued their access to trade goods in this relationship with the mission, while this also shows the central position of Cree people in the mixed economy, through their established practices of harvesting.

As they expanded the activity at the residential school, the missionaries expanded their farming and harvesting, the major expansion between 1908 and 1952, with a total of 120 acres on the mainland near Lake St. Anne cleared by 1952 for crops (Paul-Émile 1952: 106-107). By 1910, the students in the school were working for the mission's provisions as well, assisting in the fishery and in the fields (Paul-Émile 1952: 110). The pattern of using some students to work in the fields persisted until at least the early 1960's, given the recollections of former students. Some students stayed on for a few years after their education was completed, working all year in the school, and staying with their families only when they were camped for the summer in the village. This appears to be especially true of young women, who were paid infrequently and worked mainly for room and board. Again, the students, like their parents, sustained the mission school.

The mission's settlement economy was integral to their own agenda of providing civilization to the people of the region. Leguerrier and others refer to the mission as the only employer (1994: 3) of adults during the 1940's, though from as early as 1902, people migrated from this region, for seasonal work with the railway, in berry picking, forestry, and for permanent jobs in Northern Ontario towns and cities (John Scott 1995 personal communication; Joseph Gull 1995 personal communication; Long 1986: 144). The missionaries considered 'work' as central to their goals of 'civilizing' Cree people, and this explains their insistence that they were creating 'employment'. It is clear from the previous discussion that this was not the kind of employment that gave people control over resources, however, but instead served the interests of the mission. Like the Hudson's Bay Company before them, the mission created its own pattern of exploiting local people and local resources. The mission's structure, however, was all in the service of building and managing settlement life, or more accurately prescribing the shape of life through its economy, religious practices and education.

Both Roman Catholic and Anglican missions were particularly interested in breaking the trapper's credit and debt cycle with the trading post (Renison 1957: 47-48), and for the Roman Catholics this was a mark of "civilization". In a statement that reflects how intimately the Roman Catholic mission linked its own form of economic

development to its work of civilizing Crees, Paul-Émile quotes and interprets a passage from the 1934 mission journal⁵:

'The experience proves the Indians who worked for us this summer left for the hunt in good health and well dressed without a debt to the companies. As well, they leave knowing the dignity and benefits of organized labour'.... Given the chance to work with the brothers, the Indians developed a spirit of initiative to improve themselves. The work of civilization operates unconsciously in this country (Paul-Émile 1952:122).

This is a familiar theme in Canadian colonial history, and has appeared as Federal justification for reserves, where Aboriginal people would "relieve their savage idleness through labour" (Canada, RCAP 1996b: 973). Paul-Émile and the mission journal's author betray the fact that the mission's economy was a prescription for civilization which in turn justified the mission's activities. The mission provided a physical context in which the effort of Cree families and Cree children constituted civilization, in which these people animated the social order prescribed by the church.

Paul-Émile completes her discussion of the mission to Fort Albany by declaring the mission's success: "The mission to Albany is an oasis of peace and prosperity" (Paul-Émile 1952: 131). The mission, thus, integrated Cree people into practices that the mission argued imparted a culture and an economy, with no self-consciousness of how the mission was also inventing and supporting itself through the efforts of Cree people. By virtue of its own vision of a prosperous community, and by virtue of an unwillingness

⁵ As principal of the school at this time, the quote may be from Bilodeau, though Paul-Émile does not specify.

to acknowledge its actions as self-interested, the mission built an economy that was a structure for managing the labour of Cree people in the settlement.

It is clear that the mission had established itself as prosperous, but they were not self-sustaining. The missionaries envisioned a settlement much like a town, and then built it through their hiring arrangements with Cree people. It is clear that the Cree people who actually did the work for the mission were not given any control over the resources the mission had. Much like when the Hudson's Bay Company was given charter over the territory it thought of as Rupert's Land, the school, the hospital and the mission settlement economy gave the mission authority over the people of the region, as a surrogate government in the north. More than a mediator between indigenous people and the colonial government, the mission was entrepreneurial and carried out its own form of development.

The degree to which the mission controlled 'town life' is apparent in the mission's relationship to the Radar Base built on Anderson Island. Mid Canada Line site 050 was announced in 1955, and was built by the Canadian Department of National Defense between December 1955 and January 1957. Local people were employed in construction, injecting a remarkable amount of cash into the settlement economy. John Sutherland, employed by the free-trader Anderson for many years at his post on Anderson Island, recalls hundreds of thousands of dollars in sales during the peak building period (John Sutherland 1995). Leguerrier states that some people stayed off their trap lines that year to work (1994: 9), showing that local people took advantage of choices within the mixed

economy. The school was provided with electricity in 1960, three years after the base opened, through a line from the generators at the base (Leguerrier 1994: 9).

The base closed in 1965 and was sold to the mission in 1967. The mission continued to produce electricity, and what they did not use they sold to Ontario Hydro, which in turn sold it to Indian Affairs for the homes on Sinclair Island, and later to Kashechewan. After five years, the mission sold the generating station to Ontario Hydro (Leguerrier 1994:11). The mission, thus, had high levels of control over the operation of settlement life, especially after the mission's move to the mainland in 1932, and the designation of Sinclair Island as the Cree village in 1937. This does not imply, however, that the Roman Catholic mission had absolute control over Cree people: as in their relationships with the Hudson's Bay Company, Cree people made decisions about their own lives, independent and often separate from their economic, political and social relationships with European institutions.

SYNTHESIS

The Roman Catholic mission evolved into a town, run by Roman Catholic missionaries. The mission created a settlement economy by creating institutions (the school and the hospital) and then integrating the people from the region to those institutions. Through its in-kind (tokens and food) economy, the mission used Cree labour to provision the school, the permanent mission and the hospital. Children's parents contributed to running the school through this labour, as did their children who also worked in the settlement's

agricultural economy. The mission continually elaborated their institutions and performed its own form of development by integrating the work of Cree families into its practices and economy.

Submerged in the mission's own record, and basic to the representation I have made above of the history of the settlement are the disputes that local people have long held with the mission. People in Fort Albany wonder where the money to run the mission that came from the government on their behalf was spent, and to what end. This is an especially pressing question because it is clear that a good deal of the mission's resources were in the form of labour, the labour of local people working for the mission building its infrastructure and providing its food. Mission money made this labour extremely inexpensive for the mission. This is apparent in the arrangements where the mission sold people shot for the mission money they had earned working at the mission. People used this shot to hunt and then 'sold' some of that game for mission money before they moved inland for the winter. This mission money could be exchanged for more food or shot at the mission store. In this way, mission money created a loop that consistently expanded the mission's pool of resources. In the example of shot sold for mission money, the mission 'earned' both Cree labour and game for the larder, all for the price of some shot, the benefit realized by the Cree partner in such exchanges.

It is well known that the mission destroyed the money, possibly in 1965 when cash social assistance payments were made (see Theresa Metatawabin in Chapter Two). Today people take issue with many facts of the mission money system, especially that it

was not currency anywhere except at the mission store, and thus that Cree people were not given control over this segment of the economy.

The mission owned the infrastructure which Cree families had laboured to build in the settlement as well. Their ownership was most salient when the Diocese of Moosonee sold the school and its assets to Indian Affairs in 1974 for \$400,000 (Leguerrier 1994: 12). The Oblate brothers had paid for the materials for the school, built between 1952 and 1959, as the vicariate refused Indian Affairs involvement, but Leguerrier also acknowledged: "We were forced to build with the money from the Oblate brotherhood, barely enough, paying the Indians a salary adequate only to stave off starvation" (Leguerrier 1994: 6-7). The school, thus, was never 'community property', but rather mission property, despite the clear investment the community had made in the school.

When the mission formally untangled its control over settlement institutions in 1974, most agricultural pursuits had already diminished. One that remained was a chicken coop, from which the school, missionaries, mission store and hospital were provided meat and eggs. In a mystifying move, the local woman who cared for the coop was directed by the mission staff to slaughter all of the chickens. I was told of this event very early in my research, as part of a prelude to a more formal interview about something else, and so will avoid attributing the source. As a researcher this event reminds me that my representation of history is cursory compared with the volume of stories untold. It is possible, on the other hand, for me to suggest that this story, and the urgency with which

it was told to me, illustrates something of the tone of the mission's always growing distance from the people in the settlement.

Cree people in Fort Albany started a new era in their own history when the mission gave up control in 1974. Where once the mission had almost total control over the function of settlement institutions, including the economy, the settlement today is the primary location for the assertion of Cree autonomy and distinctiveness from the dominant society and economy. Most important, as I have suggested throughout this chapter, the mixed economy and all of the social bonds that are engendered in that economy have been constants for Cree people in the region despite the near absolute and sometimes arbitrary policies of the mission in the settlement. It is these constants of family structure, language and economy that members of the settlement are bringing formally into the settlement structures they are building today.

Chapter Two is a reflection on the themes outlined and discussed in this chapter, through the use of three personal history statements, a photo essay and my own reflection on negotiating history within contemporary conflicts in the settlement. The following chapter illustrates the traces of historical influences in the settlement in the present, showing how Omushkego families and individuals are central to the life of the settlement, how their decisions and actions continue to shape Cree life, and how the settlement is being transformed.

CHAPTER TWO CONTINUITY AND RENEWAL: MAKING HISTORY

PERSPECTIVES ON CHANGE

As I described in the previous chapter, the settlement at Fort Albany has evolved within the social, economic and political forces that came together here: the traditional land-based economy, Omushkego culture and language, the fur trade and an imperialist culture, missionaries and colonial rule. These economies and societies have inter-penetrated, though it is also clear that Omushkegowuk maintained autonomy from the structures centred at the settlement through their continued participation in the land-based economy.

The history of the settlement shows the inequalities in power and control over activities in the settlement, imbalances that allowed specific institutions (the Hudson's Bay Company and the Roman Catholic mission) to benefit disproportionately more from the settlement economy than the local Cree families drawn into that economy. In the twentieth century especially, the mission's settlement economy flourished and expanded. In its economic activities and institutional development, the mission was building and expanding its own structure, increasing its capacity to enter into the social, economic and cultural life of Crees in the region.

Identifying oppression, however, does not diminish the facts of Cree negotiation of their relationships with institutions like the Hudson's Bay Company or the Roman Catholic Mission. Trading posts and mission settlements were additional points in the web

of the regional economy. The trading post and the mission infrastructure in Fort Albany were sources of resources, but also sites where Cree people did not have the authority vested in the Hudson's Bay Company or the Roman Catholic mission by colonial governments, or the influence derived from control over the wage and cash economy. Despite oppression, despite real material and ideological inequalities between colonizer and colonized, the mixed economy exists, an adaptation of the cash and wage economy to the land-based economy. The settlement economy has never been strictly 'cash' or 'wage', has never been a fully market economy because of the endurance of the harvesting economy. And the mixed economy has always been a regional economy, within which Cree people have maintained their language, culture and, most importantly, their self-sufficiency.

This chapter reflects on traces of the past in the settlement today, but most especially how the settlement has constantly been undergoing change. Explicit in each of the personal history narratives, descriptions of events and photographs that makes up this chapter is some trace of the significant political, geographic and economic history of Fort Albany. Implicit in these various representations is how local people transform the settlement. Here I reflect on accomplished transformations (such as the private enterprises that have taken over some of the old mission facilities) and those in process (such as the expansion of communications technology).

The collective effect of these representations is to demonstrate both change and continuity as features of everyday life in the settlement. Most important, I am viewing

change and continuity as qualities of everyday life that emerge from the acts and experiences of local people. I start with three personal history narratives from men and women in Fort Albany, all of which show how the mixed economy operates, and has developed with the settlement. I take up this theme of representing history in the settlement today in the second part of the chapter. The section on the process of making history in the contemporary settlement shows that recovering the past is a site of contest to control truth, but also a powerful challenge to recognize the history of Cree marginalization in the settlement, a history of both physical and symbolic violence. As a conclusion to this chapter I also include a photographic essay, as another commentary on the transformations that have made the settlement the primary location for the assertion of Cree autonomy from the dominant Canadian society today.

LIVED LIVES

The following are three personal statements that explain how individuals negotiate the mixed economy. Each narrative provides specific historical information in a way that reflects on how 'change' was described primarily through missionary voices in the previous chapter. These three people all lived during the height of mission control in Fort Albany, 1903-1974, when the hospital and school were run through the permanent mission, and when the mission's settlement economy was completely integrated to these institutions.

These statements are all originally in Cree, and have been edited by the translators. In Ellis' system for classifying Cree narrative types, these are "popular discourse", characteristically skilfully shaped to both illuminate a theme and impart specific historic detail (1995: xxxv). These are individual narratives, and in translation provide insight on themes that the speaker was addressing to my research: the development of the settlement, the changes that have taken place in the territory, and their own place in the weave of history. Note that all three stories have a similar structure, a complete statement with a beginning and end.



Abraham and Theresa Metatawabin, October 1994

ABRAHAM METATAWABIN**Fort Albany September 1994**

"I just want to say that I think it is very important that we have a communication system today. We didn't have it back in 1938. My father got sick in the bush back then. My father and his wife and kids. There was no way of communicating that to anyone too. I don't remember who was all there, how many of my other siblings. I do remember my grandma was already keeping me, I remember my mom kissing me goodbye just as they left. That's all I remember about my mother. When they got sick in the bush no one knew, except for my grandpa. He had a feeling something was wrong. He knew something had happened through a dream.

"There were two trading posts then. They were both competing for the fur. We did not realize there was good money in the fur trade then. I think it was \$75.00 for one mink, and we were only getting \$7.00 for it at the post. I think this is why the two companies were competing with one another. It was through these fur traders that my father's camp was discovered. These companies had fur collectors travelling the waterways searching for fur. It must be approximately 200 miles up river where my mother rests today. That is where everyone was most of the year. We would only come down for two months for church services. That was how things were done then.

"It was 1947 when I started to stay down here year round. Prior to 1938 I was always up river. My late grandfather used to keep me and he lived off the land. He used to build his own little log cabin and stay there year round. Every two or three years he

would build another cabin. That is how the old people used to live - no one place was a permanent campground, they would always move. My grandfather kept moving around till the time he could no longer go on. I don't know why he kept relocating. His cabins were always still in good shape. He never cut his logs into certain lengths. The floor was made of boughs. He would always change the boughs. He always kept it neat. The boughs would be changed if we left the cabin overnight. That's how my grandpa raised me. It was between 1935 to 1946 when I left to live with my dad. We lived a normal life then, moved around quite often. In 1946 I left my grandfather to live on my own, and trapped with my brother Eli. Back then there were no trapping restrictions as imposed by Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). Before MNR there was already a system in place, people knew their trap grounds. They also practised conservation as passed on from generation to generation. And then the trapline system was forced upon us by the MNR.

"I don't know why this system was introduced. There was nothing wrong with the family trapline system. The people knew how to look after their lands and they were already practising conservation. They knew when to stop hunting or trapping. No one hunted for sport - even the kids were disciplined not to kill for fun. That is how the old generation looked after their land. They took good care of what the Creator gave them. Took only what they needed even when the game was plentiful. My grandfather did not really live off the land - where he lived they had social assistance already. Back then,

unlike today, they used to feed off the land. There was not much need to get things from the store. They just needed the basics.¹

"We travelled up and down the Albany river as far as 272 miles up to Pagwa River where the train tracks were. Everything was done by hand then, barges pulled by rope along shore. Today they go to Calstock to get to train tracks. Later people left the forks.

"Nice to see trail radios today. Makes it easier to call for help when necessary, for medical assistance."

THERESA METATAWABIN

Fort Albany, September 1994

"My parents names were Simeon Sutherland and Charlotte Koostachin. I was born in 1928 at the old settlement. I was not born in a hospital but at home. The midwife's name was Mary Loutitt.

¹ Abraham is making two distinctions simultaneously here and in the preceding three sentences. First, between complete dependence on land-based resources and the inclusion of store-bought items, specifically tea, flour and sugar, into the diet. Second, Abraham is distinguishing between the ability to carefully manage a small amount of store-bought items while in the bush and what is considered the large amount of food that harvesters take into the bush today. This distinction is consistently made today by younger people who respect those harvesters who take a minimum amount of store-bought items, "the basics" of tea, flour and sugar, into the bush and provide for most of their needs from the land. Many young people evaluate this 'basics' approach as the ideal, and strive to achieve it.

"The first plane to come our way, was when I was only four years old. There were three of us then, me and two other younger sisters. I went to school at six years old, and only for three years. When I was five I remember work had already begun here. People came to work here everyday.

"I had a picture of the old school but I lost it. Approximately 1935 it burned down.

"I can remember one spring flood. The whole area was flooded. Everyone had to stay at the school. Since then they used to make their tents on stilts.

"It was the people who cleared the land and I used to follow my granddad to work.

"In 1965 was when there was the first real currency in the community, and welfare too. Before then, people lived on credit; charge up a debt [at the Hudson's Bay Company] then pay off the debt. People used to get paid with tokens.

"I worked 21 years at the residential school, ten years in the kitchen, and 11 years as janitor. Now I am on pension."

JOHN SCOTT

Fort Albany, September 1995

"My name is John Scott. I come from Fort Albany, Peetabek as it is known. And I was born here. And I have lived here my whole life time. I attended school for two years and

I learned a bit of English and Religion. I may have been in grade two. Everything went well at school during my stay there.

"My first employment, with the RC mission was about farming and raising livestock. I assisted the brothers with farming such as taking care of livestock and cleaning the livestock. Afterwards the missionaries hired me in other work - such as house finishing work, painting too during the summer. The missionaries held all types of work then.

"Even the brothers worked on different jobs too, like mechanics, welding etc. I helped too. Also they had a sail boat for sea sailing around the Bay waters.

"They also did lots of logging during the winter months. We camped in the woods all winter logging. We logged over 1,000 logs for the mission. The missionaries used logs for the mission. The mission used a heavy loader Caterpillar for transportation of the logs to the sawmill. Then it was sawed during the summer. The sawmill operation took all summer long. We used a steam operated sawmill that was here. I was placed in charge of operation of the steam sawmill keeping the operational temperature at 100 degrees for maximum output. The brothers started training me in diesel automotive mechanics that fall.

"Also the school that is standing today. There was lots of work in building that cement building. We hauled gravel by small bags using canoe and mixed into cement for the structure of the school. The process of building the school took long. We started about 1953 and completed around 1959. There was lots of work and many people worked on

that. And another job that became available is the tractor train. We travelled out in the Bay during freeze up. It started from January to late March. It sometimes took longer coming back hauling heavy loads of supplies. Everyone used the services like Hudson's Bay Company, Anderson's Store, Indian Affairs and the R.C. Mission's supplies.

"We also went farther up north, to pick up materials from the watch tower site 415 [a radar base near Peawanuck]. It was very cold, sometimes we came through heavy snowstorms. The land is barren, no trees. But our quarters were very warm and comfortable. We had proper equipment and good food. Yes I always worked since age 16 years, from livestock care taker to heavy equipment operator. Finally it happened that the opportunity arose that I was asked to work at the hospital as a maintenance person, since I had excellent experience. I agreed to work then. Since then I have been working there for nearly seventeen years today."

RESEARCHERS AND THE POLITICS OF HISTORY

A few days after I interviewed Brother Charpantier about the sawmill in August of 1995, he and the other Oblate brother took part of the turbine from the steam sawmill and set it in a cement pillar on the lawn beside the brother's residence. During our interview in the dining room of the residence, Brother Charpantier had pointed towards the old hospital, indicating where the mechanism had been scrapped and said "I should go and get it before it disappears". I became one of the informants for my friends about 'that

thing beside the mission'. As of December 1997 when I last visited Fort Albany, it was still not identified by any plaque, and it is not clear what it 'means' in the community.

To me as a researcher, the monument is an emblem of the ongoing contest in Fort Albany to control interpretation of history. The mission represents one aspect of itself through a monument to industry. The Shabotowan project, introduced in Chapter One, drew volunteer offers of information and assistance from within the community when it was introduced in a radio broadcast. Like the first Shabotowan project, during which trainees learned details of the history of the settlement, the erection of the monument by the mission was an attempt to consolidate a particular framework for interpretation of the settlement's past. The contrast between the two gestures, however, also defines the major features of the contemporary struggle to redefine the settlement as a site of Cree cultural, linguistic and economic autonomy from structures set up by European and Euro-Canadian interests. One sign condenses the mission to material, economic forces, the other identifies people and their lived experiences as the heritage of the settlement.

Today, the contest to control the definition of the settlement's past emerges in two movements: Keykaywin and Mamawehitowin. While neither receives support from the whole band, both are active expressions of the history of Cree people in the region from the point of view of Cree interest and experience. Both Keykaywin and Mamawehitowin provide contexts for recognizing the power imbalances that have been built into the settlement through colonial institutions, and for resistance to the troubled history of domination within the settlement.

KEYKAYWIN

In 1992, Peetabek Keway Keykaywin, the St. Anne's residential school survivor's group, held Keykaywin, a reunion of students from the school. Events during that weekend have created a very public reconsideration of what the role of the mission has been in the settlement. In particular, a formal process of identifying survivors of abuse in the residential school began, with testimony to a panel made up of two Cree elders, a justice of the peace, the Deputy Grand Chief of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation and two healthcare officials. The gathering marked a new era in settlement life in Fort Albany, as individuals have turned to an external agency, the Ontario Provincial Police, to investigate the claims of sexual and physical abuse. Charges were laid against eight individuals in September of 1997.

By taking charges to the Ontario Provincial Police, and laying charges under Canadian law, Keykaywin leadership have found an ally capable of holding mission staff accountable. Complaints about the mission school were always handled internally by the mission itself. The residential school's major historians, Sister Paul-Émile and Jules Leguerrier note that parent's complaints about the children's diet and parent's worries that tuberculosis was spreading in the school through milk were handled solely by school personnel.

Starting a police investigation has been a major and troubling step for Keykaywin leadership and throughout the community. As an expression of the conflicts that were created by the event, some community members told me that they stayed away from the

reunion entirely, not wishing to participate. Local leaders of the Keykaywin movement have had to face this type of difficulty, as some people would rather see the investigation handled in a less public manner, or for some not at all. At the community level, the split appears in public reactions to Keykaywin and the Ontario Provincial Police investigation that has led to extended public scrutiny of St. Anne's. In October of 1996, then chief Art Scott told reporter Peter Moon from the Globe and Mail that the investigation and the official process of laying charges in a court held in the community will be disruptive. Scott said "I go to church and I take my kids to church. If this case is pushed in my community and charges are laid, what will be the impact in my community and on my children? How much trust and belief will they have in the church anymore?" (Moon 1996: A6). He also argues "the police, the court and outsiders, they will only be here for a few days, but we continue to live here after they are gone. How much of a setback are we going to suffer from this?" (Moon 1996: A6).

Scott is also quoted as saying that if it was deemed appropriate by the community, a Band Council Resolution would prevent the court from convening in Fort Albany. Scott is claiming that the Band Council can supersede the provincial court and Canadian law, and these are exactly the structures to which the Keykaywin leadership has turned for action. This is not merely a simple 'split' between Catholic and non-Catholic segments of the community, but rather a key issue around which arguments about self-determination, self-governance and self-representation are emerging. It is an irony of contemporary

politics that the structures that can be used in the service of community members to hold mission staff accountable are the same ones that can be rejected as 'colonial'.

The contest over the representation and accountability of the Roman Catholic mission and the future of the church in the community includes the church itself. Vincent Cadieux, Bishop of the Diocese of Moosonee, points out in a Globe and Mail article that the federal government has to take some of the responsibility for the whole residential school phenomenon (Moon 1996). However, the mission's own historian points out that the school opened in 1903, two years before Fort Albany Cree signed Treaty 9 (Paul-Émile 1952: 99, fn. 4), and thus before the federal government was obligated to provide education to the community. By shifting the conflict over the mission's presence and mission personnel's actions in the residential school to responsibility for the national school system, Cadieux deflects attention from the whole host of problems people are identifying with the mission in Fort Albany. Problems identified in Chapter One revolve around the imbalances built into the mission's style of self-sufficiency: Cree families and their children were caught in an economic system of agricultural and construction labour on behalf of the Roman Catholic missions in Fort Albany and the region, a structure through which it developed means to discipline and regulate the lives of Cree people in the settlement.

This central concern with imbalances within the mission's settlement provides the background for the Keykaywin movement. The specific history of mission activities in Fort Albany are the most meaningful context for understanding the current charges, and

this history is one in which the interests of Cree families in the settlement and the mission's interests were frequently in conflict. A deflection from these realities, I think, serves only to show that contemporary mission representatives are not aware of the history of the institution in the same way that community members are: they did not experience marginalization to the mission's interests. Thus, the Diocese of Moosonee today must account for more than the school itself, but for economic and institutional self-interest in Fort Albany.

The Diocese of Moosonee has started a new process of reintegrating the church into the community, with the placement of a Grey Nun. Her role is to set up a support system for survivors, though during my own research period these efforts were never specifically directed to acknowledging the struggles of survivors of the school system or survivors of abuse. The Sister represented the mission to the community through fund raising on behalf of events and projects for community children's and adult's groups, and in church services. The mission has contributed some food and money and lent some equipment to a variety of community-organized events, such as Mamawehitowin (the traditional gathering and powwow at the Old Post) and a music night held in 1994. These efforts do not seem to have had any impact on the momentum started by Keykaywin, and tensions within the community about the charges have remained.

Keykaywin is one element of an informal movement in Fort Albany to refocus on local responses to structures like the residential school, the mission town and all of the other 'outside' institutions that have been in place in Fort Albany. Keykaywin shows how

important it is for community members to have the authority to tell their own stories, while some of the responses to Keykaywin show how these voices have been and can be silenced.

The scope of the changes that Keykaywin represents are most salient in an ongoing project run by Joan Metatawabin. In preparation for the reunion weekend, Joan Metatawabin collected hundreds of photographic negatives from the Oblate's archive in Ottawa, purchased some developing equipment second hand, and produced dozens and dozens of photographs for display around the community during the reunion. She has continued reprinting these photos, using them for displays in the school and in the Coffee Cup, the restaurant in the old school building. These photographs and displays are extremely popular: groups of people gather around and talk about who the people in the pictures are, when and where the photos were taken.

Taken from the mission archives, the photos typically represent the activities of the mission, pictures of farming and gardening, cooking, photos of students in class and at communion. As Joan has demonstrated to me in our review of the photographs, they also typically represent relations of power between the missionaries and the people from the region working and attending school in the settlement: the missionary is usually at the centre of the image, or sometimes even elevated above the 'workers' being represented. This is a visual language of domination, also shown in the three photos that follow by the cleared land that forms the background for each image. For the mission, the clearings

themselves are symbolic of prosperity and progress, demonstrating the massive scale of the mission's activities.

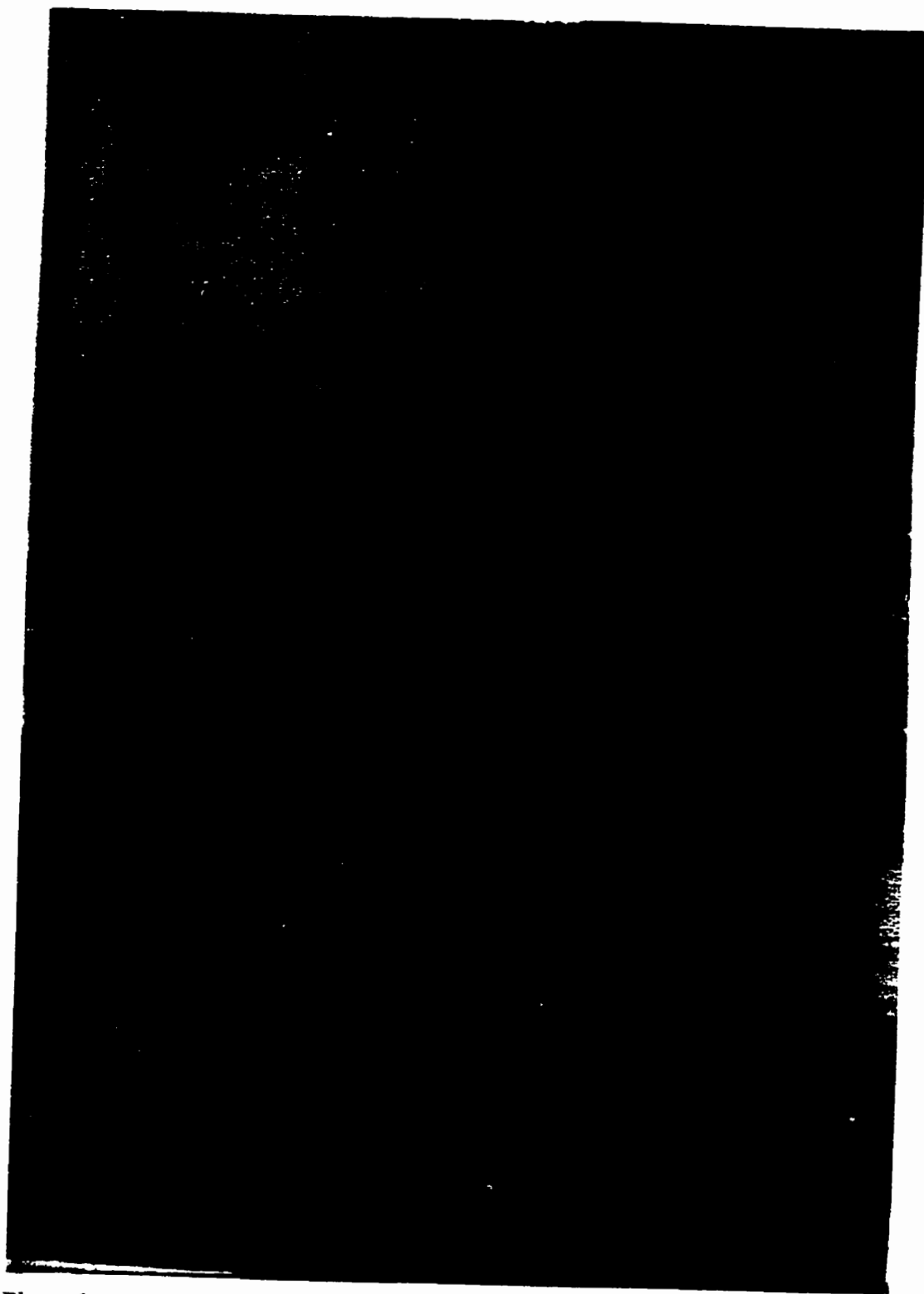


Photo 1.

Joan thinks Photo 1 is the hydro-electric dam in Fort Albany, built in 1928. This photo might be sometime after 1932 when the Roman Catholic mission moved to the mainland from the Old Post site. This is likely half of the students in the school, but there is no way to know how many families these girls represent.

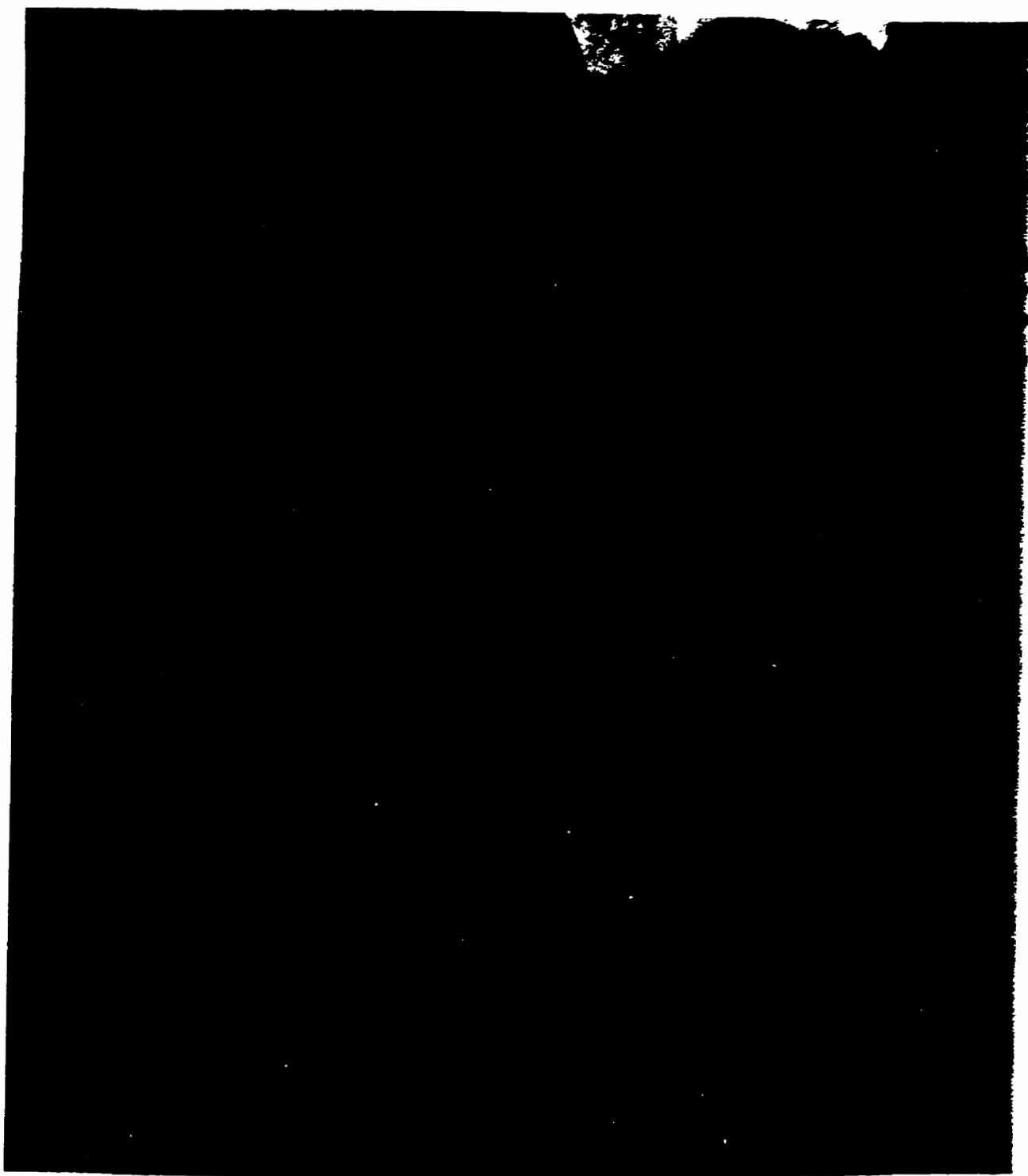


Photo 2.

Photo 2 is very typical of the photos in Joan's collection. As she pointed out to me, the priest (or nun) is often at the centre of the grouping, and the photographs generally represent some practice of life in the mission's settlement. These workers and the pile of brush behind them represent the mission's measurements for success, seen here as agricultural production, 'employment', cultivation and containment of the land. The mission expanded agricultural production after 1932 when they moved the school and hospital to the mainland near Peetabek (Lac Ste-Anne). Produce, milk, eggs and poultry produced at the mission farm were used to feed children in the school and the mission staff. Summer labourers were paid with rations and 'mission money'.

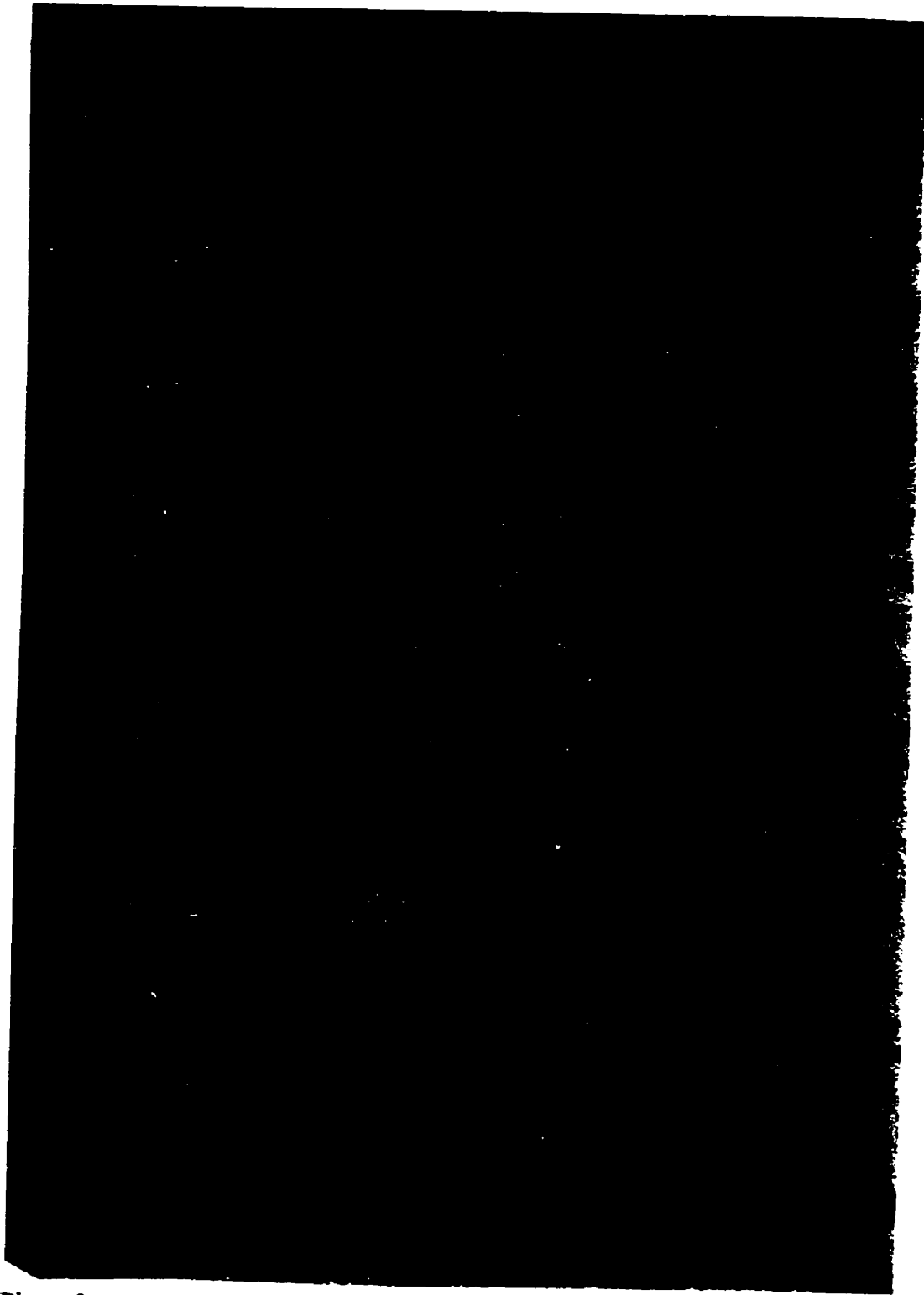


Photo 3.

Photo 3 follows the pattern Joan identified to me, with the missionary at the centre of the image. The photo also represents how the mission's practice of agricultural self-sufficiency was part of the residential school's formal practice: children were integrated into 'work' in the same way their parents were 'employed' by the mission. The boys appear to be picking potatoes, and so this photograph records part of the end of summer activities at the residential school. This field is now the airstrip, and the barn in the background is used by the Northern Store for storage. This photo was taken in the 1930's, either in 1932 when the first school on the mainland was being built, or when it was rebuilt after the fire in 1935. As in Photo 1, these 17 boys represent an unknown number of families.

While I requested that we stay true to the mission's self-representation in these photographs, Joan usually reframes the shot and enlarges certain groupings or faces within the larger picture. This has the desired effect of breaking apart the hierarchical relationships between mission personnel and the Cree children and adults that are often part of the visual language of these photos, and typically Joan edits out the mission staff entirely. In fact, what she often creates are 'family' photos, pictures of siblings and cousins standing side by side. By focusing on these relationships, Joan recovers the social relations created by kinship that endured throughout the mission period, despite residential schooling and children's long absence from their parents and homelife. The photographs are reanimated and reinterpreted through focusing on the enduring and salient relations of family.

The practice of collecting, reproducing and displaying the photos is symbolic of the consequences of Keykaywin: the whole mission era is being reinterpreted from the position of people living today. Keykaywin created a view of the mission settlement from the point of view of those people most marginal to the mission's self-interest, and thus the people most manipulated by the mission's institutions.

MAMAWEHITOWIN

The traditional annual gathering Mamawehitowin similarly opens a space from which to interrogate Cree history, and to stress the continuity of Cree culture, language and tradition despite colonial intervention, even despite differences in age, gender and

experiences between members of the community. Mamawehitowin is a noncompetitive powwow held on the Old Post site, where the Cree settlement, Hudson's Bay Post, Roman Catholic Mission and Anglican mission coexisted until 1932. The Old Post, thus, is a significant place in the history of Fort Albany, Kashechewan and the region which is reinhabited and recollected during the celebration.

Dancers and drums come from Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Moose Factory, from Cree communities in Quebec and from other parts of North America. Many people come home to Fort Albany from their residences in industrial cities like Timmins specifically to participate in the weekend event. The event requires an enormous effort on the part of volunteers, who have to set up the site, build shelters, put up tents, prepare a feast for elders and guests, and transport everything to and from the site on an island in the Albany River. Like powwows everywhere, there are economic opportunities for people selling food, crafts, and boat rides out to the island.

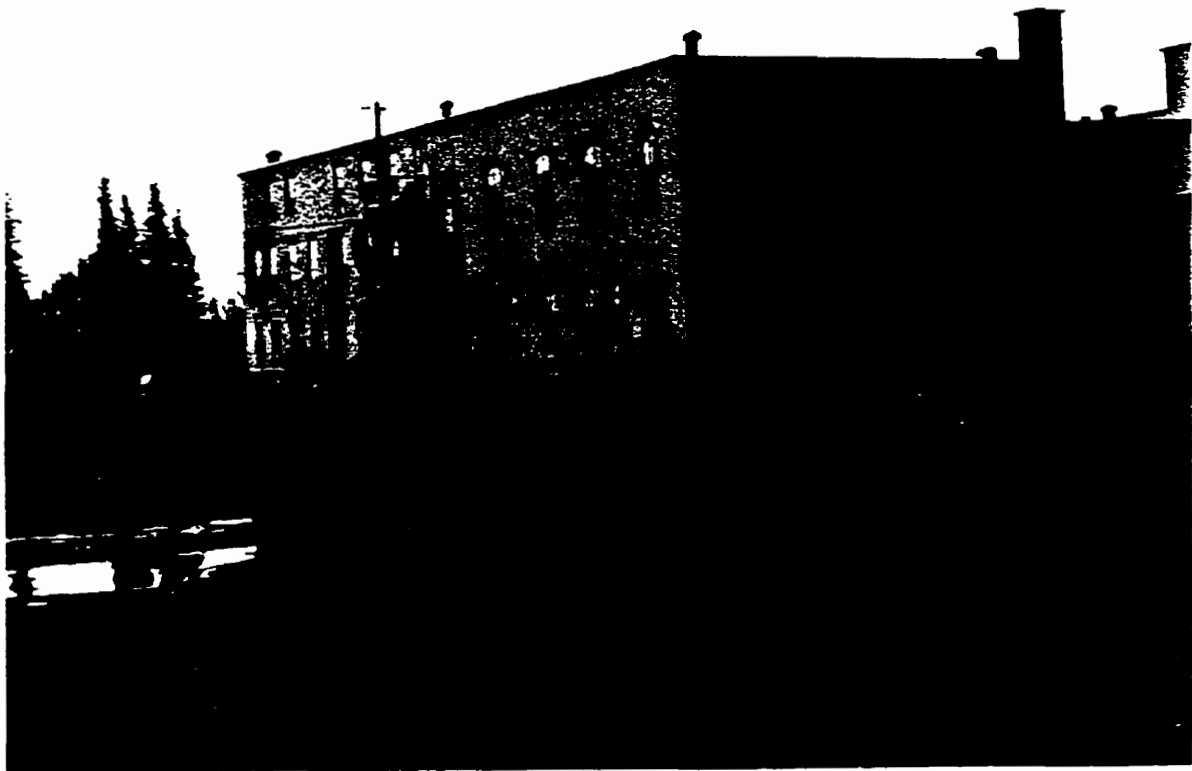
Some years, Mamawehitowin is organized by volunteers from both Kashechewan and Fort Albany, highlighting the shared history of the two communities at the Old Post despite mission influence in the settlements. Mamawehitowin thus provides a place where unity overshadows differences for people from these two settlements once separated by different missions. The history of EuroCanadian influence in the settlement is thus marginalized to the continuous Cree presence and influence in the region which is at the centre of the annual gathering.

Like Keykaywin, Mamawehitowin provides a framework for understanding history from the point of view of the colonized, outside the colonial institutions that have been used to rule Native people. The Old Post is not reinhabited by the Hudson's Bay Company or the missions during the weekend, but by the original inhabitants of the region who celebrate their traditions, history, culture and continual presence. By reinhabiting the Old Post during the gathering, Mamawehitowin honours the specific history of Cree people in this region, as this is where many people (or their parents) were born and where family graves are maintained. Thus, the Old Post is transformed from a colonial outpost to a Cree community in Mamawehitowin.

CHANGE AND THE SETTLEMENT

The following photographic essay provides the context for Chapters Three and Four, where I give an analysis of the contemporary settlement economy. The images have each been chosen to reflect how past and present are intermingled in the settlement and are crucial to understanding features of the contemporary settlement economy. Like the other textual parts of this chapter, the photographic essay is meant to demonstrate how the specific historical events and trends described in Chapter One have been negotiated by people in the settlement, how Fort Albany is always undergoing transformation.

The former St. Anne's residential school, built between 1952 and 1959. The school is still intact, but has been completely transformed in the era of band-run administration. The former chapel takes up the near half of the second floor, and is the space used for court proceedings held when the judge and lawyers fly into the village. The entrance to the band office is at the near end of the building, with administrative offices on the main and second floors in the old residence rooms. Classrooms and school administration offices, the post office and the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Police services offices and cells take up the rest of the building.



Behind the school pictured in the previous shot, this is the entrance to the Coffee Cup, run at that time (October 1994) by Joan Metatawabin in the former mission school's kitchen. Joan's mother-in-law Theresa Metatawabin worked in the kitchen here for eleven years, and kept control over the facility after the mission school closed.



The door on the first floor is the entrance to the laundromat, now run by Eva and Mike Metatawabin. The equipment used by the mission staff when this was the residential school was completely removed in 1996.



At the centre of this photograph (September 1996) is the oldest building in Fort Albany, built by the Nakogee family from logs cut into lumber at the mission sawmill. Where the red tarpaper is peeling away, the basic construction of horizontal planks secured to framing can be seen. This is one of two two-storey private residences in the village. The grey frame building to the left was formerly a Nakogee family house, converted into Dusty's Video, which closed in January of 1996. Both buildings are now empty, and John Paul Nakogee and his family live in the green building to the right. This is a pre-fab construction, built with little insulation, aluminum siding and interior drywall. The buildings are elevated on logs, and are prone to warping interior walls, floors, window casings and doorways as the ground shifts. This clustering of buildings and houses is very common despite the basic grid pattern of streets in the village.



Only two houses are built within the cover of trees on Sinclair Island. This view of Edmund and Joan Metatawabin's home shows the six-sided layout of the log dwelling. There are three bedrooms on the second storey and one downstairs. A steel beam inside was scavenged from the Ontario Hydro generating plant on Anderson Island, originally built by the Canadian Army. The logs were cut in the interior along the Albany River and had to be floated downstream and then hauled up the bank.



Emile Wheesk's residence and bakery on Sinclair Island. The white frame building to the left is the old winter church, smaller than the large chapel, and thus easier to heat for winter services when most people were in the bush. The building at the centre is connected to another small building to the right, and this is where the oven for the bakery was.



A sawmill was developed as a locally-run enterprise, Peetabek Lumber, in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Equipment failures and lack of funding for development of the business meant the enterprise failed by 1994. In December 1994, the shed and hundreds of logs filled the yard.



In the summer of 1995, one of the teams in a band-run student employment program worked peeling bark off some of the logs which were to be used for fence posts at the school. This is Annie Sutherland in July 1995.



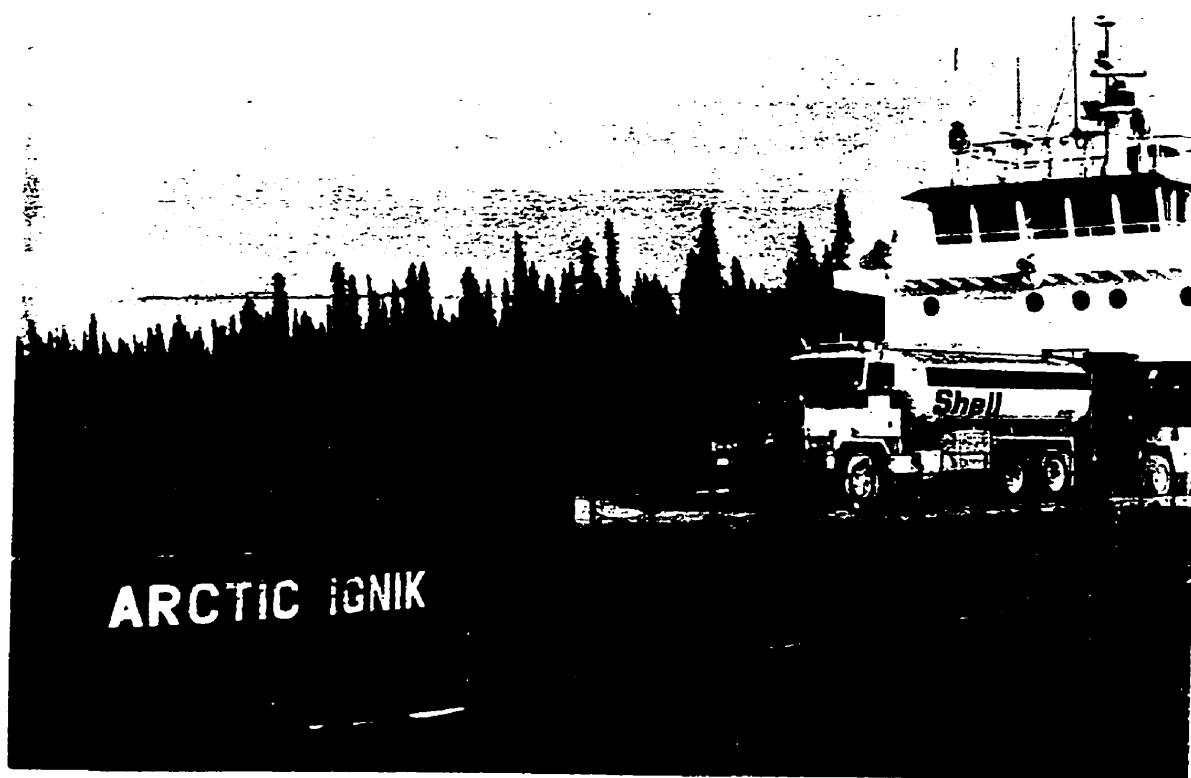
Mike Hookimaw in the summer of 1995 took down the sawmill shed, and saved the lumber to build a storage porch on his home. Mike and his wife Cassandra both work; Mike is the Bell telephone technician and Cassandra works at the airport. In the late fall of 1995, some of the logs left at the site were used for firewood by a number of community members.



September 1996, the now empty yard at the sawmill was being used for storage by Neegan Ochee, the local construction company, during the Sewer and Water Project. These pipes had been transported by a commercial carrier over the winter road from Moosonee.



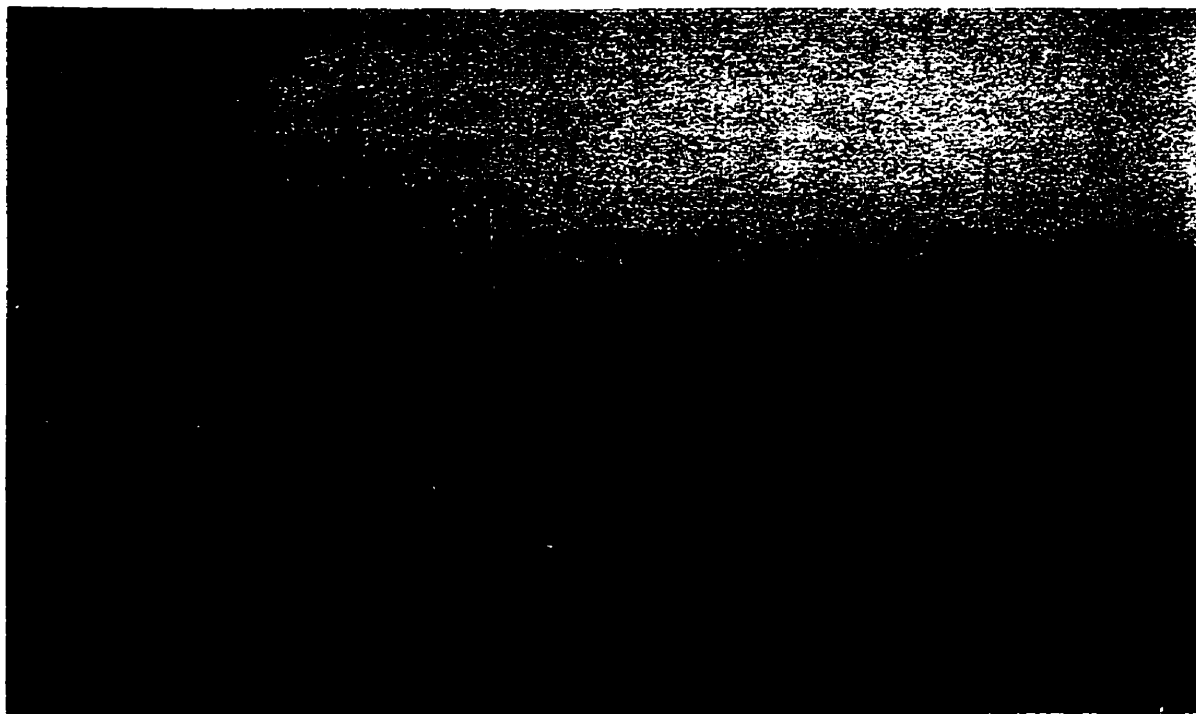
A variety of goods essential to the community can only be transported by barge, or on the winter road. This barge, from Ray Cool's service in Moosonee, came in the late summer of 1994 and is shown docked at Anderson point in Fort Albany. Moosonee, sixty miles south of Fort Albany, is a supply and transportation centre for the west coast of James Bay, especially because the Northland railway ends there. The Shell truck pictured is carrying gasoline to local businesses, where it is transferred to their own storage tanks. Propane is another supply typically imported on the barge as getting propane by air requires using a charter cargo plane, much more expensive. The barge makes only one or two visits a year, often delayed for days or weeks due to weather conditions.



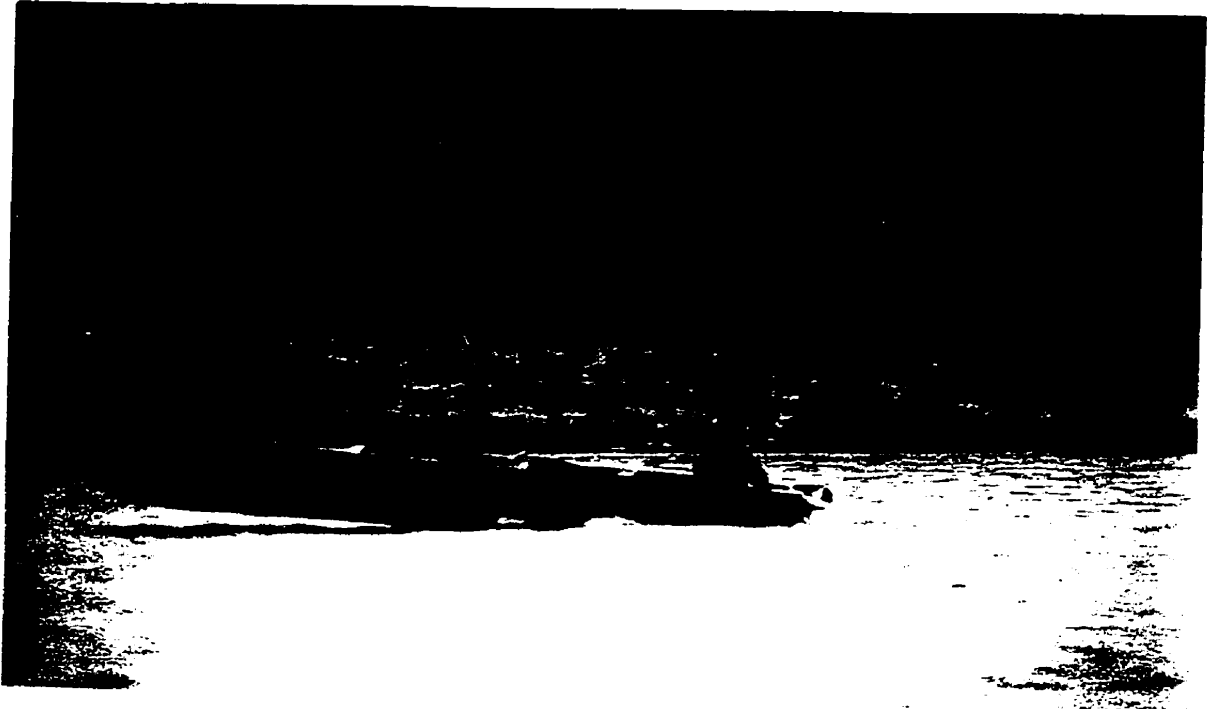
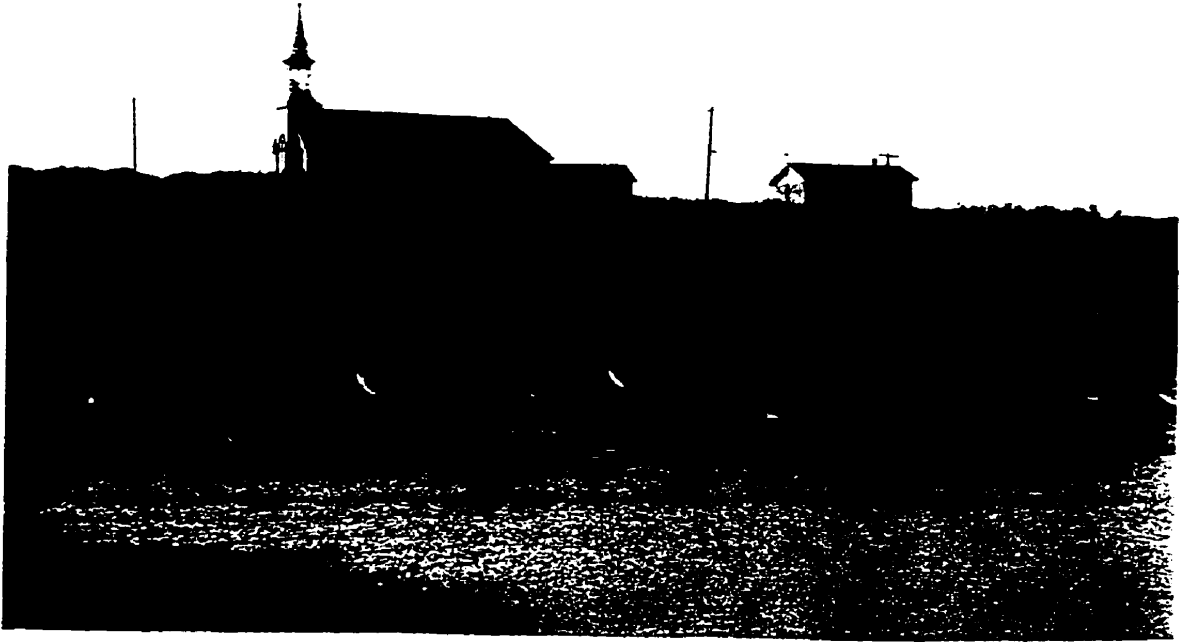
Almost everything that is imported to Fort Albany comes into Moosonee by rail or air, and then is shipped the rest of the way by barge, on the winter road or by air. Air Creebec cargo planes come twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and by far their largest client in Fort Albany is the Northern Store. This photograph was taken in September 1994.



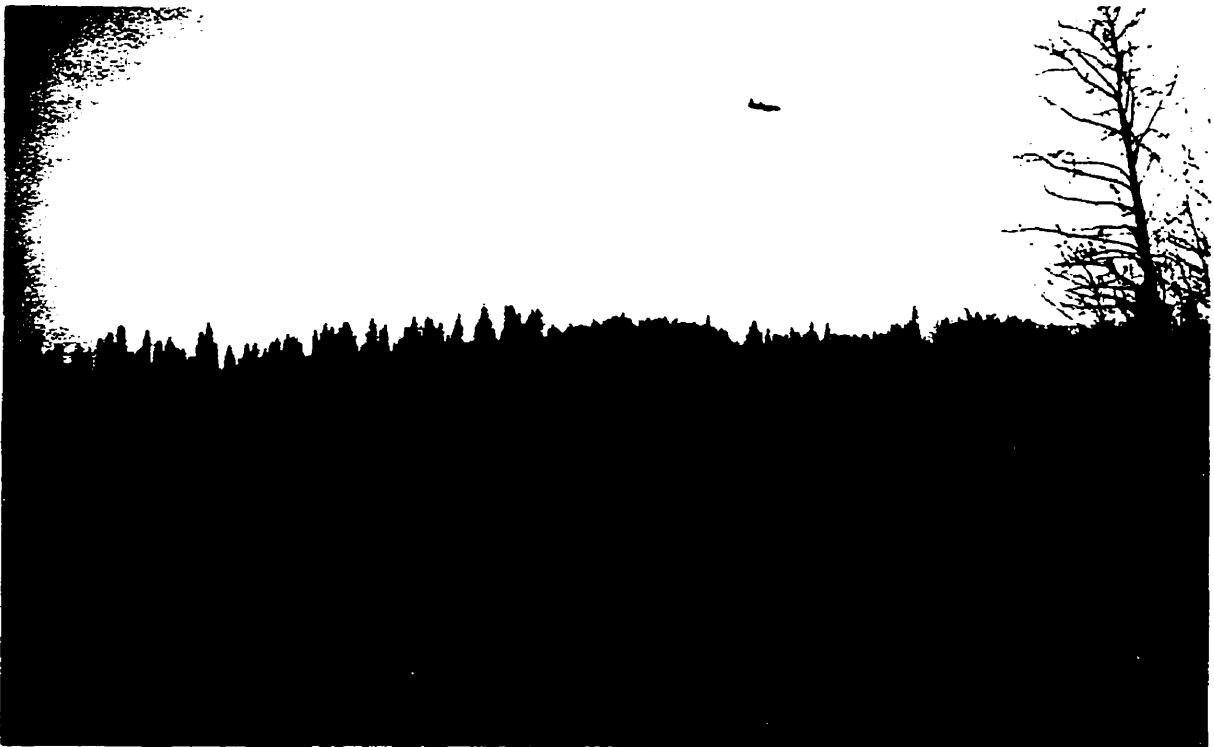
Less expensive than air travel but time consuming and difficult, a winter road runs down the coast from Attawapiskat (see Map 1) through Kashechewan and Fort Albany to Moosonee. A few entrepreneurs use the winter road for transporting supplies, and people travel between communities visiting, shopping or attending community events. Travellers on the winter road cross overland and on river ice. This photograph was taken shortly after freeze-up in December of 1994.



The channel in the previous photograph is also the major water route for small boats in summer and fall, pictured on the shore beside the Catholic church on Sinclair Island in August of 1994. Below is Abraham Metatawabin testing a motor in the channel in September of 1995.



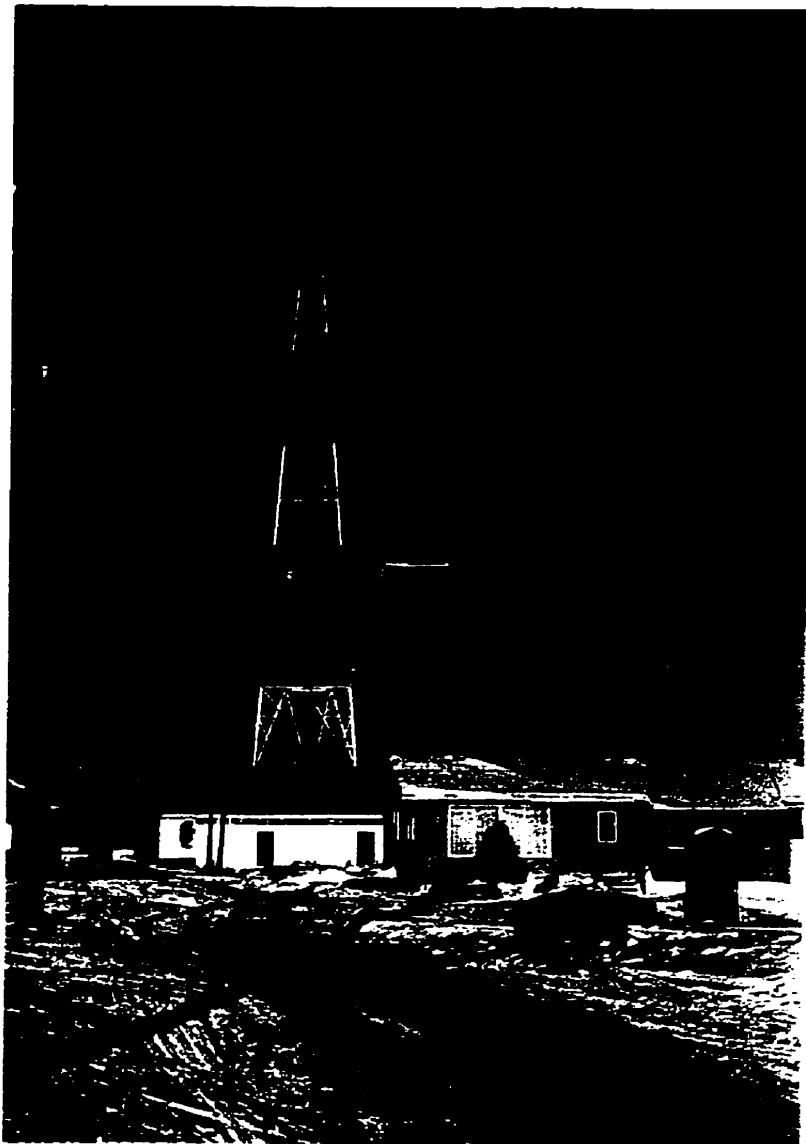
Air travel is a key form of transportation in the James Bay region, and year round there are two Air Creebec flights from Fort Albany to Moosonee and Timmins per day, and two flights arriving from the south. The 8:10 sched (scheduled flight) from Kashechewan is the first flight out each day. Charter companies operating from Moosonee, Timmins, Kapuskasing and Cochrane all have a lot of business on the James Bay coast, transporting goods, and commonly employees on building projects. Provincial court is a 'fly-in' event, the lawyers and the judge arriving in a charter. Hydro Ontario employees also travel in a private plane.



Mike Metatawabin (with headphones) and Mike Sutherland (with camera) record a conversation between then Chief Edmund Metatawabin and Indian Affairs minister Ron Irwin on the minister's visit to Fort Albany in 1994. Both Mike Metatawabin and Mike Sutherland have trained in video production working for Wawatay, the regional radio and television broadcaster. Metatawabin was the CKFA radio station manager in Fort Albany. A segment featuring the community and this interview appeared on the Baton Broadcasting System affiliate in Timmins Ontario. The editing was done in Timmins from the video and audio tapes sent via the daily Air Creebec flight out of the community. Photo by Chris Brown.



The communications tower on the mainland, behind John Kataquapit's house. Satellite technology provides telephone to the community of Fort Albany. Telecommunications, especially internet technology holds great interest as a community development tool for the Band Economic Development office which is currently negotiating the installation of an internet link to the community. Inexpensive and immediate communications could open distant markets for local guides, as would an on-line catalogue for artists and crafts people. Applications for education and local research are also a priority, as are uses for individuals communicating with family far away. Photo by Joan Metatawabin.



The Sinclair Island settlement is separated from the mainland by a wide channel. The school, the hospital, the Northern Store, the airport and the band office are all on the mainland where most buildings and homes have access to running water and sewer links. A very few homes in the Cree village have running water, though the water and sewer extensions throughout the Cree village will be finished by 1999. This photo shows the nearly completed road between the mainland and the village, and two access roads used for the heavy equipment building the Flood Control dykes farther to the west. The men in the centre of the shot are Neil the construction supervisor on the Flood Control Project and three of the workers from the community. The dykes were completed in November 1995, and washed out in March 1996, with another flood in October of 1996. Flooding is very common at this point in the Albany River during spring and fall freezing and breakup cycles: ice jams are created along the river which dam the flow of water from further inland. The village is cut off from the mainland when the channel floods, and helicopters ferry people to work, the airport and the store. Emergency repairs to the dykes done in the fall, but part of the community flooded in spring of 1997.



The Northern Store on the mainland, photographed in September 1995. The barn, which can also be seen in photo 3, is used by the Northern Store as storage, and once was the centre of the mission's agricultural activity in Fort Albany. The barn is directly beside the airport, as the present airstrip was built on the land cleared for farming by the mission. The Northern Store and the Post Office use a local private carrier to unload and deliver their freight.



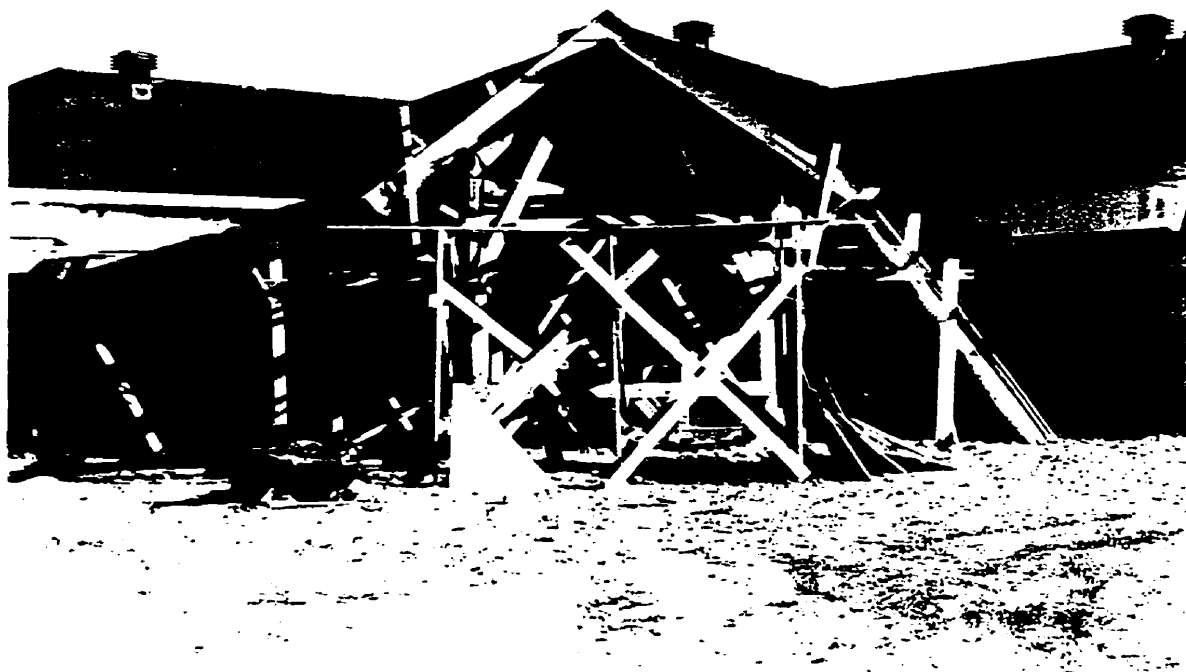
The former nurses' residence between the Brother's house to the left and the Sister's house to the right, is now owned by Paul Koostachin who keeps it as a private home and rents rooms to visitors. This is across the road from the Northern Store in the previous photograph.



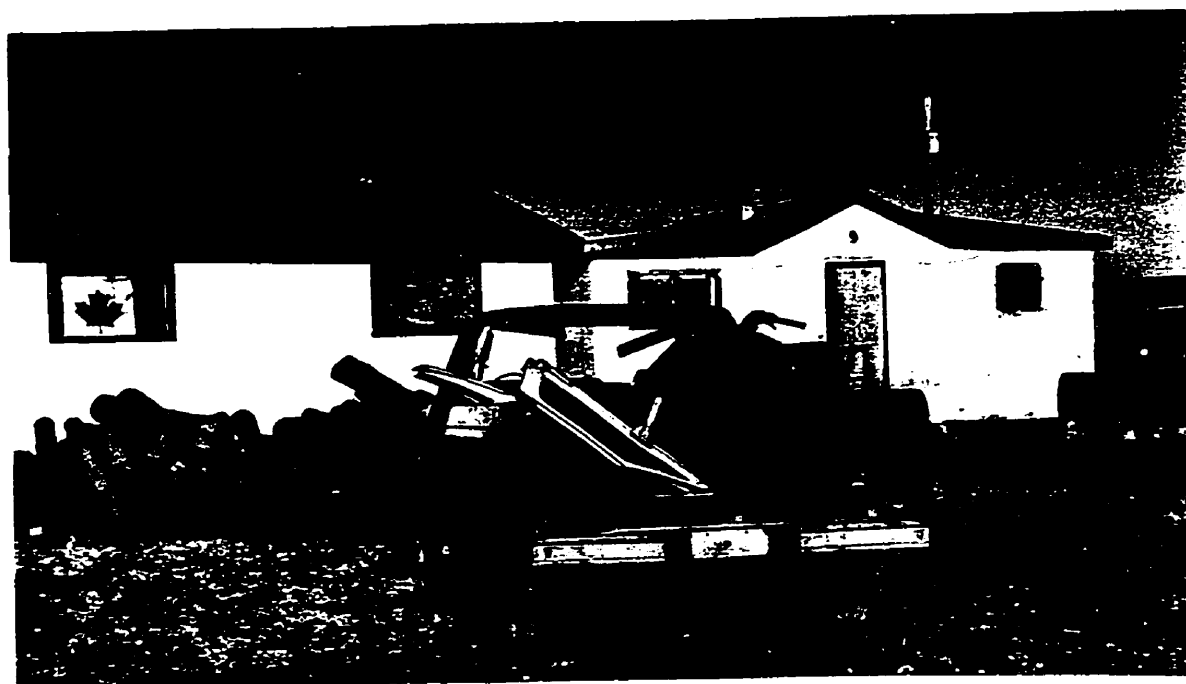
Weenebayko (The Healing Centre) on Anderson Island, at Anderson Point where the freetrader's residence was, the original dock for float-planes, and where the barge docks today. Described in Chapter Five, Weenebayko provides family counselling for the regional social services agency, Payukatano.



The new Community Health Centre on Sinclair Island, built through the Capital Projects office of the First Nation. This photograph was taken in September, 1996. It was completed in March 1998, and will house community health care services, including the Community Health Nurse, a Women's Wellness coordinator and the diabetes counsellor.



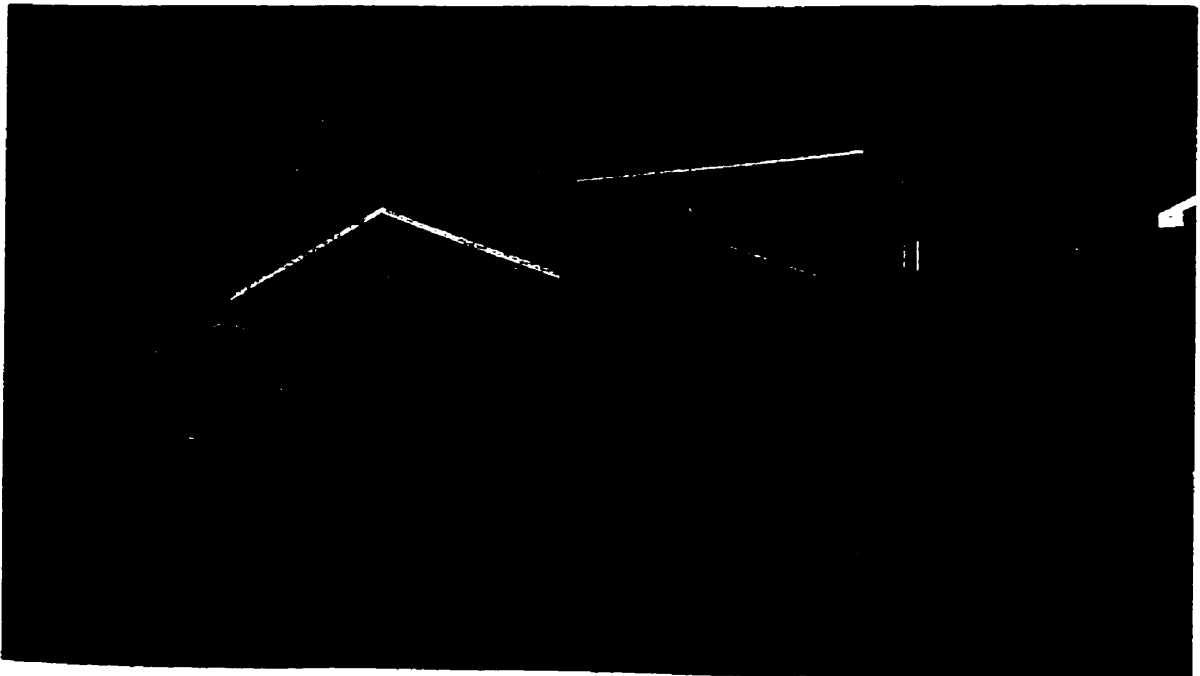
Antoine Koostachin's gas station and general store. Discussed in Chapter Six, Antoine is the most established entrepreneur in Fort Albany. Antoine built the two houses pictured below and now rents the larger one on the left.



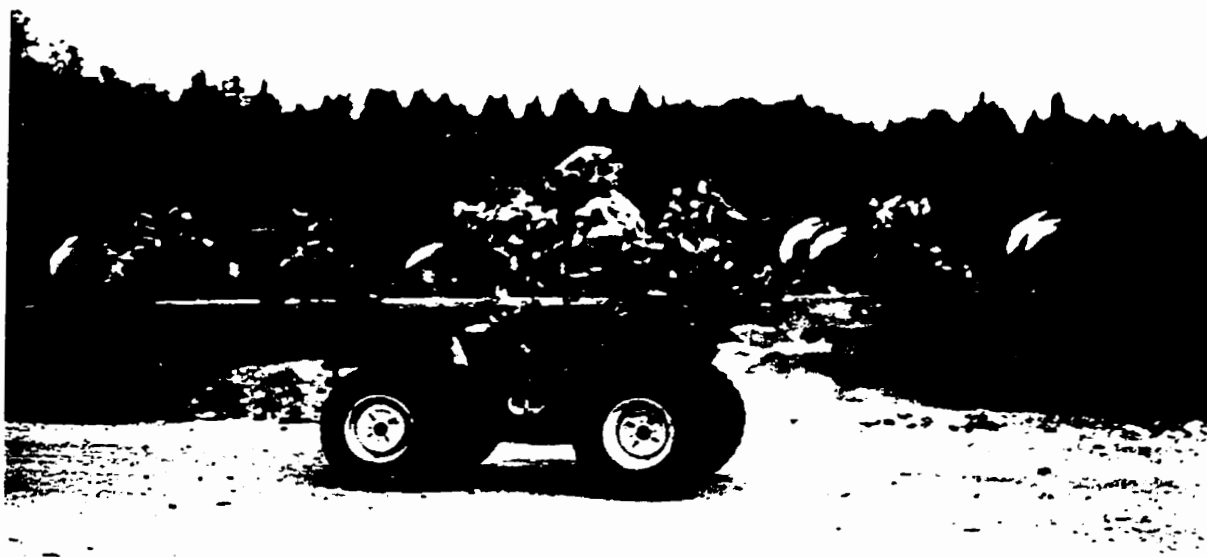
Mr. Koostachin had purchased the house to the left and the yellow one in the middle, in the fall of 1996. The house to the left was being fixed up to rent out. The second photo pictures a small part of the firewood he sold in the winter of 1996-97.



Norman Ashamock's restaurant to the right, and the grey building at the centre is his general store and video rental in 1994. The second photo shows an addition of office and storage space on the store completed in September 1996.



On Canada Day 1995, almost everyone in the community came out for a parade through the village on Sinclair Island. The second photo shows John Kataquapit's homage to goose hunting from the same event, complete with sound effects supplied by a tape recorder.



CONCLUSION

The settlement of Fort Albany is today characterized by the broad trends identified above. The trading post, mission settlement and the territory itself have long been locations for competing economies, politics and cultural systems. Just as Abraham Metatawabin narrates change, his statement equally shows continuity: Cree people have always interpreted and questioned the actions of international and national forces in the settlement and in the region from a distinct position. In describing the contemporary settlement in the next chapter, it is this thread of continuity within change, negotiation, resistance and adaptability that I have chosen to illustrate. As in Chapters One and Two, the next two chapters examine the terms of the engagement between outside and inside interests in the contest to define the settlement and the territory. The following chapters examine the imbalances in these relationships and the consequences of economic and political domination from the point of view of the households, extended families and economy of the settlement.

CHAPTER THREE SELF-SUFFICIENCY: THE MIXED ECONOMY AND EXTENDED FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION

As described in Chapter One, despite their marginality to the power vested in the Hudson's Bay Company and the mission, Cree people in the region around Fort Albany accepted, rejected and resisted their alliances with these European and Euro-Canadian institutions centred in the settlement. This negotiation was illustrated in Chapter Two by the lives of people living today, and by the transformations that have been made in the settlement itself. The settlement is no longer an extension of either mission or Hudson's Bay Company control in the manner it once was. Today, life in the settlement is profoundly shaped by the social and cultural features of Cree life.

In this Chapter, I describe three aspects of this unique cultural and social identity: the mixed economy, the household units that constitute the mixed economy and the values that govern economic practices in the household. These features of the settlement economy represent the unique position of Cree families in the region throughout the evolution of the mixed economy. Cree people have always been the population of the region most competent to reproduce their social, cultural, linguistic and economic identity in this, their traditional territory. Crees adapted the market oriented production and

exchange economy of the trading post/mission settlement to their subsistence economy, thus creating the mixed economy.

As introduced in the first chapter, the Final Report of the RCAP gives a basic definition of the mixed economy traditional to Northern regions:

In the mixed economy, households combine cash from a variety of sources (wages, social transfers, arts and crafts production) with income from the land, shifting their efforts from one sector to another as conditions dictate. ... The mixed economy is the dominant economic form of most aboriginal communities, and it is by far the most stable. The stability of the mixed economy is evident in its persistence since the earliest days of cash economy opportunities in the North, beginning with the fur trade. The central reason for this stability is its flexibility and adaptability, allowing producers to take advantage of a variety of economic opportunities (RCAP 1996a: 389).

In turn, the mixed economy and the social structures through which it operates provide templates for community and economic development, as the authors continue: "We believe that support of the traditional-mixed economy is the most effective way to promote the economic vitality of northern communities" (RCAP 1996a: 389).

In this chapter I introduce the settlement's mixed economy as a social structure, focusing on the households and the bonds that hold separate households together into extended families. Throughout my analysis, the social meanings of participation in the mixed economy are foregrounded, so that the mixed economy is seen as a process that makes cash and bush resources coherent parts of household economies. The mixed economy is apprehended here as the process of making a living, 'producing' or providing for the household itself.

By centring my description of the settlement economy in the household, this chapter demonstrates the integrity of the household economic unit, which in turn can serve as the focus of development planning. These minimum economic units, households, however, are also at the centre of struggles to control resources that circulate in the settlement. This theme of exploitation and marginalization is taken up in Chapter Four, but here I show that the existing settlement economy has rich potential for economic development.

THE SETTLEMENT, HOUSING AND THE CONTEXT OF DAILY LIFE

The Fort Albany settlement is on the Albany River, 10 kilometres inland from James Bay. The settlement is spread over two islands and a portion of the mainland near Peetabek or Lac Ste-Anne. This pattern reflects how the Roman Catholic mission organized the settlement when they moved their operations to the mainland in 1932, while successive changes in the Band Council era have overwritten the mission's map of the settlement. The physical space that is the settlement has been shaped by the various political, cultural and social forces that intersect here, and that continue to conflict. The settlement is constantly changing, while it also serves as a material map of social and political realities experienced by the people who live and lived here. The 'state' of the settlement was again and again described to me in such terms, through stories that brought my newcomer's view of the settlement in line with the lived experience of change.

The airstrip and airport on the mainland are built on the land cleared by the mission for farming. A friend took me walking along the airstrip on a quiet day, and stopped to describe how the farm looked to her as a student at St. Anne's working in the field. From the airstrip the old residential school is in full view. Also on the mainland are the new and old hospitals and the missionary residences. The old hospital is a decayed shell, except for garages used for the band construction company, Neegan Ochee.

The cluster of village services and administration on the mainland includes the Northern Store, the successor of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Northern Store stands beside the airport and the barn, once used for mission livestock and hay, now storage for the store. When the mission moved away from the Old Post to the mainland, the Hudson's Bay Company followed and built their post on Anderson Island in order to be near the major shipping link, then the dock for float planes and barges. The Bay moved to the mainland when the airstrip on the mainland replaced the dock as the major supply route from the industrial cities to the south.

In 1986 the Hudson's Bay Company sold all of their northern posts as a block, in order to concentrate on their retail operations in southern cities, underscoring larger shifts in the national industrial economy of Canada. The reconfiguration of the Hudson's Bay Company posts into the Northern Stores chain does not seem to mean much in the settlement, and everyday the store is referred to as 'the Bay'. In transit, many deliveries from suppliers in the south are marked with the shorthand "HBC Fort Albany".

Housing on the mainland is almost exclusively for non-locals, and all of that housing has running water and sewer connections. Groups and rows of houses and semi-detached dwellings house teachers, hospital staff and the non-local Northern Store staff. Nuns, brothers and other visiting members of the Catholic church live in the two residences on the mainland near the Northern store. The mainland is home to a few people from the band who live in a small apartment strip and in a few houses. The owners of some of these private homes moved them at their own expense from one of the islands so that they could be hooked up to the water and sewer lines. Other private homes are band-built on site, but do not have sewer and water connections.

There are a few houses on Anderson Island near the site of the old radar base which is now owned by Ontario Hydro, but the majority of band members live on Sinclair Island. Homes on Sinclair Island are laid out on a grid of gravel roads and an extensive system of foot paths cuts between residences. Many homes are surrounded by other buildings used for storage, businesses, workshops, and small residences for adult children of the owners of the primary residence. Roads and paths in the village are usually busy with foot and vehicle traffic during the day and evening, most commonly four-wheel all terrain vehicles and skidoos during the winter. The shores along the eastern edge of the village, as seen in Chapter Two, are the water link for small river-going boats.

The 1991 Census population of Fort Albany was 1200, with the majority, 74%, under 29 years of age, and a large percentage, 26%, between 5 and 14 years of age. The 1200 figure is closer to bandlist population, and the on-reserve population was reported

in 1993 as 887 (Mushkegowuk Council 1993). As for most First Nations communities in Canada, Fort Albany's is a very youthful population, and the inevitable increase in the number of residential family units in the band is putting pressure on an already strained housing and settlement infrastructure.

Housing is presently at a crisis state in many of the communities on James Bay. In Fort Albany, the average census household is made up of seven people, so that the average number of people per room in a house is 1.1, as compared to less than one in some other northern communities, and .5 or .3 persons per room in most urban centres in Canada (Statistics Canada 1991). This statistic shows a lack of housing, and reflects what many people report as crowding. But the low quality of up to 80% of the housing in Fort Albany today creates problems other than 'crowding'.

Most people live in pre-fabricated houses that are poorly insulated, do not have basements or foundations, and are prone to damage from temperature changes and weather. Since most people's cash incomes are small, and building materials are made costly by air or barge delivery charges, housing maintenance (for example, to repair weather damage) is most often left to the Band administration. Housing is technically owned by Indian Affairs, and so most homes cannot be insured by the people who occupy them, and thus cannot serve as collateral for a home improvement loan. The lack of fire hydrants throughout the settlement also makes house insurance difficult to obtain and then very expensive.

There are two styles of housing more durable than pre-fab in Fort Albany, both built from locally harvested wood. One family, Joan and Ed Metatawabin, presently live in a log house of their own construction and design. Ed and Joan, with considerable assistance from family, harvested their wood along shorelines further inland on the Albany River. They towed the logs down the river during the summer, and then hauled them up the bank. This enterprise required investments of time, gasoline, access to a boat and motor but otherwise no specialized equipment. Earlier in this century, log houses were more common throughout the region and in the settlement, built by local people or by the Roman Catholic mission.

Local timber was also used for plank houses, and a few are scattered around the village, used mainly for storage and workshops. These small dwellings were built with planks cut at the sawmill in the settlement, operated between 1927 and 1958 by the Roman Catholic Mission. The sawmill planed the lumber harvested by teams of Oblate brothers and hired workers during the winter. Local families also harvested and hauled logs to the settlement to be planed. As I have indicated before, for each log planed and returned to the local family, the mission kept one log. It was through these arrangements that many local families built permanent summer residences in the settlement until the 1960's. Such arrangements also assured that the Roman Catholic mission had lumber.

Around 1958 the Department of Indian Affairs began to purchase lumber from the mission-run sawmill to fill the needs of the Department's housing program in Fort Albany (Charpantier 1995 personal communication). This arrangement was short-lived, however,

ending when Indian Affairs began to import pre-fabricated houses from a supplier in Kapuskasing. Pre-fab houses could be shipped as far as Moosonee by rail, and then by barge up the coast of James Bay to the settlement. A few of the houses built from locally produced lumber still stand, and while they are too small for families, they are clearly more durable and more appropriate to the climate than the pre-fab houses erected since the late 1960's.

The history of housing in the settlement itself reflects the conflict between top-down action and local action. Housing derived from local materials was customary to life in the territory, and the sawmill represented a mission innovation continuous with that tradition. The loss of the sawmill was a loss of a form of self-sufficiency for the settlement. The top-down 'development' decision opened Fort Albany as a market for an industry in Kapuskasing, drawing Fort Albany into the industrial economy of the south. The appearance of pre-fab housing was described to me as the result of lobbyists selling their industry to the Department of Indian Affairs (Ed Metatawabin Personal Communication 1995).

Kapuskasing's housing enterprises accessed Fort Albany through the Northland Rail line, opened in 1931, and barge services from Moosonee. Housing shows the ongoing competition between the practices of everyday life in the territorial economy and the shifting interests of distant national policy makers. Importing housing purchased as a mass was not the only option for housing development, though given that Indian Affairs had a regional development problem, a similarly uniform policy was required. Though

building houses from the resources of the territory has been almost completely displaced by importing, this may only be temporary. In the mean time, the tradition of harvesting wood continues to fulfil the needs of everyday life.

Cutting wood provides one of the basic resources for most of Fort Albany's families whose homes in the village are heated with wood stoves. Electric heaters are the most common alternative to wood stoves, though frequent power outages make this an unreliable option. Firewood is collected anywhere that is accessible by vehicle, towed home on a sled by skidoo after freeze-up and by four wheel all-terrain vehicle in the fall. Wood can also be towed by boat from farther inland, and then carried up the shore. A few people cut wood and sell it for cash, though weekend day-trips to cut wood are most common. In the patterns of everyday life, firewood is always produced in the territory, just as it has been for the entire history of the settlement.

The central reality of settlement life, housing is a record of political and social relationships in the settlement, relationships that continually have meaning for the people who live here. Poor quality housing has been 'produced' in the settlement as a result of government decisions, and it is the consequences of these decisions that people live with everyday. Housing is plainly inadequate in the settlement, compounded by the lack of running water and a sewage system. In the Sinclair Island village where the majority of band members live, fewer than 20% of the houses have running water or sewer connections, though connections will be made to the majority of homes by 1999. The

sewer and water construction begun in 1996 will only serve the existing community, and will require continuous upgrades as housing in the village grows.

In the mean time, people haul water for washing, drinking and cooking to their homes where it is stored in large plastic garbage cans and painted fuel drums. The Sinclair Island community is served by five standpipes, though between August 1994 and October 1995, only two of them worked. Water from the standpipes is often contaminated, and so must always be boiled before drinking. Many people avoid the standpipes completely and collect water for drinking and cooking from snow in the winter and from certain points on the river in the summer. Rainwater is often collected during summer and spring for washing.

Without an extensive sewage system in the settlement, most households dispose of waste in a system of open ditches throughout the Sinclair Island community. A few houses have outside latrines, but most use chemical toilets or pails inside, which are emptied outside. Some homes have septic tanks, but these are expensive to put in and often freeze up in the winter. The waste ditches drain into and thus contaminate the river around the island, and may also contribute to contamination of the drinking water at the standpipes.

In contrast to the day-to-day conditions experienced by people living in the village, the mission buildings, the teacher's and nurses' residences and the Northern Store managers' homes on the mainland are in good repair and are connected to water and sewage lines. History, change, and the meaning of development colour the meaning of

these obvious imbalances everyday. One community member linked the practical experience of life in the village to social meaning when we spoke in 1994¹:

Here, I don't know. We are going back twenty years, thirty years. We're still living in third world conditions. We would like to get water so we can be more comfortable, a lot of that money's been spent needlessly through unwise policies. And people are getting fed up. Before you make improvements in their home settings, I don't think anything will improve really. I don't think we should live like that. For me that's the way I feel. I enjoy the land, I go there and live, rough, you know what I mean. I choose to live there. Where I live normally with my kids, I'd like to see the benefits like any other community. That's how I feel.

W: Are there people who are content with the lack of infrastructure here?

No. If you were to go to any house and ask 'are you happy taking out your shit pail every morning, and every evening' they'll tell you no, that's unhealthy. They run off, in the summertime, wherever you throw your shit pail in the creek, it comes out in the spring time, it's all tossed up and everything is messy. It's not healthy. In the old days, when you lived like that you moved around with the seasons, so you didn't live in one particular spot, you were moving, so you didn't really effect where, you were choosing one spot where you were dumping your waste; and it would naturally be decomposed right away. But now we have chemicals that we have to put in there, and that seeps into the earth. It was different then.

The extreme limitations that have developed in the settlement, continually compounded by population growth and cash poverty mean that basic living conditions are compromised for most Cree families in Fort Albany. Every day, most households in Fort

¹ In transcriptions of spoken interviews, I have chosen to represent contractions, as a closer approximation of speech.

Albany face challenges well beyond their ability to take meaningful action. In the face of these conditions, the Band administration struggles with severe limitations on its ability to provide and improve housing. The band has limited resources to invest in housing development or improvement in any given year. Large and settlement-wide projects must be prioritized, and timed to the availability of funding from Indian Affairs.

Housing development in the settlement is also complicated by long delays getting new electrical services put in by Ontario Hydro, because Ontario Hydro's generators cannot meet any new demand for electricity. The limits imposed by Ontario Hydro are a regional problem, because both Kashechewan and Fort Albany are affected by the moratorium on new electrical services. Regional energy conservation would improve the problem with electrical services, though the amount of housing and business development required to meet the needs of families in Fort Albany will demand increased generating capacity.

The material realities of housing are straight forward: lack of running water, lack of adequate sewage removal and treatment, lack of and inadequate houses. Housing for many people in the settlement has come to mean enduring conditions that are not of their choosing and that are representative of inequalities within the community and between the settlement and other Canadian cities and towns.

The meanings of housing problems are experienced everyday by members of households, but everyday life is much more than the sum of these problems. Everyday life in the settlement is providing for the household, and running the household within the

regional mixed economy. This social process of making a household invests life as a member of the settlement with wider meaning that is not apparent in a simple description of material or economic conditions.

EVALUATING THE SETTLEMENT ECONOMY

In the most conventional economic terms, one way to describe the economy is through the quantitative value of household income. In Fort Albany, household incomes are made up from social assistance payments, wages, proceeds from trapping and harvesting, reflecting the "adaptability and flexibility" of the mixed economy in the RCAP's definition quoted already. A 1992 report from the Mushkegowuk Council for the region breaks income into formal and informal sectors. Formal refers to wage employment, self-employment and income support (social assistance payments and unemployment insurance). Informal sectors are bush resources (food, medicine, wood) and cash incomes from other sources besides those considered 'formal', such as proceeds from bingo, gambling, selling personal property, bootlegging, and short-term self-employment like selling a boat-ride.

The average household income for the region is \$34,000, 75% of which or \$25,600 is in cash, and 25% or \$8,400 is land-based resources. Wages contribute 30% of the overall household income, \$10,000; income support 38%, \$13,000; bush 25% based on a cash equivalent of \$8,400; and informal cash income 7% or \$2,500 (Mushkegowuk Council 1992). Household incomes, however, are stretched thin: the average household

size is seven people, and purchased goods (food, clothing) cost 40-60% more than in other Ontario cities, and so cash income is almost completely invested in the most basic needs of the household. Consider also that incomes derived from Ontario Social Assistance payments were reduced by 21.6% in October 1995, further reducing the cash income of many settlement households.

The Council's statistical description of the mixed economy demonstrates two of the broadest features of the settlement economy. First, these show that significant amounts of cash are part of the overall 'wealth' of the settlement. Cash is one resource that is available to people who are performing the work of running a household. This resource is spent primarily on the needs of the household, and it also benefits the settlement network of households who are providing for their needs². Second, the bush or land-based portion of the mixed economy makes a significant contribution to household incomes, and is similarly a venue for economic development.

The mixed economy is the framework for daily life in the settlement. The mixed economy can be measured in economic terms, but such a measure does not communicate the social meanings that members of the settlement reproduce in their day-to-day economic activities. In daily life providing for the household communicates individual

² Most cash is quickly 'leaked' out of the settlement by outside businesses, and thus does not strengthen the settlement economy. In this section, however, it is more important to stress the principle of household self-sufficiency and the integrity households gain from their members' competence to that task.

member's competence and their willingness to participate in the sharing networks joining households. I turn now to a discussion of these social features of the settlement economy.

HOUSEHOLD SELF-SUFFICIENCY: THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE ECONOMY

Extended families are the primary social unit in the settlement. Separate residential households share fairly equal rights to resources and maintain extensive responsibilities for sharing with other households within their extended family. Each household within the extended family is a residential unit, made up of one or two parents, their children, and sometimes grandchildren and nieces and nephews of the adult heads of the household. Individuals who do not maintain their own house or residence live with members of their extended family, and may move from house to house as conditions dictate. Adult unmarried children usually live with their parents, sometimes with children of their own.

Separate residential households are extensively bound to one another through daily contacts. Contacts include visiting for non-wagered card and dice games³, tea and television, sharing household resources, childcare, chores and harvesting. During my research period, day-to-day contacts were most common between parents and their adult children's families, among same-sex siblings and among same-sex first cousins. Relationships between same-sex first cousins are especially common among offspring of

³ Gambling games, especially cards, are social events that are not contained within kin groupings, drawing groups of upwards of ten players and some spectators. Like bingo at the community hall on Sinclair Island, participants are admitted on their willingness to wager.

same-sex siblings. This is a regular pattern of close social intimacies, assistance and sharing between same-sex parallel cousins. Some of these close relationships are lifelong, and 'inherited' with position in the family, a family that is extended beyond the nuclear family, and beyond parent/child relationships⁴.

Family is shaped by residence, shared history, age group and personal alliances within an extended family group. Activities of everyday life are accomplished within the extended family. Besides wage work, shopping, cooking, childcare and so on, many other everyday activities in the settlement require special efforts. Hauling water or snow and ice during the winter, and getting firewood are part of everyday life. These are constant concerns, and require coordinated efforts, often between households which are interdependent. For example, sisters may do laundry together, brothers may go out to cut wood together, or a son-in-law will get water for his mother-in-law, so that separate households share the effort of providing for related households. Sharing work also links households through shared technology. Expensive items like skidoos and chainsaws are necessary for much of the work of maintaining a home in the settlement, and so are shared between separate residential households within the extended family.

⁴ Most individuals have a spouse from another family and a sibling who is married into a different extended family from their own (except for spouses from other communities). This makes boundaries between extended family groups flexible, dynamic and permeable. Extended families thus have a definite shape dependant on which individual's position they are viewed from. When you view them is important as well, because people move, conflicts occur and are resolved.

The structure of the extended family binds related residential households into reciprocal exchanges. Economic anthropologists define reciprocity as "a moral norm structuring the giving and returning of help: 'If you want to be helped by others, you must help them'" (Narotzky 1997: 45). Reciprocal exchanges within extended families do not create 'debts' or require an equivalent exchange. Instead, they are channels of assistance and obligation that are always open within the extended family. The 'help' that is trafficked between households in the Fort Albany settlement takes a variety of forms: access to technology (such as a skidoo, axe or chainsaw); labour (such as when a relative collects firewood for a family member); material goods that are to be consumed by the recipient (food, firewood, cash). The sharing or exchange of these gifts substantiates or embodies the social structure of the larger extended family itself.

The same gifts of resources can be made to a person outside one's family network, and in my research experience these acts of giving do not open or maintain a reciprocal exchange relationship. Unlike giving in the reciprocal structure, these gifts may elicit passing justifications in conversation. I note this latter type of exchange not as an exception to the rule of reciprocity, but rather to indicate the flexibility of the settlement-level economy even across established boundaries between interconnected, extended family groups. Such extra-family exchanges demonstrate intra-community relationships (and partial interdependency) despite more obvious tensions between separate extended family groups. Family divisiveness is especially apparent in the contemporary settlement in band-level elections and other politicking. Conversely, in my research period, band

elections, the band council and band administration have been channels for mediating oppositions between families across lines that divide extended family groups. Thus, part of settlement life in Fort Albany is the process of constantly negotiating the shifting oppositions and alliances between extended family groups.

All of the resources held by each household are its 'wealth', which I define as the use-value of resources. By use-value, I mean the benefit that accrues to the user, giver and recipient of any particular gift, item or skill. In these terms, wealth refers to the variety of resources (cash, goods, skills, knowledge, help, food) that are circulated within the community. But wealth is also the intangible, social networks through which resources circulate, because they ensure stability for households which depend on relationships of reciprocity and sharing.

The work of keeping a household running continuously renews links between households, links through which wealth is shared and social alliances are established. To abstract this observation, 'sharing' maintains and embodies a structure that exists only in the practice or performance of that structure. The network is a potential within which individuals act, reproducing the network.

In daily life, the settlement's mixed economy provides opportunities for individuals to provide for their household. Because this is a mixed economy, the work of providing for the household takes in the territory as well. The social structure through which households have access to one another's resources is also part of that economy. Taken together, an individual's position within the territory, settlement and family gives him/her

access to a 'means of livelihood' (Narotzky 1997: 210). This means of livelihood is not narrowly material (money or goods) but instead a weave of opportunity and obligation. Individuals are required to pursue these opportunities and be able to fulfil their obligations. In the same way, households must be willing to fill their place in the settlement's social economic structure. Households pursue and achieve self-sufficiency in the settlement economy, to which I now turn.

The ability to provide the resources required in the household is a highly valued quality in the settlement. Every household, by virtue of maintaining a residence, is in some sense self-sufficient. That is, participation in the rhythm of work and effort that is required to keep a household running defines self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency demonstrates the competence of the members of a household to carry out the tasks of running a home. For some people, however, especially unmarried adult children, this role cannot be fulfilled by running a household, and may be accomplished in other manners. For example, some young men's hunting, trapping and fishing trips, sometimes of many weeks duration, demonstrate their competence to be self-sufficient. Adult children living with their parents also demonstrate their competence through education and waged work, as does the work they do within their family. Competence and self-sufficiency are indivisible in the social, economic and kin roles in the mixed economy. Skill and intelligence are required to provide for everyday needs.

The household is the place where resources are used to build wealth in the community, through contributing to family incomes. Individual family incomes sustain the

family, and contribute to other households, keeping the web of reciprocal relationships alive. Economic development can be defined as improving the opportunities of households to be self-sufficient, by ensuring access to all of the resources and practices that make up the mixed economy.

Each household is not only woven into the economy of the settlement, household economies intersect national and international economies. Individual residential households interact with settlement and regional structures, Canadian Federal structures, the national industrial economy and the regional land-based economy. It is especially in relationships with the industrial economy that the settlement's cash resources are drained away from economic development for the settlement. Some resources never leave Fort Albany, and are produced and consumed entirely within the area, especially bush resources (food, medicine and wood). On the other hand, most cash leaves the community very quickly through businesses and service providers situated outside the community (such as Bell, the Northern Store and Air Creebec). Given this degree of leakage, Fort Albany is a stable income base for businesses from outside the community, while the same cash incomes could contribute to development of the local economy.

Community self-sufficiency, household self-sufficiency and individual opportunity are meaningfully linked in a theory/practice approach to development planning in Fort Albany, shown here in a quote from the Economic Development Program 1995-1996:

We are hindered in our quest for economic development in that the First Nation has no revenue/funds of its own and is totally dependent on government grants. They say we have no land except the reserve land, they

say it is incumbent for the office to create wealth. Wealth is looked at in the sense that the community has more - more healthy people, more resources, more tools, more infrastructure, and in the end, more funds and revenue. As it is now, the First Nation has none of these and if they are available, then the machines, the tools, the buildings are outdated or substandard.

The underlying philosophy of including everyone in our actions and activities was developed and refined by our elders thousands and thousands of years ago. We call the system the "wholistic approach". ... The wholistic approach preaches inclusion of all people in all actions and in all activities. No one is to be left behind.

This is the aim of the Band Development Office - to provide equal and fair opportunities for everyone to help him/herself by providing access to community/group projects: for example, the arts and crafts project for the women, Shabotowan for the elders and the youth centre for the youth, trapping assistance for trappers, and employment programs for the high school and post-secondary students (Fort Albany Band Economic Development Office 1996).

The necessity of improvement to the basic infrastructure of the settlement is stressed in this passage, as is the growth of the economy, but in the context of the mixed economy. "Equal and fair opportunities for everyone to help him/herself" expresses the value of self-sufficiency and competence for community members. The passage directly highlights the settlement's mixed economy, as all economic sectors are stressed as areas for development action.

As I describe in the following, the mixed economy is at once the structure within which self-sufficiency is enacted and a unique development context.

THE MIXED ECONOMY: CREE ADAPTATIONS OF THE CASH ECONOMY

The Mushkegowuk Council's statistical breakdown of incomes as 75% cash and 25% bush describes an economy in which households derive their resources from harvesting, wage work and social assistance payments. Overall, the mixed economy is built out of the adaptation of opportunities (which always change) to need (the requirements of the self-sufficient household). During the fur trade and mission eras in Fort Albany, short-term work at the settlement was one opportunity within the larger territorial economy. For generations, flexible and short-term employment accommodated harvesting patterns, representing an adaptation of a wage opportunity to the harvesting economy. In this adaptation, the economy is unified for households: incomes generated from any source combine to meet household needs and achieve self-sufficiency.

In the widest social patterns of daily life, the contemporary settlement economy is organized by the idea of 'having access to harvesting'. Most recently in Fort Albany, this pattern has been formalized in Cultural Days (a leave of absence for band employees to go hunting) and in Goose Breaks in the school year. In principle, these periods permit participation in harvesting activities, especially during the fall and spring goose hunts, though a fall moose hunt is also part of the yearly cycle. In practice, seasonal trips for hunting of a few hours, days or weeks are very common. Fort Albany's hunting breaks are a formal support of the harvesting economy, and demonstrate the basic social value of harvesting in the settlement.

In the links between separate residential households, the value of having access to harvesting is made tangible in the process of sharing. Skidoos, boats, outboard motors and canoes are requirements for harvesting trips, especially for hunting, fishing and trapping but also for collecting firewood. This technology is costly, and at present in the settlement not everyone can afford the cash expenses of owning and maintaining it. Sharing between households is the only way to ensure that many households (and individuals) have access to this technology. The integration of technology to harvesting takes place within sharing networks between households, the constant which incorporates the new.

The preservation of fish, geese and other game meat represents a similar process. In Fort Albany today the most common method of preservation is freezing which is possible in the home with large freezers. Large freezers accommodate the fact that goose hunts produce large amounts of meat. Moose meat, similarly, can be preserved in a freezer and used throughout the year. As another example, Annabella Solomon told me that when she was first married to her husband Gilbert, she used a canning machine as one way to preserve meat at winter camp, and fish in the summer, while she also smoked meat and fish. This was during the 1960's when she was living primarily in the bush. Mrs. Solomon, employed full time at the school since the early 1970's, and living primarily in the settlement, still smokes meat and fish when she has the opportunity.

Changes in the patterns of preservation do not represent a change in the distribution of hunted foods along traditional lines in Fort Albany. Meat is still distributed

widely in the community between households, within extended family networks and within alliances across extended family boundaries. Ellen Smallboy recounts a drastic change in the practices of sharing in Moose Factory in her life time, and she was particularly concerned that meat was being sold (Flannery 1995: 50). Selling meat is denounced in Fort Albany today, though I have no evidence that it is a common practice. More common is to see meat shared among households as soon as it is brought into the community. Preserved meat (now mostly frozen or smoked) is available for the asking for a special occasion, such as an elder's feast, from anyone who has the meat available.

The social uses of such mundane things as technology replicate the bonds between members of the settlement, and bonds between these families and the territory. It is basic, unremarked patterns of everyday life that reproduce the mixed economy and all of the social bonds that are possible within the mixed economy. One final example of the unity of all resources in the household comes from bush activities that create income, pursuits other than trapping. The best example is collecting firewood to sell to other people in the community. Cutting and transporting firewood provides a cash income, while their other harvesting activities provide bush resources to the household. Other people, with access to larger cash incomes, are the most able to afford to buy firewood. For people selling wood, they have a steady market and can supplement small cash incomes from pension, Unemployment Insurance or social assistance.

Bush resources are a necessary part of household incomes. The process of being part of the mixed economy, of harvesting and providing for yourself within the territorial

economy shapes the social world. Rees argues that mixed economies have two specific social consequences: "maintenance of cultural tradition[s]" of harvesting (1988: 60), resulting in "community coherence and survival" (1988: 67). But harvesting is not itself the lone traditional component of the mixed economy: it is the ethic of self-sufficiency that is 'traditional' in the mixed economy, or the central social mechanism that is animated in the process of the mixed economy. Self-sufficiency is reproduced within all of the opportunities available in the mixed economy. The patterns of reciprocity, resource use, and self-sufficiency that people recreate when they provide for their households are the real core of the economy, not any specific resource (cash or otherwise).

Economic interdependence between households in the settlement is the basis of the settlement economy. This interdependence is derived from the ethics that govern the distribution of bush resources, where sharing and reciprocity are normal. In this way, the mixed economy is different from the cash economy in other parts of Canada, because its basic value system puts more importance on reciprocity than on the accumulation of resources. In economic development terms, stability, flexibility and wealth are produced for participants in the process that is the mixed economy.

THE MIXED ECONOMY, SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND DEVELOPMENT

As I showed in Chapter One, the mixed economy has developed around the economic practices that met in the settlement: wage and trading incomes were integrated into the regional (land-based) economy. This integration has always meant that Cree

families have a unique position within the mixed economy, because the economic roles of harvester and wageworker are indivisible from reciprocal obligation and the pressure to achieve self-sufficiency. The mixed economy reflects a heritage of local economic control as well as autonomy and distinctiveness from international and national economies. It is not only traditional or land-based pursuits that contribute to community survival: it is the larger adaptability of the mixed economy to incorporate all resources within the social fabric of related households. In this argument, cash (from any source) is one resource in self-sufficient households, but cash does not circulate in a community-based business sector in a way that builds wealth for community members or that is reinvested in the settlement. In fact, outside businesses profit disproportionately more from the community's cash resources than members of the community.

There is an added distraction when considering cash incomes in the settlement, however, and that is a misattribution of cash income from income subsidies as in and of itself an economic development problem. Incomes from social assistance are often stigmatized as creating 'dependency' on government, and contradicting the idea of 'self-sufficiency' (see for example Elias 1995: 14-15). Incomes from social assistance do not, at this point in time and in this economy preclude the self-sufficiency I describe. Social assistance payments are an inadequate Federal response to the need for major development in Fort Albany, and so debating whether or not they are necessary in the economy at this time only serves as a distraction from the real problem: the cash sector

is not controlled locally and requires extensive and expensive locally controlled business development, as well as supports for the informal sector.

Social assistance and Employment Insurance are a fact of life, and will remain so, but are also one resource among many that the community can build on. At this time, because of leakage, household incomes derived from transfers from Federal and Provincial governments contribute more to the mainstream economy (through outside businesses) than they contribute to the community's economy. As LeDressay states: "The scale of the phenomenon [leakage] dispel[s] any myth that First Nations do not contribute to the non-First Nation economy" (1993: 221).

The mixed economy in Fort Albany is thus a site of conflict. Economic exchanges and practices are the routes through which households are self-sufficient, are the ways for individuals to demonstrate their competence as members of households. In turn, economic exchanges create and recreate links between households, building stability into the settlement economy. However, the benefits of cash exchanges do not accrue to the settlement's households, but to the businesses which bleed cash resources out of the community. The ethic of self-sufficiency that operates in the household and extended family does not yet operate in the settlement-wide cash economy.

Economic development plans must protect the vitality of the mixed economy while increasing settlement control over cash resources. The mechanisms for building the values of the mixed economy into an expanded cash economy are already in place. In the most obvious instance, individual households can be 'developed' in the sense that all of the

opportunities to provide for the household can be supported and expanded. Members of households will continue to reproduce core values of self-sufficiency and competence, in ways that already provide community coherence, interdependence and economic security.

The cash portion of community resources is already governed by a value system shared by community members. There are prosperous families who are rich in both bush resources and cash incomes. Some families are more associated with either resources derived from the land or cash incomes. These differences between families are discussed in a variety of ways by members of the community. One distinction that I heard was made between segments of the community as more or less "traditional" in daily concerns and practices, an accusation that less traditional families are only concerned with accumulating cash wealth. Such comments are widespread, demonstrating that the cash economy is fraught with conflict. But this conflict between community orientation and interest in accumulation is an expression of an ethic of fairness that I would argue is widely shared in the community.

The accusation that one is unfair and taking advantage of community members in their business activities shows the shape of community expectations and tolerances, social values that can be built into the management practices of businesses. As I discuss in Chapter Six, entrepreneurs in Fort Albany expressed this ethic of fairness as a desire to be self-sufficient without 'getting rich' from their businesses. Competition between enterprises occurs, while it is frowned upon: it is 'unfair' to actively try and undermine your competitor's enterprise and thereby deny them opportunity. The concerns that are

raised around enterprises in the settlement demonstrate that values governing enterprise are asserted and reasserted constantly, regulating business.

Self-sufficiency and sharing are intimately linked as more traditional values, and these values heavily influence economic and social exchanges within the community. The mixed economy, then, is more than strictly economic pursuits, but is also made up of social ideals and values.

MIXED ECONOMIES: FORT ALBANY AND NATIONAL PATTERNS

Cash incomes fill a particularly complicated niche in northern economies. Expansion of the cash economy is at once a potential benefit to the community generally, while the cash economy is one of the channels through which northern communities are being exploited by the economies of the industrial south. The association of the cash economy with exploitation (discussed in detail in the next chapter), is well founded in light of the everyday experience of people running households in Fort Albany. However, the cash economy can continue to be developed within the existing mixed economy in Fort Albany.

The mixed economy afforded Cree people in this region the autonomy to protect their linguistic, social, cultural and economic distinctiveness. It has always been a structure through which Crees have negotiated their alliances with European and Euro-Canadian influences centred in the settlement. This process of negotiation is ongoing, and

the mixed, regional economy of Fort Albany is similar to other regions of the north where the mixed economy has endured, despite conflict and exploitation.

Forestry and hydro-electric development have had massive negative impacts on Cree communities in Northern Quebec, with the most obvious benefits of the resultant conflicts coming from the mobilization of Cree leadership and the development of a regional Cree-run infrastructure with the cash portion of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). Unlike other large scale boom periods in northern regions, the JBNQA has provided funds for regional development of benefit to the region, while the agreement in no way makes up for the losses to the Crees of Northern Quebec, especially the loss of territories and resources of food and fuel. Cash has not been (and never will be) an adequate replacement for the kinds of losses that occurred as a result of flooding and road building because those territories have been excized from the sustainable land-based economy.

Cree leadership in northern Quebec has been careful to insist that the existing regional economy, a mixed economy, must be the basis of future economic development, and not displaced by Hydro-Quebec's style of economic development. The Grand Council of the Crees of Northern Quebec thus has insisted that Cree communities have created their own development within the context of the agreement. Matthew Coon Come states:

Hydro Quebec will...tell you that the La Grande project has somehow been a benefit to the Cree people as half of the Cree population are now involved in administrative and private business activities. What is true, is that our population has grown and continues to grow today at a very fast rate. Moreover, the business activities of the Crees have increased, as they

have among other indigenous peoples in Canada. Also, as elsewhere in Canada, the Crees control and have improved education and health services in the Cree communities. What is false is for Hydro Quebec to claim that it is somehow due to their efforts and to their project that this has come about (Matthew Coon Come 1991: 6-7).

Hydro-Quebec's development plans have always presented a threat to more than the economic autonomy of the region's mixed economy: they have always been assaults on the rights of the Crees of Northern Quebec to manage their own economy. Hydro-Quebec's planning has always threatened to supplant economic direction set within the context of the mixed economy. This, in turn, can be seen as a political act that denies Aboriginal title to these territories held by the Crees of Northern Quebec. Billy Diamond states:

We intend to assert our own jurisdiction, sovereignty and control over that land because under International Law we have a unique and identifiable population, our own culture, our own language, lands we occupy and continually use, historical occupation and possession and international recognition (1991: 32-33).

The mixed economy must be understood within this context of cultural and linguistic sovereignty. Mixed economies provide the shape for change while they provide continuity, even in the face of real domination. Coon Come and Diamond speak to the vitality of the mixed economy, despite daunting conflict.

In Nation Within a Nation Marie-Anik Gagné analyzes the Cree economy of northern Quebec as a peripheral, underdeveloped industrial economy. In Gagné's sustained attempt to force the Cree into the role of periphery, Cree cultural, linguistic and economic

forms obligingly disappear during the fur trade, even before the Cree's 1973 challenge to hydro electric development:

[Hydro Quebec's] defence argued that the Cree were dependent on store-bought food, unemployment, government transfers, and welfare; therefore, they had already given up their traditional way of life. In this argument, Hydro-Quebec is actually confirming the fact that when the periphery depends on the centre it destroys the culture (1994: 118).

Some of the testimony Gagné refers to was given by nurses and other southern newcomers before Justice Malouf, and included reports about Kentucky Fried Chicken and store-bought clothes (Richardson 1991: 313). Like Hydro-Quebec's lawyers, Gagné merely reduces culture to the material, while her claim of dependency on the state reduces the meaning of a resource to its source. In this, Gagné disregards the social and economic structures of the mixed economy that I have argued here encompass all resources, regardless of their source. What Gagné confirms in her argument is nothing about the Crees, but merely the pressure of her argument: in order to demonstrate that the Crees are 'peripheral', she must erase their distinctiveness.

Gagné's argument is propelled by the notion that Cree people were completely subordinated to the interests of resource developers through the fur trade:

Europeans introduced the Cree into a capitalist world economy when they were not even at a feudal state, even if this was not the direction in which they were necessarily heading. Once in this world economy, the Natives were "swallowed" up and forced to take on the role of a periphery sustaining a core (1994: 38).

This argument leads Gagné to represent harvesting as one marginal practice of a subordinated, desperate people. Of the contemporary economy, Gagné writes: "The James

Bay Cree [of Northern Quebec] are more fortunate than First Nations Citizens residing in urban areas, because they can supplement their employment income by hunting and trapping" (1994: 62). In this way Gagné characterizes harvesting as anachronistic within an underdeveloped industrial economy. Such a characterization ignores and obscures the fact that mixed economies are fundamentally different from urban industrial economies. With such an irresponsible attack on the James Bay Crees of Northern Quebec, it is profoundly important to recognize the integrity of mixed economies in northern regions: mixed economies represent the persistence of Indigenous autonomy from and selective engagement with the industrial economy.

Beyond a cash equivalent value estimated at \$8,400 per year in each residential household in Fort Albany, land-based activities are central to community social and economic life, creating tangible social meaning in everyday life. In Fort Albany, access to harvesting is a central value in daily life. The idea that bush resources are supplementary to cash incomes ignores the social uses and social values of bush resources, and even the 'worth' of the knowledge that is required to harvest. In Fort Albany, the sharing of bush resources maintains and strengthens social networks through which kin-based family groups are defined.

Mixed economies are partially separate from industrial economies, or rather they operate in engagement with industrial economies. That relationship is unbalanced, but imbalances do not equate with complete annihilation. In Fort Albany, the cash economy is the major channel of relationships between the settlement and the industrial economy

of the south, the buying and selling and using of cash resources in the effort of providing for the household. But cash exchanges can only be understood in relation to the social value and meaning of self-sufficiency and competence: cash exchanges continue to provide for households, reproducing the households, the values of self-sufficiency, and the competence to produce. Further, and most important, these social values play a part in development planning, indicated throughout this chapter. The urban-industrial economy does not provide the template for development of a region that has its own unique economy. As described in Chapter Five, in its widest application the principles of self-sufficiency are translated into self-determination in development planning that is dominated by responsibility to linguistic and cultural distinctiveness.

In Fort Albany, the process of providing for the household constantly reaffirms the relationship between Omushkegowuk and the territory that the mixed economy utilizes. Mixed economies generally support the continued use of territories to which bands in northern regions have Aboriginal title. Aboriginal title is affirmed and reaffirmed continually through economic practices that bring land-based resources into household incomes. I have been reminded many times by Alex Metatawabin, the Band Economic Development Officer in Fort Albany during the period of my research, that the contemporary economy is one point in the several thousand year history of Cree people in the region around Fort Albany. The settlement at Fort Albany, and the economy of Fort Albany today have grown out of land-based activities that are Indigenous, and that are the heritage of the contemporary residents of the community. Aboriginal title is also a claim

to cultural and linguistic rights for Omushkegowuk, and cultural and linguistic sovereignty are high priority development issues in Fort Albany.

Potential conflicts in development planning emerge around the goals of change, if they are assumed to be merely expansion of the cash economy. As the case of Fort Albany shows, development needs to be directed by an understanding of the mixed economy as a unique development in itself, a form of economy that can continue to grow in its own terms: protecting and encouraging access to all forms of income at the level of the household. Mixed economies provide direction for change, and do not reflect only a static response to outside interests.

Understanding the settlement today requires accepting that Cree people in this region and in the settlement are makers of their own history, even within periods of domination. The settlement today is the primary location for the assertion of Cree distinctiveness from the dominant matrix of Canadian society. In the next chapter I take up the conflicts in the settlement economy: the economic exploitation, marginalization and domination that are ever present in the cash portion of the settlement economy. In the following chapter, I reflect again on what daily life is like, but in terms of the contradiction between action and outcome, or the daily struggles over economic authority and control that take place in the settlement everyday.

CHAPTER FOUR
"TO THE POINT OF IMPOVERISHMENT": ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION AND
DAILY LIFE IN THE SETTLEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines economic development problems in Fort Albany, indicating how those problems are identified and meaningful in everyday life. Reflecting on the contemporary economy as something that people live inside everyday, this chapter provides a view of the economy from the inside out, or from the centre of settlement life (the household) to its margins, where the mainstream industrial economy of Canada operates. This attribution of centres and margins reverses conventional Marxist sociological and anthropological constructions of the 'periphery' as marginal to industrial, 'developed' economies (see for example Allahar 1989 and Gagné 1994). Such a reversal is established in the work of feminist critics of 'Third World Development' analysis (Mohanty 1991a and 1991b). By choosing to view households as the centre of economic life, I view the daily practice of living in the settlement as an engagement with economic practices, institutions and structures that connect the local to 'the outside'. I view the local as the place where these connections are negotiated, accepted and resisted; as the site of innovation and agency despite limits.

My goal in this chapter is to capture some of the local interpretations of the economy in the Fort Albany settlement. These interpretations are highly political,

historically aware and locally meaningful understandings of economic problems. This chapter also defines what development 'means' in Fort Albany: the growth of opportunities for community members; the enhancement and protection of choices for community members in providing for their households in the mixed economy; improved material conditions in the settlement; greater control over the resources that are already present in the settlement. These definitions are demonstrated as formal and informal development action in the following two chapters.

The interpretations of the settlement economy included here relentlessly acknowledge the fundamental need for change, along lines shared by the authors of the RCAP final report:

The principal factor that brought Aboriginal communities to the point of impoverishment over the centuries was the intervention - deliberate or unintended, well-intentioned or self-interested - of non-Aboriginal society. If this judgment is harsh, it also suggests that the economic marginalization of Aboriginal communities can be reversed if the will to do so is present. But the factors that define how Aboriginal economies operate must change, as must the share of economic power exercised by Aboriginal people. In the economic realm, as in governance, it is necessary to make room so that Aboriginal people can develop their own solutions. The onus is also on Aboriginal people to exercise informed leadership; to take up the challenge of entrepreneurship, education and training; and to take the risk of breaking away from patterns of dependency where these exist (1996b: 777).

As this chapter will demonstrate, imbalances in "economic power" are central to the economic problems facing the people living in Fort Albany, while these imbalances are rooted in the specific history of the settlement.

The previous chapters have introduced conflicts in the settlement economy, but I have also placed these conflicts alongside and within the continuity of Cree strategies for making a living. Examples like pre-fab housing from the previous chapter are dwarfed by the scope of conflicts described in the following. Processes of economic domination and marginalization repeatedly impose limits on the ability to make change at the household level and at the settlement level. But problems are, again, not the whole picture: the economy of the settlement contains a contest, a competition for share of economic control. Not an underdeveloped industrial economy, representing a partially or poorly completed process of change, Fort Albany's is a mixed economy, a distinctive set of possibilities facing unique problems.

EMPLOYMENT, DEPENDENCY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CASH ECONOMY

Seasonal and short-term employment both in and away from the community has had an important place in the economy of Fort Albany. Today, these traditions feed into development policy, a conversation that speaks loudest at 'the top' where Federal and Provincial agencies structure programs directed to development. Each program and policy is countered, translated and reinvented on the ground in Fort Albany, just as wage work and employment have traditionally been drawn into Cree strategies for using the settlement and its opportunities as part of the mixed economy.

Dependable summer work for cash or in-kind payments has been common for almost three hundred years, first for the Hudson's Bay Company, and in the twentieth century for the Roman Catholic and Anglican missions, Revillon Freres and the free trader. Full-time year-round employment was also available for a short term when the Department of National Defense built the radar base in the settlement, 1955-57. Seasonal and short-term employment gave people flexibility, ensuring that they had enough money to travel into the bush and that they could provide for their family.

Seasonal employment, however, is not the only form of wage employment that has been integrated with the land-based economy in Fort Albany. In the twentieth century, a few people worked year-round for the mission or one of the trading operations, though most of these people also lived off the land at some point in their life and pursued some seasonal harvesting while they were employed. One trend was for people to take work when they were young to support their family, especially if one parent was ill or had passed away.

Year-round, permanent wage employment was available to very few people until the 1960's when the mission began to hire more lay-people to work in the operations of the school and the hospital. In some cases during this era, the mother/wife earned a cash income from full-time year-round work, and the father/husband pursued harvesting and seasonal employment, so both partners' incomes were part of an over-all household income. Yet these full-time jobs were not necessarily permanent, just as a sometime seasonal worker could take full-time year-round work periodically. Incomes from full-time

wage work (though not necessarily permanent), seasonal work (mainly summer) and temporary full-time jobs (such as in construction labour for the Department of National Defense) have been integrated into overall household incomes which include incomes from harvesting.

Today, wage (un)employment is widely marked as a crisis development problem. Statistics from the Mushkegowuk Council's 1991 report for the region show that cash contributes 75% of each household's income today, and so cash is a significant resource for the community. Unemployment rates run around 50% (Fort Albany Band Economic Development Office), slightly higher for women than men (Statistics Canada 1991). These statistics imply large amounts of cash injected into the settlement economy through government income subsidies. It is high unemployment statistics, and large amounts of income subsidies paid out in Mushkegowuk communities that motivate many of the Federal and Provincial programs that reach the economic development office at Fort Albany, all with explicit goals of lowering unemployment rates, and thus reducing the cost of social assistance. Unemployment is a high-profile economic development issue, and judging by the programs available to the band, employment is a perennial cause for development investment.

High unemployment rates in Fort Albany reflect the lack of full-time wage employment available in the community. Employment in band administration provides about 30% of the full-time, year-round wage employment in the settlement. During my research period, the band-run construction company Neegan Ochee employed almost as

many people as the band office, though most of these jobs were seasonal. The hospital, local business, permanent jobs with the local construction company, the school, the Northern Store and other employers (such as the airport, the Day Care and the Healing Centre) make up the remainder of the wage employment in Fort Albany. In the case of the hospital, the school and the Northern Store, the highest paid full-time positions are held by people from outside the community, the nurses, teachers, and managers.

The meaning and value of wage employment in Fort Albany is brought to life in employment and training programs in the settlement. Many of the employment training programs in Fort Albany are directed to placing wage employees in institutions that are central to settlement life, such as the band office. Training programs for carpenters, plumbers and heavy equipment operators demonstrate the same goal of training local people for employment locally, with the band-run construction company or as independent operators doing housing repairs. Formal training programs of this kind are geared to the needs of the settlement.

Less formally, community members have been encouraged to pursue the qualifications required to teach in the school, and to work in the hospital and the day care. These formal and informal trends reflect a local development strategy to use wages and wage employment as a way for the community to gain control over the cash economy. By ensuring that community members have these valuable skills and specializations these wages enter the extended family networks that make up the community. In this way, these incomes contribute to community wealth by improving family incomes, circulating in the

community's mixed economy. Further, locally controlled institutions (whether businesses or social service providers like the daycare) have a larger impact than providing jobs: they are a way for the community to develop settlement institutions in ways that manifest community interest in those institutions.

Despite any local strategy for improving opportunities for wage employment, however, many jobs in Fort Albany are temporary: they are either seasonal, contract or depend on 'soft' funding from a provincial or federal agency. For example, due to provincial funding cuts to a locally designed and provincially funded agency, four full-time positions and two part-time positions were lost between 1995 and 1996 in Fort Albany. Employment is, at best, insecure for most people living in Fort Albany. Taking work outside the community is a well established practice, which underlines the overall insecurity of wage employment in the community.

Another form of employment in Fort Albany, discussed in detail in Chapter Six, is small enterprise. Like other forms of employment, it has a long and unique history in Fort Albany. Since the 1960's and the growth of the permanent Cree settlement, people have provided various services to other community members. Most important, entrepreneurs adhere to the ethic of household-level self-sufficiency: they provide small cash incomes to their household, and often provide employment for other family members, and sometimes other community members. Jobs in small businesses are extremely flexible, and employees come and go frequently. Seasonal downturns in business also

make jobs in small businesses insecure for employees, though overall they provide cash to household incomes.

Employment is insecure in the settlement at the present time, though opportunities for full-time work are expanding with the elaboration of institutions in the settlement, such as the band office, the hospital and the day care. Wage employment is beneficial to the settlement economy, increasing the amount of cash available to households and extended families. Cash incomes from employment are part of the mixed economy, as purchased goods are distributed within the social bonds inherent to the mixed economy. Cash and purchased items are owned by the residential household and distributed to the extended family through sharing. Purchased equipment is held by a residential household though shared with the extended family, whether it is an item needed to pursue land-based incomes (such as a boat) or to provide for the household in the settlement (such as a washing machine). In these ways, cash helps sustain the self-sufficient households that make up the mixed economy.

From a development perspective, expanding and strengthening access to wage employment is crucial to renewing local control in the settlement economy. Employment now represents the community taking control over the settlement economy, especially in the cash that circulates between locally owned businesses, service providers and their employees before leaking out to the urban-industrial economy. Encouraging wage employment can improve opportunities for cash income, but cannot replace or preclude participation in the land-based economy. In Fort Albany, Trapper Training and Arts and

Crafts are programs that demonstrate how formal development planning can be used to elaborate specific economic pursuits traditional in the mixed economy, trapping and cottage industry. I discuss these two programs more thoroughly in Chapter Five, and here want to acknowledge that the shape of the settlement's mixed economy can support formal economic development.

Trapper Training and Arts and Crafts are formal acknowledgements of forms of competence that otherwise may appear marginal economic practices: the cash income from these pursuits is minor compared to cash incomes from full-time wage employment, and cash returns may be erratic or unreliable over a given period of weeks or months. However wage work is inherently short-term in the settlement, and tends to be unreliable in the long-term. The competence required for traditional pursuits provides flexibility and dependability over the long-term. In my research experience, both men and women who had recently lost a job (for a variety of reasons) turned their energies immediately to cottage industry and harvesting, in some cases to collect cash income, in others because the time was now available, which it often is not during periods of full-time employment. Competence in these skills, traditional in the mixed economy, is thus more reliable. The competence required to keep a household running requires that households produce some of their income from land-based pursuits all of the time, in combination with wage and subsidy incomes. Trapper Training and Arts and Crafts exploit the employment training model to support this fundamental value of competence and flexibility. This in turn accommodates the instability of wage employment in the settlement.

The flexibility that is built into the mixed economy should not be mistaken for a hierarchy of pursuits, with wage work at the top, but instead represents the fundamental diversity of the settlement economy, and the coherence between various pursuits. The insecurity of wage employment in the settlement remains a 'development' problem, however, given that it represents the instability of cash sector of the economy in the settlement. The small number of self-employed community members who profit from their own enterprises represent all of the local economic activity that recirculates and creates economic opportunities out of the cash resources in the settlement. Most cash is otherwise spent supporting outside businesses only, and does not flow through formal locally controlled enterprises or informal local enterprises (selling firewood, furs or artwork for example). Gambling, bingo and bootlegging are the only other economic streams that circulate cash within the settlement, and they are extremely sporadic.

The biggest share of economic control in the settlement's cash economy continues to reside in 'outside' businesses. Incomes are secure for these businesses which supply basic goods and services. This imbalance is called "dependency" in some of the literature on northern economies, in which northern regions and the industrialized regions of the country are in an imbalanced relationship in the cash economy. William Rees uses dependency to describe these relationships between regions: those areas interconnected by the "mainstream economy" and "northern economies", which serve as a resource base for mainstream, industrial economies (1988: 63-64). Northern cash economies are dependent on the investments that come from the mainstream industrial regions of the

country, and these investments are controlled by the outside. In turn, the incomes of these businesses are not reinvested locally but reinvested elsewhere in the mainstream economy (Rees 1988: 64).¹ After a boom period of investment, a bust occurs because none of the exchanges that have been part of that boom have been reinvested locally, and so these unstable cash economies collapse. The cash economies of northern, resource-rich regions are thus 'dependent' on investments from the south.

Rees' model flows from the idea that resources (such as timber, hydro-electric energy or minerals) are the raw materials required for production in industrial regions, however the model applies in the case of the Fort Albany settlement, not presently under immediate threat from such resource-extraction economies. For my purposes, a range of resources must be considered investments: wages (paid by operating funds from an outside agency), social assistance payments (from federal and provincial sources) or technological investment (such as roads for forestry, dams, mining technology). In Fort Albany the Northern Store has invested in a store, a storage building and staff houses, but the store's profits go to investors living in the industrialized south. Most settlement member's cash incomes (from any source) eventually go to the Northern Store, but most of the profits benefit investors and the highest paid employees (who are from outside the community), upper-level management and staff in head offices, and can also be used for Northern Stores to reinvest in their operations nationwide. Cash incomes from both wage

¹ An associated problem is that the settlement economy does not have a business and service sector adequate to capture the cash which comes into the community as investments, and so profits are not circulated in the community (Rees 1988: 64-65).

employment and income subsidies in Fort Albany currently support the Northern Store. Cash, thus, is one of the forms of wealth available to the community right now, but it is a resource that is not under community control.

Cash in the settlement economy goes through the household to support enterprises that exist to exploit that resource base. The settlement economy presents a market for either local enterprises or 'outside' businesses. Viewing this situation from Fort Albany, the urban industrial economy encourages a pattern in which outside businesses profit disproportionately from household cash incomes, and nothing within the 'free market' can make these businesses accountable to the interests of the community. Whole forms of enterprise exist in more southern cities like Timmins, Kapuskasing and Cochrane Ontario that depend on the cash incomes of the James Bay communities, sending goods up the coast, serving the population when travelling out to attend school, visit, shop and do business in the south.

At the level of the settlement, instability is a manifestation of the lack of control over cash investments in the settlement. Resources that are constantly controlled by the policy of external agencies are troublesome for northern economies because this makes cash incomes unstable. Instability is exemplified by the loss of jobs in Fort Albany mentioned above, just as much as by the 21.6% cut to social assistance payments in Ontario, started in October 1995. This is a reduction in income at the level of the household and spells a loss of resources to the settlement economy, loss of income for the Northern Store, but also a loss of economic potential for settlement enterprise.

The cut to income subsidies in Ontario represents the power of ideology to create social meaning out of economic relationships. The cut was argued to be a progressive economic move, lessening 'dependency', truly revealing a general sense that these incomes are charity, regardless of what purpose they serve and for what reasons they are necessary within a wider economy. 'Dependency' in this argument equates with reliance. This equation of economic instability with "reliance" has some adherents in economic development literature describing northern economies (Elias 1995: 15), even though this is not the same as 'dependency'. Elias' summary of a number of authors leads him to project a whole host of characteristics attributed to reliant settlements and households:

In condemning and planning to eliminate transfers [from federal and provincial governments], most observers refer to direct transfers from a government agency to a household - in particular, social assistance or welfare payments. These transfers are the bane of mixed economies, since reliance on transfers is intimately associated with social pathologies and political domination. Imposed institutions tend to supplant traditional institutions of governance, and erode kinship as the bases of economic relations within and between households. Ineffectual leadership and weakened family institutions are associated with social pathologies (1995: 15).

As thus defined, 'reliance' implies an absolute state of resignation to domination, an absolute shift to a state of 'dependency'. Such a definition is unaware of ongoing, shifting political struggles attendant to these economic relations.

In Elias' characterization of dependency as encouraging "reliance", the body of research fails him: there is no comprehensive study of the use and social meanings of social assistance in northern communities that proves what is implied by the idea of

'reliance'.² This particular argument bears a great deal of similarity to Oscar Lewis' "culture of poverty", which he uses to explain how poverty is "a way of life that is passed down from generation to generation along family lines" (1968: 187), even though poverty itself is argued to minimize social family bonds (1968: 191). Daniel Moynihan similarly used 'culture of poverty' to expose the disintegration of the African American family, and thus the causes of welfare dependency in 1965 (Leacock 1971: 11; Maxwell 1993: 234). This structure of argument has been renounced as ethnocentric and sociocentric, as biased in ways that makes it consistent with racism and classism. The evidence emerges from comparing groups of poor people to White urban middle class individuals, used as the norm against which all other citizens are judged (Leacock 1971: 17-19, 25). Reliance, as a 'culture of poverty' argument similarly effaces the specific features of mixed economies, and thus the distinctiveness of mixed economies from the mainstream industrial economy. Also, such an argument erases the specific historical and political relationships that result in the exploitation of the cash portion of incomes by the operation of the mainstream economy.

The argument that people in First Nations communities have become 'reliant' on income subsidies is an idea faithful to 'culture of poverty', locating the problem within the

² There are a number of sources in the literature on Native communities that fail to acknowledge the self-directing features of community life, consistent with this sense of 'reliance'. In A Poison Stronger Than Love and Reservations are for Indians, two popular treatments of 'reserve life in Canada', both authors take the notion of reliance to the extreme that they present people in Native communities as the passive and overwhelmed victims of systems on which they are completely dependent.

household, within the actions of social agents who receive transfers: they come to enact social pathologies repeatedly, habitually, they come to enact their condition of reliance. Leacock paraphrases Ruth Benedict to counter the simplistic functionalism of this argument: "Cultural norms do not exist outside of [humanity's] living history, and they involve conflicting and contradictory goals and values, from which people choose, and which allow for change and development" (1971: 14). In the case of a place like Fort Albany (and indeed all northern mixed economies) the construction of dependency as reliance masks the fact that indigenous, local economies endure despite economic and political domination. In Fort Albany, income from social assistance and wage employment feed into the mixed economy, and provide for needs at the level of the household. It is these social relations that are the focus of development action, targeted for renewal, and not the fact of receiving income subsidies. These subsidies have recently been proven profoundly unstable for their recipients, just as they are described in ways that disguise other levels of domination, exploitation and oppression.

A colleague in Fort Albany discussed the stigma of dependency in light of the economic change that led to 'dependency'. Here these relationships are understood as an assault on the autonomy of the people:

Question: Aren't people just adding new things to their incomes?

If it wasn't for welfare, UIC [unemployment insurance], all these programs that they have today, in the past twenty years, all these programs, a lot of these families would still be utilizing the land, their traditional traplines, every fall, every spring, to make it through the winter, a lot of people would still be going out on the land to trap, in the fall, taking their

families, staying out there, a lot of families would still be going out to their traplines and coming back in the summer. But after all these programs came into being, a lot of this died down, a lot of families just decided 'I can live on welfare', or it was more convenient to live on welfare, then go out there and spend one week, one month, one year out in the bush. Mind you, it's good; it's nice; it's good living out there, out in the bush, I like it, I enjoy it. To answer, they've always been able to maintain their autonomy, well, yeah, they've always used the land, that's a way of answering your question, they've always hunted, trapped, everything, out on the land. (Fort Albany 1994)

Far different from a pathological and disintegrated community, this passage signals a contradiction within the day-to-day work of providing for the household. Self-sufficiency is undermined by the acceptance of cash income subsidies, since self-sufficiency is equated with the land-based economy, not because income subsidies have changed people. This analysis does not account for other changes simultaneous with the expansion of government income subsidies in the region, such as the shift from residential to day school in 1974 or the growth of wage opportunities in the settlement after 1960 (with the school and later in band administration). Yet this comment still accounts for the continued use of land-based resources and practices of seasonal harvesting that shape the settlement today.

Asserting the conflict between the ideal of self-sufficiency and the ongoing assault on that capacity debunks the idea that 'dependency' is an accomplished state of affairs. Instead, economic relations that can be described as dependent are an ongoing, socially meaningful contradiction for members of the settlement. Clara Wheesk, based in her research with focus groups in the Mushkegowuk communities, reports: "By 1995 the

federal government plans to dismantle the welfare system. This issue was brought up to see how the communities are reacting to such changes. The community members said it would be good for the people that the dependency on the welfare system will be non-existent." (1993: 11). Self-sufficiency is a shared ideal for economic change, and entirely possible within the practices of settlement life. 'Dependency' marks a fundamental contradiction between the goals of self-sufficiency and the position of the settlement in the industrial economy.

The dependency that Wheesk referred to, and that she found people in the region identified as a problem facing their communities' futures is part of a broader understanding of economic and cultural change. This notion of dependency is a historic view of shifts in the economy, from self-sufficiency to 'dependency', a shift that is not total, and that has not erased the need nor the potential for self-sufficiency. This understanding of 'dependency' shows how self-sufficiency is a core community value.

The idea of dependency is most useful for understanding northern economies when it is associated with economic and political domination. As the following discussion by Mike Metatawabin³ demonstrates, the integration of Fort Albany into both economic and state structures follows similar patterns, and they both spell cultural and economic change and domination:

³ Mike Metatawabin is in his early thirties, and worked as my research assistant at various points. When I did this interview, he was the manager of CKFA, the community radio station. He is also a videographer, translator, video trainer and was the organizer of the Shabotowan Training program. He was born in Fort Albany, attended day school at St. Anne's, and lived in Sioux Lookout where he worked for Wawatay.

Every time I heard a story it was always somebody else that was in control, and it was the Crees that guided them safely to their destination, and that was it. They acted as guides, but they never controlled, they couldn't even control the missionaries, instead the mission controlled them. They couldn't even control MNR [Ministry of Natural Resources], MNR controlled them. To their understanding, I think, it was almost like they didn't have any control, to their understanding. The missionaries came, told them what to do, they did it, they built this building that we're sitting in [the former residential school], they cleared the land, everything.

The missionaries' survival depended on the Cree people on the mouth of the river, along the river. And with everybody else that showed up, like the Hudson's Bay, how did they manage to transport their stuff? It was the people who transported all that stuff, through hard work, hard labour.

When you ask me about control, when you talk about control, they had control of their lives, they were capable of surviving off the land, being able to provide for one another, that's probably all I can say about control. That's as far as I know; I've never come across anybody telling me that Crees were the bosses, they controlled the fur trade, they controlled the waterways; no, I never heard anybody tell me anything like that. If we were in control, we wouldn't be here, we'd be living down south, Toronto, I don't know [laugh]. We'd be dictating how the land was utilized if we were in control. That's my understanding.

All these people that were here back then, everybody got rich off what people knew or what people were capable of doing around here. I'll say again, look at this building, look at this clear area here, the air strip, where the farm land used to be, it was the people who worked, sweated, they were the ones cleared the land. Until the church eventually owned everything. Even the Northern Store, it was known as Hudson's Bay, they never paid good prices for the furs they bought. It was always cheap prices. They must of got rich off those furs when they sold them down south or elsewhere, in Europe. As far as the local people, they're still the same place where they're at, they're still the same, they didn't get rich at

all [laugh]; all they had was where they lived, the land, the area. And some people still use the land, moose hunting, goose hunting (Fort Albany 1994).

Metatawabin paints a very clear picture of cultural, political and economic domination, and of the intersection of various European/ EuroCanadian interests in the settlement. This describes the genesis of contemporary inequalities in the relationship between the settlement economy and the industrial economy.

Coates and Morrison use a strategy similar to Metatawabin, when they base their discussion of changes in the economies of northern regions on Paine's idea of "welfare colonialism" (1993: 19-20). Like the dependency theory, welfare colonialism brings attention to imperialist rule and its long-term implications for the subject population. The model represented in Coates and Morrison's work is helpful for understanding the evolution of the relationship between state structures and northern communities, and the impacts of state policy on local economic change and development.

The penetration of forms of state assistance into northern regions not only represented the appearance of a new source of European goods and cash resources, but also ensured the partial integration of these regions into the state. Social assistance, hospital care, pensions, 'baby bonus', policing and formal education are administered through state structures, in the form of local agencies to administer the programs (Coates and Morrison 1992: 23-24). In the case of Fort Albany, the Hudson's Bay Company and missions took the role of surrogate state representatives, distributing benefits and running institutions. And just as the Hudson's Bay Company was replaced in this role by the

Roman Catholic mission, the mission has more recently been replaced by secular regional and local institutions⁴.

State structures and their surrogates have controlled community and economic development in the Fort Albany settlement. As I described in the first chapter, the settlement has very definitely been 'developed' in these terms: before 1974 control over investments in and expansion of the settlement economy was heavily biased to the goals of the mission, even though large amounts of that investment were on behalf of Cree people and also in the form of Cree labour. But even in the most recent era, large amounts of the cash available to the community come through state structures. These resources are directed by planning from outside the community, because federal, provincial and regional funding agencies provide resources through programs and projects. This funding is both shaped by the goals of the funder and controlled by an external agency. Instability is inherent in these programs, because policies are constantly changing, which reshapes the entire program field from which local agents draw their development funding.

The force of 'dependency' comes from the power of the state to "subordinate" northern regions to their colonizing influence (Coates and Morrison 1992: 32), but state interests can be equated with mission and Hudson's Bay Company interest in Fort Albany, all as external agents of control. The best use of 'dependency theory' to explain problems

⁴ Moose Factory General Hospital, Nishnawbe Aski Police Services and the Mushkegowuk Council are examples of regional organizations, while the school in Fort Albany has a locally elected school board, Mundo Peetabek Education Authority.

in northern economies captures what Metatawabin shows: local economies exist, but are dominated by external interests.

In this way, local economies are invisible beside the development goals shaped to conform settlement economies to the industrial economy. As Wheesk comments, within the Mushkegowuk settlements change is targeted directly at regaining control over the economy: "The time for economic renewal may not be far, the land and the resources are within the community" (Wheesk 1993: 11). Self-sufficiency requires self-determination in every sector of community life: control over resources, territory and the institutions of governance and development.

TRANSNATIONALS: LEAKAGE AND CASH POVERTY

The cash economy in Fort Albany today is heavily influenced by businesses that are based outside the community, and Wheesk refers to these as transnationals. The term transnationals refers to the representatives of the nationwide industrial economy that provide services to the Mushkegowuk communities, while the term also implies a separation between local economies and the industrial economy. She writes:

The most significant [transnational] that affects [Mushkegowuk] communities is Northern Stores. They are one of the worst cases for extracting money out of the local economy. People in the communities are expressing concerns about Northern and other organizations who flow [cash] out of their community. They want a change and want to start asking for a better system for themselves and the community (Wheesk 1993: 10).

The Northern Store is part of a large chain of retail stores located mainly in isolated northern communities across Canada, with department store type operations in northern cities like Timmins and Thunder Bay. The head offices for Northern Stores are in Winnipeg Manitoba, though operations tend to be organized regionally. That is, groups of Northern Stores are joined by their shared use of regional transportation links, and thus whole regions are served by the same distributors, airlines, rail carriers and trucking companies.

The everyday influence of such transnationals is a high profile concern in Fort Albany, as Wheesk found it was an issue in all of the Mushkegowuk communities. The specific problems with the Northern Store that people identify provide an insightful analysis of the role of the store in the cash economy in Fort Albany, and of the position of Fort Albany in a national industrial economy. This analysis, in turn, also gives insight into the overall goals of economic development and change.

The Northern Store represents, both practically and symbolically, a form of economic domination over the cash economy in Fort Albany. In practice, it is obvious on a daily basis to community members that the Northern Store represents a connection between Fort Albany and the industrial economy of 'the south'. As a symbol, I think today the Northern Store represents the whole history of the exploitation of people in the region and in the settlement today. In the Community Economic Development Operational Plan for 1995-1996, Alex Metatawabin states:

Families of the Fort Albany First Nation have pursued their ways and their livelihood on lands along the Albany River, its tributaries, and along the adjoining James Bay Coast for thousands and thousands of years. The people had discovered their own approach to life that was entirely different from and thus strange compared to the practices of the business-oriented Europeans....In the 1600's, the area was reconditioned as a major trading post by the strangers from overseas and it was such a success, being in a strategic location, that even today the Northern Store still exists and still retains a profit. However at the end of the fur trade, nothing was left - animal life was depleted, people were lost, nothing had been gained for the people. No profits were received or shared, no infrastructure built or inherited, hence no progress for the people (Fort Albany Band Economic Development Office 1995: 4).

The Northern Store has inherited a profitable place in the economy of the settlement, while the settlement has inherited domination within the national industrial economy.

In the same discussion with Mike Metatawabin quoted above, we talked about exploitation as a feature of the history and the present of the community:

Wendy: The way you described that those explorers exploited indigenous knowledge, they never did anything except exploit that knowledge, it made me think about how the Northern Store today is exploiting the fact that people are on social assistance.

Mike: They are exploiting that now. All these people that were here back then, everybody got rich off what people knew or what people were capable of doing around here. ...

Wendy: What about now and what happens at the Northern Store?

Mike: I'll just go back as far as I can, as much information as I know. I'll just go back, lets say, twenty years ago. It was more lenient, the manager seemed to have more authority, more control than today. Today it seems like it's being dictated by Winnipeg, or head office somewhere down south, but back then it was under the authority of the local manager, so credit

was more lenient, flexible. A man could go in, or a family could go in, and say 'We want to go hunting this fall, go out on the land, we'll be back by Christmas, we need supplies'. The manager then obliged, 'Sure, help yourselves. Anything you want, whatever.' And he just made sure, kept track, tallied up the amount, the family or the man just took what they needed. When they came back, that's when they settled whatever they had outstanding. Of course the family had no where else to go but the Bay to cash in their furs, and they settled their accounts then. Today, well it's still okay I guess, but more or less it's being dictated how much you can charge up from somewhere else. The manager today says 'I'm sorry, it's policy. That's what Winnipeg wants, I'm sorry I can't do this, I don't set the prices'. Nowadays they require deposits if you want to charge up something, a deposit of maybe twenty five percent, fifteen percent of whatever you want to charge up (Fort Albany September 1994).

Exploitation, as a feature of the cash economy today, has been built-in to the relationships between the community and the store, where the store (and its predecessor the Hudson's Bay Company) are outsiders and the community are insiders. Mike Metatawabin's description of the relationship between inside and outside is an analysis of economic relations in highly social terms. The Northern Store conforms to principles that ensure the store's survival and profit, while remaining socially distant from the community.

The success of Fort Albany's Northern Store is tied to its purchasing power: the cost of the items they purchase to retail and the cost of shipping these goods are low because of the volume they buy and ship. Northern enjoys a lower freight rate from their shippers than any other business or organization in Fort Albany. The group of Northern Stores that the one in Fort Albany is connected to are regular and frequent users of the same shipping companies, and together their shipments are very large. Northern Stores

are by far the biggest client for Air Creebec's cargo planes in Fort Albany, as well as to the other fly-in communities on both the Quebec and Ontario coasts of James Bay.

The Northern Store in Fort Albany, thus, is connected to all of the other Northern Stores on James Bay. During the study period most of these Northern Stores were supplied with meat and produce by Jessel Foods, a private enterprise in Kapuskasing, Ontario. Jessel's is federally licensed to wholesale meat, so they can serve both Ontario and Quebec Northern Stores. Goods from Jessel Foods are transported by road to rail lines and airports, and the northern fly-in communities receive all perishable foodstuffs by air. In Fort Albany, Air Creebec cargo planes arrive twice weekly, carrying the majority of the items sold at the Northern, though the store uses the winter road and summer barges (from Moosonee) for some items. Nonperishable foodstuffs are shipped from a Northern Stores warehouse in Montreal, as are most of the other items Northern sells, household items and clothing.

Wheesk's term "transnationals" emphasizes Fort Albany's place in a national economy. A network of shippers and retailers in more southern areas benefit from the shipment of goods into the north, and again, these businesses support the economies of other areas of the country. The transportation routes that connect the Northern Store with their suppliers around the industrial south meet in Fort Albany, goods flow in, the settlement's cash flows out. The view from Fort Albany, as Mike stated above, as I found in casual conversations in the community, and as I have come to see it myself, is that the benefits of the cash spent in Fort Albany are not for the community, but for other places.

Beyond the simple fact of the Northern Store's near monopoly on retail sales in Fort Albany are the social costs associated with their central position. As the major provider of most retail items, most of the cash in Fort Albany will eventually flow through the store, immediately removing it from the community, as this cash will no longer circulate between community members. Such leakage is the opposite of the 'multiplier effect' (Personal Communication, Rick McCloud-Farley 1994), when individuals providing services and goods from within the community benefit by an increase in their wealth. This very simple concept is based in the idea that cash resources are always a benefit to the community, as long as they are circulating between community members.

The value of the multiplier effect in terms of business development would come through the expansion of individual businesses. Local businesses would use their profits to improve the service they provide to the community. However, businesses in Fort Albany (as in other communities in the north) are at a disadvantage in the face of the benefits the Northern Store has access to as a regional and national business. Given that Northern can ship items less expensively, other retailers are immediately at a disadvantage. The store in Fort Albany, for example, benefits from the overall savings the larger company enjoys through its contracts with carriers and relationships with wholesalers. Individual operators in Fort Albany (and in other Mushkegowuk communities) will always be at a disadvantage because of the smaller scale of their operations. Further, Northern Stores have storage facilities in Fort Albany, which allow

managers to plan their purchases so as to make the most of every shipment they arrange. This means, for example, that heavy items that are expensive to ship, such as skidoos and four wheel all terrain vehicles can be shipped in the least expensive manner, and then stored until they are sold. Smaller operators in Fort Albany are much less likely to have storage space available, and so bulk purchasing and bulk shipping are further discouraged.

The Northern Store, as the quote opening this section from Mike Metatawabin indicates, is perceived as exploitative of the community as a whole, but not only because the store is in extensive and beneficial relationships with other businesses outside the community. The Northern Store is a place to cash cheques and to make many purchases on credit, and through these two roles it is also a surrogate bank in Fort Albany. Here is another excerpt from my discussion with Mike Metatawabin:

If you're going to write a personal cheque, they'd rather see that cheque made out to Northern. Say you're going to pay somebody or get some money if you want to purchase something. The manager will tell you that cheque has to be made out to Northern, and on top of that you have to include \$1.50. So all that money goes in to the big hand of Northern, no matter where you're going to spend it.

When cashing a personal cheque, there is also a fifty dollar per day limit, a protection against losses from cheque fraud. Generally, the store's position as a source of cash provides a profit to the store, a profit that is unrelated to their role as a retailer.

The Northern Store also extends credit, a practice bound to the store's role as a source of cash: the Northern Store in Fort Albany has a policy of taking a payment towards an outstanding credit account equalling 10% of the cheque being cashed. When

people's incomes are received by cheque, especially social assistance, pension and unemployment insurance payments, most often these are cashed at the Northern Store and so this money is immediately in the store's pocket. This quote is from someone in the community I would rather leave anonymous because of the sensitive information about family members, but it describes the cheque cashing and credit relationship:

People who are on a fixed income, who only get a monthly cheque, must have trouble with Northern. That must be difficult...You try buying a case of milk to last you through the month, and buying maybe twenty pounds of sugar to get you through the month. If you are on a fixed income, that's probably the best bet. But there goes all your cheque. But the case of milk and the sugar might not last, when you have twenty grandchildren or children in the household.

The best example I can give you is my Mom there, or my Dad. They're both on fixed incomes. Each month they get a cheque for so much, and my Mom will take that to the store, and she's got an account there, that goes so much beyond how much she's getting. She'll take that cheque and try to pay off as much as possible from her account, pay it all off, pay seventy five percent of her account. And then after that, she has a hundred dollars left, or if not twenty bucks, and then she'll go through the rest of the month living off that credit. A month behind. That's just my mother or my father, that must be the same for everybody throughout the north, wherever there's a Northern Store.

The Northern's policies reflect their central position in the cash economy of the community. Most important, the Northern Store daily represents exploitation of members of the settlement.

The cash economy in Fort Albany ends with the Northern Store, given their central position in providing goods to the community. The credit practices of the Northern Store

heavily influence how people can use their cash resources. The extension of credit is an important fact of life in Fort Albany, but Northern Stores maintain these practices in the interest of the store's profits. As Mike Metatawabin described it, "they're the bank and collection agency all in one."

The Northern Store has developed practices that exploit the overall structure of the cash economy in the North. First, low cash incomes and the high costs of purchased goods have come to make credit an important source for meeting basic needs in households: as described above, cash simply runs out, and credit fills the gap. Second, Northern's mandatory credit payment from any cheque cashed at the store exploits the lack of basic banking facilities in Fort Albany: without other places to cash cheques, and with a large number of households receiving cash incomes in the form of social assistance cheques, the store is almost guaranteed access to people's cash incomes.

In August of 1994, the Northern Store in Fort Albany opened a direct-payment terminal with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the nearest bank with a branch in Moosonee, Ontario. Banking is generally a problem in Fort Albany, since sending a cheque or money order to the bank in Moosonee or Timmins creates delays, making it difficult to maintain a bank account outside the community. The new direct payment system benefits the bank, as a debit system isn't prone to fraud the way cheque and credit card transactions are. The system also benefits the store, because it can make sales that do not depend on Northern credit, avoiding unpaid debt. The debit system will work in the interest of community members, if they can maintain a bank account outside the

community, because cash incomes would no longer be tied to the Northern's credit system. However, a full service banking machine is required, where people can make deposits, thus completely bypassing the Northern Store.

The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce's service charges to use the debit machine (of between .48 and .60 cents per transaction) are merely replacing the Northern's charge for cashing a cheque. The debit system, based in technological innovations and dependent on the extension of telephone service to the north, simply opens Fort Albany as another market for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, without really improving service or providing the range of services the community needs. From our conversation, Mike Metatawabin continues:

Now they have this machine, it's quite new. Everyone was excited about it, but now everybody is, well at least I now realize it's just another way of the Bay [Northern] taking your money again. This machine, if you have your card, and you're making a purchase at the Northern, you can take your card, whatever account card you have, and it automatically deducts money off your account and it goes on their account. That's all, you can't make any deposits, there's no way to ensure you have money in that account. It seems like Northern made sure you can spend that money, but that's all, at their store.

The debit system is an example of how business is adapting to northern communities like Fort Albany for its own ends only, much like Northern's credit and cheque cashing policies.

The Northern Store is also criticized for their employment practices in the Fort Albany store, practices which Mike characterized as taking advantage of workers:

Do you notice any of the Northern Store employees with trucks in back there? Band office, you see that [laugh]. Band office employees, they have trucks. All they take home each day from the store is that little grocery bag (Mike Metatawabin Fort Albany September 1994).

The Northern Store employs local people in small numbers, mainly women, and mainly as store clerks, but there is one local woman in the office and one local man is the manager of the hardware department. Mike says:

I think a lot of times they just hire local help, unskilled people, so it must be written in policy out there if that person is unskilled or is without education, then pay them minimum wage. I don't know why they don't give raises or promotions. Where would you get promoted too? Manager? [laugh] They have these internal programs, where an employee can go on to specialize in certain areas and then they move you around to other Northern facilities. A raise, I heard one lady say 'Raise? No such thing.' There's a few people who work there ten years, and that was basically to provide for their family.

During the study period, the store manager and the produce manager were from outside the community, and this is typical, as the quote above argues. Management positions are usually filled by long term employees of Northern Stores chain, and, employees told me, are generally filled by people from outside the community.

Like employment practices, prices and quality of goods are repeatedly the focus of community concern. In part a reflection of typical business practices, these are understood on a day-to-day basis as the Northern's overall disregard for the community.

My conversation with Mike concluded:

The other thing too that I've noticed throughout Northern Ontario, people with diabetes, or people with other medical ailments, that have to follow a certain diet, vegetables only, or fruit, there's nothing, or it's very poor, or it's not fresh at all. It must be hard on those people with those ailments,

because there's nothing. There was this elderly woman one time, she couldn't find any of the stuff she was required to eat, sugarless or whatever. That's Northern, that's the Northern Store.

Quality of goods is a particularly vexing problem for retailers because of delays in shipping and shortages caused by the potential waste of overstocked perishables. These are simple retail issues, however the notion of 'bad business' practices does cover at least one illegal, unfair and dangerous practice, the relabelling of meat products at the store.

The price tags that are affixed to meat products are produced at the Northern Store in Fort Albany, and applied over the meat packer's label, put on by Jessel Foods in Kapuskasing. The packer wholesaler's label must have a date and a weight measured on a federally approved scale. The packages are simply reweighed in Fort Albany, and so the price of the product is calculated including the packaging weight. The store manager was warned after a report of his practice was made to Weights and Measures Canada in December of 1994, but the practice has resurfaced as of June 1996. The report made in 1994 did not elicit any charges against the store, and the manager was expected to comply. Charges would require an investigation by Weights and Measures Canada, who were reluctant to pursue the problem given the remoteness of the location⁵.

⁵ Certain events that were part of the investigation illustrated 'inside' and 'outside' from the view of Fort Albany. The Weights and Measures agent I spoke with about the complaint was unsure whether or not the federal department had jurisdiction in a reserve community, and would not pursue the complaint until he confirmed this with the head office in Ottawa.

The packages of frozen meat are also redated at the store in Fort Albany, and while it is legal, because the product is frozen by the shipper, it is misleading, and tied to commonly reported problems with spoiled food. While the store managers can explain spoilage is due to the extreme transportation conditions, they do not alleviate community concerns that the product (especially meat) is not adequate, or even safe, and sometimes spoils on the shelf. It is important to note that store managers are concerned with the quality of goods in the store, but are more often reticent to correct any problems. No matter what the inside operations at the store are like, a common perception in Fort Albany is that Northern Stores are a negative presence in the community, profiting from the community without any interest in acting in a responsible fashion. Further, formal and informal alliances of community members are regularly mobilizing to take complaints to the store's managers, and even to formalize the complaints process through the Community Health office.

The cost of food and merchandise at the Northern Store in Fort Albany is a constant concern. Generally goods are more expensive in fly-in communities than in the south because of shipping costs. Perishable and refrigerated goods are extremely expensive, because the only reliable (but most expensive) form of shipping them is by air. Prices for food in Fort Albany are 30%-60% higher than in Moosonee (a forty minute flight away), and double or triple the prices in southern Ontario cities. The largest price differences are on heavy items (such as flour) and perishables. Managers at the Northern Store set their prices by calculating the cost of shipping per-item, a cost that is included

in the shelf price of the item, and so shipping costs are completely absorbed by the consumer. Profits are calculated against the basic per-unit price that the Northern Store pays for the item: though there was no way to learn Northern's mark-up, other retailers in London, Ontario told me that a typical markup in grocery retail is at least 25%. Between Northern's markup and the shipping costs, purchased food is extremely expensive in Fort Albany.

The Air Stage Subsidy is offered through a federal program, and is aimed at reducing the cost of food (by reducing the cost of shipping) for individuals living in fly-in communities in Canada. The subsidy works as a reduced postal rate for nutritious food, calculated and discounted at the point of mailing. The program is intended to assist northern residents who can order food from outside the community, and have it shipped north. At the point of mailing, the shipper must fill out a declaration listing the contents of the package, and goods must be packed according to the three categories of food to be shipped. For example, crackers and cookies are in separate categories, and so orders have to be sorted according to the categories laid out by the subsidy program.

The current subsidy system is extremely inefficient, however, and does not appear to operate well enough to be used by the people in Fort Albany I spoke to about this. A supplier I spoke with in Timmins, Ontario explained that he charges an administration fee to the consumer because of the added paper work and an added trip to the post office (he normally ships from the railway station in Cochrane, Ontario and not through the post office). With this added cost to his client, he argued that the program offers no savings.

The Air-Stage subsidy program currently operates at the point of shipping, the post office, and would be more useful if it could benefit the receiver more directly. For example, a subsidized rate for a small business collective, a co-op store or families could be available through an air carrier which could be paid the subsidy by the federal government.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

The mixed economy in the settlement of Fort Albany provides an important template for development: to reiterate Clara Wheesk's comment, "the time for economic renewal may not be far, the land and the resources are within the community" (Wheesk 1993: 11). The regional economy within which the settlement economy evolved has persisted, as has the unique position of Cree people within that economy. The Northern Store (for example) is not woven into the regional mixed economy in the same way that residents of the settlement are, through tradition, family and economic practices within households. The mixed economy, in turn, conditions what development means, what forms development takes and how the problems with the contemporary economy are identified. All of the typical concepts associated with economic development planning (like wealth, competition, and growth) are being defined in Fort Albany in this very specific economic context.

Consistent with the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples final report on economic development, and as demonstrated here, larger collectives (within the settlement and within the region) present a locus for development action. Basic cash resources, all

spent in the service of providing for the household are already a reliable resource for outside businesses, those that have had access to the investments necessary to set up shop. This kind of 'dependency' is indicative of more than a lack of development resources, but also the sustained political marginalization of the settlement to more 'centred' or powerful interests. Instability has become a trait of the cash economy in the settlement, a property that some will always attribute to members of the settlement instead of the structures that determine and encourage that instability.

Formal and informal settlement institutions are identifying and meeting the challenges of development in policies, programs, and in private enterprise. These actions are part of ongoing transformations with deep roots in community history: as Cree people in Fort Albany have taken more and more control over settlement institutions, local goals for change and development have been defined in policies and programs. Today's values and today's ideas reflect the continuity of Cree language and culture in this area and in this community. In the next chapter, I discuss specific development policies and programs in Fort Albany which show how local goals for community and economic development are being articulated and accomplished.

**CHAPTER FIVE
FORMAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SELF-
DETERMINATION**

INTRODUCTION

Economic and community development, education, health-care and so on require band leadership to define the needs and goals of the settlement. In these matters, band-level planners in Fort Albany are negotiating with funding structures that are federal, provincial and regional. The transition from mission to band control is realized in Fort Albany as the redefinition of the settlement as the centre of Cree economic, cultural and linguistic distinctiveness from the dominant Canadian society.

As this chapter will demonstrate, the dominant theme of development actions today is transformation, from a settlement dominated by the interests of the outside to a place where the goals of Cree people are acknowledged and assured. Community and economic development originates in a process that defines development as: the enhancement and protection of choices for community members in providing for their households in the mixed economy; improved material conditions in the settlement; greater control over the resources that are already present in the settlement. All of these goals are discussed here, and many are woven together in the community development ventures I describe.

These are also undertakings that are informed by the complicated history of the settlement: none of the programs described here exists in the limited time frame of 'now',

but are part of the ongoing change and competition for influence in the settlement. For this reason, this chapter describes development as a process, one in which 'success' and 'failure' equally demonstrate the reality of performing this process.

Derived from my research on the job market in Fort Albany and the role of employment in daily life, the projects described here represent the fundamental difference between locally designed settlement institutions and those imposed by others, especially the mission. These projects are the active expression of community values and the growth of local control.

In this chapter I describe community development in three areas: institutional settings (Iskwayuk Kapeshewin, the Day Care, Weenebayko Healing Centre and the Community Birth Centre), the Band Economic Development Office and band-run business (Neegan Ochee). Each of these institutions, organizations and projects shows that self-determination at the community level can be embodied in the kinds of actions taken by community members and development planners.

GAINING CONTROL: BUILDING INSTITUTIONS

As discussed in Chapter Four, community and economic development are seen in Mushkegowuk communities as taking control over the elements of community life that have been controlled by 'outside' interests, and this includes both the economy and community institutions. Control by outside businesses, agencies and interests has never been total, nor have these agencies exercised absolute power over Cree people's lives, as

evidenced by the continuity of Cree language and culture, and the mixed economy. Today it is much clearer where local development planning diverges from the developments envisioned and established primarily in the interests of or under the control of outsiders. Thus, I present development in this chapter as statements of self-determination and resistance.

Development action is not static, but part of a larger process through which self-determination is continually being defined. An important feature of Iskwayuk Kapeshewin and Weenebayko is that they are grounded in active attempts to define the settlement at Fort Albany relative to various other places, groups and organizations. Planning and policy, then, is a venue for the self-definition of the community, while also a commentary on the history of EuroCanadian domination in community life: these facilities propose Aboriginal ways of performing institutional functions.

Iskwayuk Kapeshewin was a minimum security women's correctional facility located in Fort Albany. Iskwayuk was open from 1993-1995, and had been planned and developed by members of the band administration seeking to access provincial funding for the development in the settlement. Funded by the Ontario Ministry of Corrections, the centre focused on healing and counselling for Native women, using methods intended to be culturally appropriate for Aboriginals. Iskwayuk Kapeshewin was an alternative offered to inmates from northern and northwestern Ontario who had been given short sentences. In this case, an institutional setting could provide for the unique needs of Native women from northern Ontario, while remaining consistent with state interests.

Iskwayuk did not hold inmates from the community, though it was in some ways a community institution. The facility was staffed by local women, and some of the clients took part-time jobs in the community. Iskwayuk closed in 1995, a combination of budget cuts by the Ministry and a lack of clients. The facility provided at least two full-time jobs and several part-time and casual positions for a number of other women in the community. Since closing, the building has been renovated and opened in 1998 as an Elder's Residence, providing high quality residence style care for elderly members of the band, and providing new job opportunities for local people.

Iskwayuk Kapeshewin was a community development initiative, an attempt to bring regional needs and provincial funding into the settlement in a way that created opportunities in Fort Albany: opportunities for specialized training, employment and experience. But the facility also demonstrated the willingness and ability of a northern settlement to be part of a larger territory, one bound together administratively within the provincial system of law enforcement and corrections.

Weenebayko Payukotaywesewe-Weechahewaygamik is a family healing centre, the most recent program to be housed in a facility built in the late eighties on the tip of Anderson Island. This residential facility has two private cabins, some residence rooms in the main building, a meeting hall, sweat lodge, and office space. Weenebayko is run through Payukatano, the regional structure for provincial child and family social services. Payukatano covers the Cree communities on the west coast of James Bay, administered

from Moose Factory and Timmins. Weenebayko staff were trained by Bear Woman and Associates, a counsellor training service from Manitoba.

Like Iskwayuk Kapeshewin, the service lacked clients and its future is at present not certain. Also like Iskwayuk Kapeshewin, the service mainly employed local people, though one person was hired from outside the community. This arrangement proved difficult, however, because of a lack of housing in the community at the time, and the employee soon resigned. This situation highlights the major problems facing community development in Fort Albany and similar northern communities, especially how some very basic problems like housing affect any initiative.

In the cases of Iskwayuk and Weenebayko, these institutions provide (or provided) services for the region, opening Fort Albany as a centre for the services of regional institutions. Iskwayuk and Weenebayko were projects that allowed Fort Albany to be part of larger regional organizations, but in a way that provided funds for the development of local institutions, and thus local jobs, training and experience. In the case of Iskwayuk Kapeshewin the facility remains a community asset while it is used as an elder's home.

Both Iskwayuk and Weenebayko grew out of the collaborations of elected members of the band administration and community health and social services employees, all employed in the major structures through which funding for this kind of development flows into the community. The elaboration of social services throughout the region was described as "welfare colonialism" in the previous chapter, indicating that federal and provincial agencies penetrate northern regions through exactly these structures. However,

this same process has most recently expanded opportunities for unique, culturally relevant and distinctive institutions to be built. Iskwayuk and Weenebayko were specifically geared to the unique interests, experiences and needs of First Nations clients in the north, potentially undermining the colonialist element of this expansion. These programs represent a process through which the interests of a wider community, the First Nations population in northern Ontario, can dominate institutional development.

In two other community development cases, the Day Care and the Community Birth Centre, a wider range of community interests were integrated into the development of community institutions. The Day Care and the Community Birth Centre represent the expansion of social services at the settlement level.

The Community Birth Centre was proposed by the community and approved for funding in 1994. The proposal for the centre grew out of the efforts of a few community members and the community health nurse at the hospital who saw a funding opportunity in a provincial New Democratic government's program to develop birth centres staffed by midwives. Unfortunately, this particular development program was shelved in October of 1995 by a new provincial government, news the community learned on the regional CBC broadcast. Development of a centre in Timmins, Ontario was also cancelled in this move.

The centre in Fort Albany would have been staffed with a midwife and other health care professionals. The centre met a very specific need of women in Fort Albany, because it would have reduced the number of women who fly out to give birth, mainly to Moose Factory, a twenty five minute flight, or as far as Timmins, a two hour flight.

Women are expected to fly out and relocate to the hospital two weeks before their due date. While this may be negotiable in some cases, the rule is for women to wait the two weeks in Moose Factory.

This practice of flying women out of the community to give birth has developed rapidly in Fort Albany, and represents the medicalization of a process that until the 1950's took place within the context of the family (Flannery 1962; Preston 1982). For most of this century, the majority of babies in James Bay communities were born at home, whether in the settlement or in the bush on the trap line. According to Romanyuk's statistics for Moosonee, Moose Factory, Fort Albany, Attawapiskat, Fort Rupert and Fort George, the shift to hospital birth was abrupt for James Bay Cree. Before 1940, less than 2% of babies were born in a hospital, less than 8% between 1940 and 1949, and then the figure jumps to 55% between 1950 and 1959 (Romanyuk 1974: 351). Between 1960 and 1968 when the survey was completed, the number jumps again to 91% (Romanyuk 1974: 351). While these are not statistics for Fort Albany specifically, the general trend of few hospital births prior to the 1960's holds for Fort Albany despite the presence of a permanent hospital from 1902. Some of the hospital births during the 1960's took place in the mission hospital in Fort Albany, while the practice of 'flying out' began late in the same period.

Giving birth in the settlement was also displaced by the regionalization of the healthcare system, when Moose Factory's hospital became the centre of regional healthcare. This regionalization has imposed limitations on health care available in Fort

Albany. After 1974, the hospital run by the Catholic mission in Fort Albany came under the control of the provincial government, as part of the Moose Factory General Hospital, and since then it has functioned as a clinic and long-term care facility for the frail elderly. The hospital is permanently staffed by nurses, with monthly or bimonthly visits by busy doctors. Physicians perform some casualty treatment (if it occurs while they are in the settlement), check long-term and non-emergency conditions, but most serious medical treatment requires a trip to the hospital in Moose Factory.

Staffing and treatment policies within the regional hospital system have thus combined with the earlier medicalization of birth to produce the practice of relocating women before they give birth. The regional medical care structure now ensures that everything except the most basic care and some kinds of chronic care are provided outside the settlement, whether in the better equipped, larger hospital in Moose Factory, or for the most specialized care in Timmins, Kingston, Toronto or London (all in Ontario). Flying women out to give birth is thus an extension of the limited healthcare available at any of the settlement hospitals.

Kaufert and O'Neil attribute a shift from home births to hospital births in the Keewatin district (along the west coast of Hudson Bay) during the late 1960's and early 1970's to developments in federal government policy for all of Canada which led to increased government investment in Northern community life (1993: 39). Further research is required to determine the specific contexts in which women in Fort Albany began to choose the hospital over homebirth, but the consequences of the shift to hospital birth,

compounded by the policies of the regional hospital are that women in Fort Albany today must fly-out to a hospital equipped for maternity services. Based on my informal discussions with women who were getting ready to give birth, or just returning from the trip, I would argue that while 'flying out' to give birth is accepted, it is also stressful and openly disliked by many women. While some women look upon their time waiting to give birth positively as a trip 'out', the current practice places a number of strains on the expectant family: finding childcare for children that are left behind, the expenses of a husband or boyfriend staying in Moose Factory, or if a woman has to be alone, isolation from her close family during her stay and delivery in Moose Factory. Fathers are also isolated during this time, especially if they have to work at home in the community.

The actual costs of the practice of flying women out are both financial and personal for the woman and her family. The Community Birth Centre met a specific community need, and demonstrates that the elaboration of local services can be generated by local interest and local needs. The Community Birth Centre meant something very specific in Fort Albany: it would have provided a service that now is provided only a great distance away, and thus would have reduced the financial and emotional stress on the expectant family. As a development strategy, the Community Birth Centre represented a local appropriation of an institution, while women with special needs in regards to their pregnancy and delivery would still have had access to more elaborate medical care in Moose Factory or Timmins. The Centre, thus, addressed a problem for the community without placing more demands on the larger institution, Moose Factory General Hospital.

The Centre thus demonstrated the integration of settlement interests with those of the region, instead of one level dominating the other.

The most successful and enduring community development initiative in Fort Albany is the Day Care, and like the Community Birth Centre, it represents the elaboration of a local service to meet the needs of the community. The Day Care opened in 1994 and offers a low cost day-long program for children between 3 years and school age. It is small but very well equipped with a kitchen, cloakroom, large open playroom and a fenced grass play yard. The day care is actually half of the one-story building formerly used as a boarding style residence for the nurses. After new apartment style units were built for the nurses, the residence stood empty most of the time except for visitors from outside the community with no other place to stay, and so the organizers of the day care lobbied to take over part of the building for their project. As with the Community Birth Centre, the proposal for the Day Care was put together by a combination of elected members of the band council, band employees and interested community members.

An important part of the development was to include housing for the day care supervisor, who lives in a small apartment attached to the day care. Day care supervisors have always been from outside the community, because no one from the community has the required early childhood education qualifications yet. This has meant that so far the Cree-speaking staff, like at the school, are the local women who are day care assistants. There is an effort to use Cree as the major language in the daycare, in the interests of language preservation, and this is effective as most of the children speak Cree. The great

majority of the mothers whose children are in day care are employed full time, and the daycare offers reliable and inexpensive care for preschool age children.

The impact of the daycare is greater than just providing a service to the community. The focus on Cree language, the employment of local women, and the ownership of the facility as a community institution all make the daycare consistent with the goals of community development. Protection and promotion of Cree as a community language in a formal institutional setting is particularly important to my analysis, as this theme appears in a number of the training programs administered by the Band Economic Development Office, discussed later in this chapter.

These four institutions, Iskwayuk Kapeshewin, Weenebayko, the Community Birth Centre and the Day Care, illustrate that the settlement can be a place where social services are provided in a way that is consistent with the an overall agenda of self-determination at the settlement level. Self-determination in these cases describes how community leadership can appropriate institutional structures in a way that advances community interests. In particular, language preservation and promotion is a basic feature of the operation of the Day Care, just as expressions of First Nations' cultural distinctiveness are basic to Iskwayuk and Weenebayko. The Community Birth Centre would have met a need in the community, while giving the community greater control over one necessary service.

The downfall of Iskwayuk Kapeshewin and Weenebayko was lack of clients to serve, a problem that is located somewhere within the regional structures (correctional

facilities, courts, family counselling agencies, and so on) which recommended clients to the facilities. I do not mean to equate the specific roles of the two facilities, but to point out that both were meant to be integrated into regional structures that serve First Nations people and communities. And it was this integration that was incomplete in some way.

The viability of locating a regional service in a community like Fort Albany, which can benefit through local employment and training, is a particularly important issue of regional development generally: regional institutions are currently administered through communities like Moose Factory and Timmins. These administrative offices represent development wealth in those communities that could be spread out. Sharing this administrative wealth was achieved with Iskwayuk and Weenebayko. The failure of these initiatives shows that regional institutions need to actively promote the viability of these local centres.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE: NEGOTIATING FUNDING AND COMMUNITY INTERESTS

Public institutions in Fort Albany represent one place where meaningful action can be taken toward an overall goal of building on community interests, and this process is self-determination. The most formal development agency in Fort Albany, the Band Economic Development (BED) office is responsible for economic development planning within the settlement. This mostly requires management of training and development funding programs, securing funding for programs, and promoting community development initiatives.

The process of identifying needs and responding with corresponding programs is still heavily determined by the agencies through which community leaders fund any program or project: the funder has a pre-determined sense of what they will support, and proposals are written from the community to conform to those guidelines. This is not inherently a problem, as Alex Metatawabin, the Band Economic Development Officer explained to me numerous times during my research, these guidelines are useful and simply a part of the process of accessing development funding. Writing proposals is simply a bureaucratic process, and the actual project often diverges from the one written up in the proposal.

It can be in these divergences that community goals are articulated, though it is also true that local initiative and direction is disguised or muted in this negotiation. Local expressions of development initiative can only be seen 'on the ground', in the actual events that take shape in the delivery of a program or project. Each development project is communicative action in the sense that actual outcomes reflect local concerns, whereas the policies of funding agencies seldom capture local goals for development. To illustrate my point about the social meanings and contexts for development, I want to consider the Student Summer Work project.

In the summer of 1994, the BED office ran a summer employment program for high school students, funded through a provincial student employment program. Many of the students actively lobbied the economic development officer to be included in the projects. The students were organized into teams to do work around the community and

in the area of the Old Post, where the former Hudson's Bay Company post was on a neighbouring island. One of the projects they completed was cutting and preparing the grounds for Mamawehitowin in August of 1994. Students were also employed in the summer of 1995, again in community projects.

The team leaders were university and college students hired under the same project, and they supervised the students on projects such as stripping logs to be used as fenceposts around the school yard, cleaning up garbage from the roadsides and working in locally owned businesses. One of the student supervisors organized some less work oriented events, including interviews with elders and a day trip to study names and uses of local plants. In discussions with this team leader, she told me that this was an opportunity for the youth to encounter what she herself had enjoyed in her childhood, summers in the bush camping with her family. These were more than happy memories, however, as she made very clear to me that she wanted her team to have the experience of learning about the practices of bush life, something she explained was lacking from the knowledge of her own young children.

These jobs served several needs, depending on the student. The university and college students, some of whom have children, were glad to save the extra money to help pay living expenses while at school. The younger students used some of their money for purchases typical to teenagers, such as junk food or compact discs. Many also talked about saving their money to buy clothes when they went out to school in the fall. Like summer work for students everywhere, the project in Fort Albany gave the students some

work experience and some income, either to be used for spending money during the summer or during the school year. Since students do not live with their parents during the school year, the students' incomes also reduced some of the financial demands on their parents' households while they lived with them during the summer.

From the funding agency's point of view, the summer jobs program was intended to provide work experience. In contrast, a major element of the summer jobs program from the Development Officer, Alex Metatawabin's point of view was fairness, providing the opportunity for all high school students (including those graduates of grade eight preparing to leave for secondary school) to be included in a community project. Alex Metatawabin's insistence on this fair sharing of the jobs meant that his office had to find funding from more than one source to hire all of the students, because otherwise he would have had to find some way to discriminate between eligible and ineligible students. As he expressed to me in 1994, creating a hierarchy within which to evaluate the students is not consistent with the goal of meeting everyone in the community's needs. The trips with elders that took place in 1995 were also encouraged by the economic development office, which had to provide for some of the expenses (such as gas for the outboard motors), again showing some of the social significance of the project for community leaders.

The social embeddedness of the program was made very clear to me late in the summer of 1995 when one of the teams spent the morning working with the two Oblate brothers building a new garage. I did not find out who authorized the team to take the

job, or why the team did not return that afternoon, but in casual conversation at lunch time in the restaurant, I came to see this apparently simple situation in all of its complexity, interpreted through local experience. What was pointed out to me was that the team working for the mission replicated the work done by local families for the mission, and work done by some of the children in the mission's residential school. The scene was a disturbing one for the former student at the residential school who offered this analysis, whom I will leave anonymous here. Even further, the very material used for the building evoked the mission's economic and political domination in the settlement: mission staff created a formula for cement made from local materials, difficult where there are no fine gravel deposits, and very little sand. The mortar used in building the school, for example, was made from this formula. While local people did the work of building the school, no one was ever taught how to mix this cement. This is a poignant summary of the development struggle today, the struggle to create local structures, and to use them to promote the future of the settlement as a Cree-run community.

Self-determination at the institutional level thus brings to light some of the conflicts between community interest and external interest, but also new strategies to negotiate that conflict. In order to illustrate how development planning represents self-determination, and the negotiation of basic conflicts, I want to discuss four other programs that were initiated by the Band Economic Development Office between 1994 and 1996. My association with these projects is various. In the case of Shabotowan, I have discussed Shabotowan with its designer Alex Metatawabin since 1994, and thus since its inception

as a community development initiative and training program. During the first weeks of the program, I was also a volunteer trainer, working with the trainees on English writing skills. I discussed the Trapper Training program extensively with the designer and trainer in the months leading up to the start of the program, and I did not discuss the program afterwards with any of the trainees. My information about the Arts and Crafts project has also come from discussions with the designer, Alex Metatawabin, between 1994 and 1996.

Shabotowan

The original Shabotowan project was a communications training program designed and initiated by the BED officer that ran from October 1995 until March 1996. The project employed a local coordinator, Mike Metatawabin, and used training money for eight local people to attend community and regional political and social events, to take classes and work on the project.

Shabotowan was justified in the proposals for training funds as a communications training project, providing experience with communications technology through having trainees produce a community newsletter and news stories for regional newspapers, television and radio broadcasts. This communications aspect of the project was modeled on two other training projects in the near region: a communications program proposed in Fort Albany in 1994 which was not funded, and a program that took place in Kashechewan in 1995, taught by Mike Metatawabin. The Shabotowan project was a reworking of these Communications for First Nations projects, with an added emphasis

in the funding proposals on cultural and historical analysis and collection, as well as culturally appropriate methods of data collection and training.

The major funder was Abatisowin, the regional body in charge of Employment Canada funds for training programs run by local band-councils, who apply on a project-by-project basis for the resources. Abatisowin covers training costs only, that is, the expenses of a trainer and the trainees' allowances, like any training program run by Employment Canada. The economic development officer thus applied to a second, provincial agency (Trillium) for funding for equipment. This grant was not awarded, and so some money from the Abatisowin budget was used for tape recorders and tapes. Without funding specifically for equipment, the project goals of creating an extensive video and audio archive of community knowledge were curtailed early in the project, though the basic goal of researching community elder's values was maintained. The process of doing the research, in fact, was one of the core goals of the project, and despite the technological limitations, Shabotowan was still carried out as building links between elders and younger members of the community.

Besides formal classroom training in uses of technology and written Cree, students also worked with elders in the "oral tradition" (Abatisowin proposal, 1995). Exposure to oral traditions of teaching and learning was in itself one of the technical aspects of the program. Consulting with elders was emphasized in the proposals for two outcomes. First was to establish a core of "absolutes" for governing band-run institutions, a way to bring elder's insights about the values governing social interactions into a development project

in a formal way. The second was to teach the trainees Cree communications traditions, both refining linguistic proficiency and the social aspects of communication.

In such goals, Shabotowan articulated the distinctiveness of the community, illustrated here in an excerpt from the proposal made to the Trillium Foundation:

Traditional environmental knowledge which has been acquired through generations of knowledge building and spiritual association with Mother Earth is the foundation of First Nations culture.

This is more than an assertion of cultural difference: this is a statement of cultural integrity and value. Shabotowan was the first manifestation of an ongoing process of integrating Cree language, teaching styles and values into formal institutional practice. In this emerging approach, demonstrated in Shabotowan, Cree culture and history are both content and action: oral history, for example, is both the process of teaching and the information contained in that teaching. Goals of bringing Cree culture and language into institutional life demonstrate a key community concern with cultural and linguistic viability in the post-mission era, when much of settlement life is touched by institutions that link the community to the rest of Canada, and when local people are gaining authority in those institutions.

Implicit in the concern over the future of Cree language and culture in Fort Albany is a basic criticism that many institutions are biased to Euro-Canadian values and English language. Teaching trainees through the oral tradition is a specific commentary on the effects of the residential school system, a major vehicle of Euro-Canadian domination in Fort Albany. It is not surprising, then, that one of the first stories any of the trainees

wrote for the newsletter was Susan Metatawabin's "Memories of My Life", that I quoted from in Chapter One. While she is not an elder, her story fit neatly in this newly created context for exploring the relationship of history, culture, experience, language and politics in the settlement today. Shabotowan was a context for her to articulate a single story that resonates with many parallel stories. Shabotowan bridged many gaps: cultural between Cree and EuroCanadian, linguistic between Cree and English, between generations, gaps between views of history, between styles of education, between economies. This was a typical 'training program', funded by Employment Canada through Abatisowin, but with very local focus and implications.

Trapper Training

Another project from the BED office was the 1994/95 Trapper Training program, modelled on a program first run by the Fort Albany band office in the late 1970's, and repeated in a different form in 1995/96. Trapper Training was an innovative project that used training money to provide cash incomes to a group of eight trainees for twenty weeks, and thus represents a direct appropriation of the 'training' model for a project with unique, local qualities. The twenty weeks of trapping created an opportunity for a group of young men to live on a trapline, and to acquire or refresh skills in bush life. Since the project provided money for some equipment (traps, rented skidoos and sleds) and for supplies (clothing and food), participants avoided these large expenses.

The trainer identified two 'intangible' benefits for himself and for the trainees. One was that the primary language of instruction was Cree, which, it was argued, would refine the communicative skills of the trainees, because they would be conversing about traditional circumstances in their first language. Teaching trapping skills in the Cree language also meant that trainees would learn the specialized language for describing bush environments and activities which is not used much living in the settlement.

Second, the length of the trip (twenty weeks) was seen as a way to reduce trainee's dependency on village life, especially the store and the cash incomes that are required to live in the village. That is, one goal of the program was to make people more self-sufficient, and self-sufficiency was linked to the land-based economy. In my conversations with the trainer and the Band Economic Development officer, land-based self-sufficiency was argued to be Cree, and so trainees were pursuing their own cultural heritage, which was explicitly also an economic strategy. This training project asserted the role of the land-based economy in the contemporary economy of the community, highlighting the importance of the land-base to the community generally.

The Trapper Training project is similar to the Income Security Program (ISP) administered by the Grand Council of the Crees of Northern Quebec and the province of Quebec. The ISP was instituted under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and provides a guaranteed cash income for families who are primarily supported by land-based activities. Where trapper training differs from the ISP is also where the major problems with the project were. First, the trapper training project was based on one-time

funding, a function of the training dollars used to support the program. The experience with the ISP reflects that support programs must entrench formal support and encouragement to the land-based economy in order to keep it healthy. ISP, in fact, does much more than support the land-based economy, it encourages these pursuits as economically viable for community members, and thus ISP is a form of economic development.

Second, the Trapper Training project did not allow for whole families to participate, which the ISP supports, and so the trainees went out in a group with the trainer, not in kin-based groups. There were some problems with endurance, as some people wanted to leave the camp for the weekends. It seems that without integration into a system of family-based camps on the land and trappers moving out from the base camp for trapping, the isolation of the camp was too much for the trainees, and some returned home. The artificial nature of the training program thus seemed to work against it. In 1994-95, the program did not produce any income besides a training allowance for trainees, and while 'income' was, I would argue, secondary to the larger goals of getting young men out into the bush, the trainer was critical of this point.

The problems with the program show that it was not a replacement for formal support for trappers and their families while on the trapline. Children can be taken out of school easily, houses can be handed over to someone for a short term rental, if the cash to buy traps, clothing, provisions and transportation is available. It would be difficult for a person to make a long-term trip into the interior for harvesting if they hold a full-time

year round job, and so those with seasonal jobs are more available, as are those receiving income subsidies. Trapping, however, is not merely a replacement for a job, but rather a more complicated social and economic practice, with importance for the whole economy, and to the community in social terms.

Even in the face of an expanding cash economy, and most people's interest in succeeding in such economic terms, harvesting activities, bush resources and bush life are highly valued. At the same time that people value self-sufficiency and harvesting, many people in different age groups express concern that the knowledge required to be self-sufficient, and to hunt effectively and in a proper, sustainable manner is being eroded. The Trapper Training program was targeted specifically at this conundrum, demonstrating that the community values the knowledge required to live in the bush while taking an effort to slow the perceived loss of this knowledge. Trapper Training was an answer to the disruption in the transfer of knowledge about bush life created by full-time school attendance, village life and cash employment.

From a community development planning perspective, the Trapper Training project met some goals for encouraging community control over the settlement economy by strengthening the mixed economy. Trainees were directly engaged in an economic practice that makes important contributions to the community, and that will likely be an important element of the future economy of the community. The Trapper Training program is among contemporary responses to the ongoing conflict between wage labour/cash incomes and 'self-sufficiency' through harvesting, represented in the contrast of living in the bush

and living in the village. The financial assistance in the form of equipment made available to the trainees was an acknowledgment that there is a basic level of cash income required to pursue harvesting in the mixed economy.

The Trapper Training project highlights some of the most important development planning questions today, questions about whether or not the web for social life is encouraged by economic practices. Trapper Training is an especially powerful assertion of the value of self-sufficiency in the settlement economy, here in the value placed on the practices that provide people competence in their economic pursuits. The Trapper Training project points to the fact that the contemporary development scene is much more than an underdeveloped cash economy, but rather a mixed economy where there are a variety of choices available to community members to achieve self-sufficiency.

Arts and Crafts

The Arts and Crafts Project was another program designed and managed by the BED office in Fort Albany. Arts and Crafts used training money to pay a manager and a number of other women while they worked on art and craft pieces in a large and comfortable room in the old residential school. The women produced a wide range of goods: hide mittens and gloves with beaded cuffs, embroidered baby blankets and waspisians (moss bags), goose feather blankets and other beaded objects sold to community members, teachers and visitors. A percentage of the profits that each woman earned from the sale of her works went back into the project for materials.

Like Trapper Training, the project required the traditional expertise of a number of community members, while providing them an opportunity to build a co-op style business. Thus, Arts and Crafts offered an opportunity for expansion of the cash segment of the mixed economy, because like trapping, it is customary for there to be a cash component to these economic practices. Many of the women involved in the project had already done sewing and produced pieces for sale from home, and this form of cottage industry has long roots in Fort Albany as in many other Native communities in Canada.

While there does not appear to have ever been a formal project to encourage artists and crafts people to market their work outside the community as in other Native communities in Canada, it is customary along the James Bay coast to accept orders from other communities, and then send the article through the mail or on the plane. Some families from throughout the region take their goods to Moosonee during the summer and sell them from roadside stalls to tourists, and these trips are also an opportunity to take orders for articles from across Canada. There are a number of men in Kashechewan who make trips to Fort Albany by boat during the summer with their sculptures and tamarack geese, selling things door-to-door and stopping by the band office and the hospital. These articles are sold to local people and visitors alike. In Fort Albany a few men and women are known to make certain articles and will take orders. Some young people earn a few extra dollars in the summer by making dream catchers and key chains and selling them door-to-door. Joseph Metat Senior and other members of his family produce a great

number of objects each winter and fall, wood and bone sculptures and tamarack animals which they sell to regular clients.

Women and men who participate in these cottage industries are notoriously underpaid for their work, simply because the investment of time in such work can barely be compensated in financial terms. There are benefits of cottage industries, however. First, sales provide cash income, sometimes in addition to income from a part-time job, or income security. In a couple of cases I learned about, the artist needed a certain amount of money in a short period of time, and so committed herself to sewing for a few weeks, providing the necessary income. Second, cottage industries do not require any special investment in space or equipment, beyond raw materials, and so can be accommodated in small homes. Third, many of the cottage industry products can be produced while also attending to other responsibilities, such as child care. Fourth, as Simon Brascoupé argues, the transmission of skills between people and across generations is a significant social process in the continuation of First Nations artistic traditions (1993: 103). This is certainly true in Fort Albany where specific skills (like sewing) are learned best by watching an artisan, and where different regions around James Bay are distinguished by styles of work (for example blanket patterns or waspian decorations). While many aesthetic traditions overlap in Fort Albany, and stylistic influences are regional, national and even international, some artisans are conscious of their work as within a local and even family tradition.

By integrating cottage industry into the 'training project' context, I think that the Arts and Crafts project demonstrates how thoroughly the existing local economy can be integrated into development planning. As with Trapper Training, a project of this kind puts priority on local economic strategies, and the social and cultural concerns that are part of those strategies. On the other hand, and this holds true for a great number of training programs in all contexts, the money used for incomes for the trainees is basically short-term, one-time funding. Ideally in the Arts and Crafts case, the project could be an institution through which men and women acquire materials at a reduced rate and marketing assistance in return for a percentage of their profits. This is, of course, a very common cooperative model, which was encouraged by the BED officer, but so far the project in Fort Albany has cost more capital than it has generated. Further, as mentioned, cottage industries of this type are not likely to provide enough income to make a household self-sufficient, but instead are only likely to 'top up' income from other sources. Given the cash strain on most households in the settlement (see Chapter Three), increasing household wealth is a legitimate development goal, if even for a short-term development period of two or three years.

More generally, the employment training model tends to produce extremely short-term benefits, by creating a form of employment for a small number of community members (less than ten) for a limited time (usually between three and five months). In many of the programs I was able to find out about in Fort Albany, there was no permanent, full-time wage employment available at the end of the training program

because the community economy simply was not equipped to absorb the trainees as employees. A criticism of training programs as simply providing short-term employment, however, does not do justice to the creative uses of the training program model in Fort Albany that I refer to here.

In both the Trapper Training and Arts and Crafts project, the potential outcome is improved wealth in individual household economies, consistent with an existing settlement economy that supports these pursuits. However, since the projects depend on low levels of funding paid out as training allowances to the trainees and the trainer, and only a few months of funding at that, the larger problem is a lack of funding to build community institutions. For example, Trapper Training would work best if trainees had access to income supplements, such as a guaranteed annual income. Arts and Crafts, similarly, could benefit from an investment to set it up as a co-op, which would then provide marketing assistance, collection and storage of materials and finished goods and small seed loans to artists and artisans for materials. As with entrepreneurship, trapping and cottage industry hold some potential for improving economic security at the household level, and ideally formal support would remove barriers and even encourage these segments of the economy.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING: A RECEIVED DEVELOPMENT MODEL

In contrast to the projects discussed above, entrepreneurship as a development strategy was introduced in the training program format to Fort Albany in 1994, through the

Mushkegowuk Council's Entrepreneurship Training Program (ETP), a four month program of classes and consultation for new entrepreneurs. Trainers were resident in each community where there were enough students, and the training package was designed by a consultant, Fred Weihs. Trainees responded to an ad posted in the band office, and were signed up by the BED officer. The intent of the program was to provide trainees with the skills required to write a business proposal for funding agencies, and to run the business on their own.

The costs of the project were high: consultant/trainers cost over \$30,000 each, to which was added their transportation and housing expenses. It is typical that these costs are questioned within each community, though such costs are typical for consultants in the region. More generally, however, the goals of the program were heavily criticized by certain people in Fort Albany, particularly because the goal of opening new businesses in a community with limited infrastructure (housing, business space, electrical service and water service) made most of the proposed businesses financially unfeasible. I will discuss these entrepreneurs and their plans more fully in the next chapter, but here I want to discuss entrepreneurship within the formal development model.

The ETP gave trainees a great deal of confidence about their plans as entrepreneurs, and in most cases, with the assistance of the trainer, they ended up with good quality business plans. With few exceptions, however, the businesses required investments that were difficult to justify given the profits that were possible in the community, which is a small market. Add to this that, beyond development costs,

inventory for any business that requires imports is made more expensive by shipping costs, and so profits are immediately reduced because the major competitor, the Northern Store, has much lower freight costs than any independent. In a very general way, the ETP was like putting the cart before the horse: lower freight costs, bulk buying with a community warehouse and basic infrastructure development must come before new entrepreneurs can get established successfully. These limitations left the trainees in most cases disappointed, and their businesses indefinitely 'on hold'. The development ideal proposed by the ETP was out of step with the reality of the Fort Albany settlement.

Chris Metatawabin was the BED officer in Fort Albany when the first ETP went ahead, and he offered some insight into basic conflicts that exist in the community around this type of business development. Referring to the regional management bodies that fund and design projects like ETP, he said:

All of these organizations come up to the community, and they say 'we're here to help you'. People want to know 'So how do you help me?' But they explain it in English, and so 'I don't even understand what you are talking about, I don't see how you can help me.' [These organizations] are pushing for job creation and business development, and the Cree speaking people say 'you're not here to help me, you're just bringing the south to my community. Meanwhile, I want to hunt and trap and fish, but you tell me there is no money available to do those activities. They're just helping these young people who speak English, to establish these businesses that are urban oriented, to help these city kids to set up businesses in our communities'. So that's the problem right now, that these organizations are facing with entrepreneurship training. They don't address the needs of the long term residents, they only sign up the individuals that have obtained grade ten and upgrading...They don't bother with like Antoine Koostachin, they don't help him out, and he's [running a business] all by himself.

Antoine Koostachin is a star entrepreneur in Fort Albany, and I open the next chapter with a discussion of his businesses. By calling up the example of Koostachin, Chris Metatawabin is pointing out that business is entirely possible in northern communities. However, as the quote shows, Koostachin's businesses are run based in locally developed insight, knowledge and expertise that has emerged from years of experience with the particulars of northern life. This knowledge is not the same as the 'new' development planning coming with new development agencies, agencies that are based in Moose Factory, which is substantially different than other coastal communities, often considered much more urban in infrastructure, its residents more urban in their outlook and experience.

Chris Metatawabin's words put forward the idea that the type of business development promoted in the ETP misses the realities of northern communities, and imposes knowledge with a southern, urban bias instead of elaborating local knowledge and conforming to local interest. Like trapping and cottage industries, entrepreneurship is an established economic practice in Fort Albany, one which could be elaborated, but in its own terms: as one economic practice through which individual households achieve self-sufficiency. The problems with the ETP, and the kinds of conflicts that Chris Metatawabin notes do not preclude business development, however, as enterprise that provides employment to a segment of the community is an important part of development in Fort Albany. As Neegan Ochee, the band run construction company, demonstrates,

large businesses can be built with a coordinated commitment between regional and settlement agencies.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: ELABORATING THE SETTLEMENT ECONOMY

Neegan Ochee is a construction company directed by a local board of directors. Based in Fort Albany, Neegan Ochee holds contracts with the band for major structural improvements. In the course of the enterprise's existence, it has faced many setbacks, but is set to renew its position in the settlement and regional economy.

In 1994, Neegan was first hired to construct a series of dykes to prevent flooding in the settlement, a project it completed in October 1995. This was a massive two year project, requiring specialized heavy equipment, large amounts of industrial building materials and up to fifteen heavy equipment operators to work on the project, some of the time in two shifts around the clock. As a local construction company, Neegan was situated to take the contract for the project which was funded by the Department of Indian Affairs as infrastructure development in the community. Neegan Ochee received bridge financing to expand (purchasing equipment for example), and so the Flood Control Project acted as an investment in a locally owned and operated enterprise. As the contractor, Neegan hired qualified people from outside the community to work with the project as foremen and journeyed trainers, but the majority of jobs on the project and spin-off jobs (such as catering) went to community members. The project was organized by the

Economic Development office (which administers training programs) and the enterprise together to train workers during the construction period to qualify as heavy equipment operators.

I discussed some of the community development aspects of the company with Edmund Metatawabin, among the most formative designers of the business. He specifically described the business' role as breaking the dependency described in Chapter Four, where investments in the community (here in the form of development contracts) benefit businesses from outside the community who are contracted to do the work. Ed's example of this relationship is housing development in the settlement, described in Chapter Three. Neegan Ochee is organized so as to avoid the leakage that occurred when Indian Affairs started importing pre-fab houses and a local facility was displaced.

Neegan Ochee responded in two ways, through investment in the local enterprise, and through offering jobs and training to local people. First, each contract that Neegan acquires represents an investment in the business itself: contracts provide the income to maintain and expand the enterprise. Neegan Ochee owns its own heavy equipment, which reduces rental and shipping costs for equipment, making their operations more efficient than any operator from outside the settlement. Operating as the contractor, the enterprise can build and maintain relationships with suppliers, which acts as an investment, because a favourable business reputation is a form of currency. Neegan Ochee builds and protects a bank of skills, equipment and capacity to act as a profitable enterprise beyond the end of any single development project. Each contract that the construction company receives

builds its ability to expand, purchasing new equipment and building relationships with suppliers. A company in Fort Albany fills a market niche, development of infrastructure, but not only for the short term if it can bid on contracts in other communities. This in turn would lower costs for other communities in the region by developing a regionally-based industry.

One of the original goals that Edmund Metatawabin described for Neegan Ochee was to provide services to other communities on the coast at a savings to those communities. In this way, investments in Neegan Ochee would become regional investments: other James Bay communities requiring similar development could become part of Neegan Ochee's market, providing jobs and incomes within the region. Those communities would also benefit from lowered costs of development projects.

The second form of development Neegan Ochee created for the community was through training and employment for local people. Training and employment are an investment in the community through local employees, who receive good household incomes, while training builds a base of skills in the community. About fifteen community members received direct benefits from the training provided through their jobs with Neegan Ochee during 1995. All of these employee/trainees were from Fort Albany, most permanent residents, though some were earning money to help them pay living expenses while they were away at university. Hiring local workers also reduces the cost of the project, because out of town employees are costly: the project has to cover their transportation and housing, and local employees are obviously less expensive.

In community development terms, Neegan Ochee reflects a development policy that is in line with the community development goals I have described throughout this chapter. Neegan Ochee practices a style of community development which transforms the inside/outside relationship, because project income circulates in the community, through individual wages, and construction projects build the capability to take on other contracts. The enterprise allows the settlement to benefit from each construction project in the settlement. Neegan Ochee provides the settlement with a way to 'bank' skills, profits and equipment as a unit that will be able to take advantage of further investments in the settlement and in other James Bay settlements, especially if set-aside programs recommended in the RCAP are adopted by the Department of Indian Affairs (1996b: 904-905 recommendation 2.5.21). Procurement programs covering development in the Mushkegowuk region could ensure that local enterprises like Neegan had access to the market, while supporting an enterprise that is already unique in this region.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND CONTEXTS

This chapter has shown how the settlement is being invented by the people who live here, who are participating in projects, and who are designing and implementing programs. Part of the photographic representations in Chapter Two captured this ongoing process. Each of the projects I described requires or required community participation, but more importantly innovation on the part of community leadership and those responsible for community development. The core values of development planning today are Cree cultural

and linguistic continuity, improved services at every level of community life, and self-sufficiency. These goals can be met while elaborating the settlement as a place for administration and business.

There are three crucial points in this chapter: first, there is meaningful direction set locally despite limited access to resources. Proposals such as the Community Birth Centre and Trapper Training define local solutions to locally identified (and experienced) problems. These projects demonstrate the viability of local planning and decision making, despite profound limitations inherent in negotiating funding within small regional budgets, shifting government policy and geographic isolation.

Second, local visions for development are strategies for transformation of inside/outside relationships, especially in the potential for growth of regional initiative. Neegan Ochee, Iskwayuk Kapeshewin and Weenebayko define the settlement as a locus of development, administrative and institutional action; as a point where regional, provincial and even national interests can be served. Neegan, for example, presents the Department of Indian Affairs with a better deal than depending on contractors from industrial centres, since it is the federal department that will be the major investor in infrastructure development on the James Bay coast. Such organizations increase the flow of investment into the community in a manner that builds strength within the settlement economy. This shift requires considering settlements like Fort Albany as centres within a larger economic, political and administrative web, and no longer at the margins of that web. The case of child birth and the James Bay General Hospital demonstrates some of

the most pressing personal and social disruptions caused by the existing relationship between the centre (Moose Factory) and its margins (the remote hospitals).

Third, I have demonstrated here that development planning in Fort Albany is very much tied to the history of the community, as a specific context in which action is taken to transform settlement life into self-determination. This is territorial self-determination, given that the settlement is located within and dependant on the land base through the mixed economy. It can also be regional self-determination if settlement insularity is broken down and the regional economy is fully realized as an opportunity, in the way it is an opportunity for the Northern Store. Connections throughout the region, too, are artifacts of the region's history, just as is the Northern Store's central position in the cash economy.

As I have demonstrated here, strategies for development that originate within the community are consistent with the range of needs, interests and opportunities that make up the settlement's position in the territory and the region. Such consistency is true of entrepreneurship as well, which I discuss in the next chapter as informal development in the settlement. As I describe next, the goals of individual entrepreneurs in Fort Albany are compatible with the larger development goals of the formal institutions, programs and projects I have described in this chapter.

CHAPTER SIX INFORMAL DEVELOPMENT: ENTREPRENEURS AND THE MIXED ECONOMY

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship in Fort Albany has a long history, best understood as innovation within the cash segment of the economy, innovation which allows economic development despite difficulties caused by geographic isolation from suppliers, a lack of basic infrastructure and a limited market. For at least twenty years, there have been local, Cree-controlled enterprises, despite the undeniable domination of the Hudson's Bay Company (and the Northern Store) in the cash economy through its role as a major provider of goods to the community. Many of these private enterprises have grown up out of the facilities built by the Roman Catholic mission, which ran a hospital and residential school in Fort Albany from 1902-1974, while some businesses have been developed from the ground up by a local entrepreneur.

When I first started my research on the economy in Fort Albany in 1994, entrepreneurship had taken centre stage as a development strategy at the regional planning level, in the Mushkegowuk Council's Entrepreneurship Training Program (ETP). The ETP was designed to be run through classes with the trainer five days per week, with individual consulting on business plans in the afternoons and evenings. The course content covered a description of entrepreneurship, the demands on the entrepreneur and training in the skills required to create a business proposal and subsequently run the business in

a way that would satisfy a granting agency or a bank manager reviewing a loan application.

Chris Metatawabin was the Band Economic Development Officer in Fort Albany when the ETP first started:

Entrepreneurship, that's complicated. People should be prepared when they enter that area. The main thing they lack is research, to find out what it means to be a business man. You need a surplus amount of money stashed away, not to be involved with your family life.

Their literacy skill wasn't there either: whenever you get correspondence from down south, it's mostly jargon, business jargon, and you have to be well versed in jargon, or at least understand these long, big words that they use, like entrepreneurship! It's much easier to say 'businessman' rather than use that long word. And so the people that signed up for that course, they had high expectations, the instructor gave them high hopes and all of them came crashing down.

I don't know if anybody made a successful business plan for a business that is going ahead now. The instructor was very positive when she left the community, when the program was over, she said "I have five business plans ready", but I haven't heard of anything being established up there. Like [the] video production company, I don't think it's active at all. And then there's [the] housing material business. And the other people that took the course, I don't know if they got established, I don't know if they got started, I don't hear from Albany that there are people running new businesses in town.

And when the process got going, these students were enthusiastic at first, but once they found out that there was so much paper work to do, they started to lose steam, and they all dropped out. They couldn't attend classes as a group, they wouldn't share information, everything was top secret. They ended up doing one-on-one learning experiences with the instructor, and the instructor was doing the business plan, rather than the student doing the business plan, and asking questions and writing it. It was the other way around. Then the student was reading the business plans. When people write things for you, you don't know what they're doing, you have to do the whole thing yourself, you have ownership of that business

plan. Sixteen weeks, that was the duration of the training part, that was not enough. I read in February that it takes two years to finish a good business plan on your own. So to offer a sixteen week course to people, and then expect them to finish it when they're not even at that literacy level, that's wrong to give the students a rosy outlook. They should expect some hardship (Timmins Ontario October 1994)

This chapter is framed by the issues Chris Metatawabin's comments introduce, a full range of conflicts between inside/outside, intentions and outcomes, and definitions of development. As I describe in the following, Chris's assessment reveals more than problems with the ETP alone, but also the larger process through which local realities, goals and the integrity of local practices are made invisible. It is this larger process that continually places blame on the local economy for instability, discounting the viability of the settlement economy.

"ANTOINE KOOSTACHIN IS A REAL BUSINESS MAN"

When arranging interviews, I became accustomed to hearing entrepreneurs telling me that they were not running a real business, and often I was directed to Antoine Koostachin as "a real business man". The story of Antoine Koostachin and his businesses illustrate how entrepreneurship works as a local economic strategy, as a uniquely local interpretation of the cash economy. Mr. Koostachin has not allowed me to tape an interview, though he graciously discussed business with me whenever I would visit his store, and on my last visit we went for a drive around the village to look at his new houses. The following is based on notes I made during our discussions in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

Like many men from this region during the 1950's and 60's, Antoine Koostachin worked in a variety of labour intensive seasonal jobs (such as woodcutting) and eventually took work with the Roman Catholic mission. He worked for them first in transportation, on the boats that moved building material and supplies to the other James Bay missions accessible by water from Fort Albany. Originally from further north on the coast of James Bay, he took up residence in Fort Albany after marriage. Working at the mission in Fort Albany, Mr. Koostachin received training as a mechanic, which he later studied more in Toronto. Wage labour has not been Antoine's only pursuit, however. After he had first married and settled in Fort Albany, Mr. Koostachin did not have a trap line in the region, and so he took up trapping in his brother-in-law's area for a few years, having grown up trapping "on the land" where he lived until he was in his teens.

Antoine Koostachin's businesses have emerged as responses to the changing needs of the community. His first business started in the late 1950's, cutting firewood, which he sold for \$7.00 a cord. Antoine comments that he was the first person in the community who owned a chainsaw, and this technology was really the start of all of his businesses. Antoine thus gradually stopped working for the mission and was independent as both a trapper and an entrepreneur. During the 1970's, the Roman Catholic mission was giving up its role providing services to the community, and so Antoine took over some of this work as an independent entrepreneur. He acquired a vehicle, and started garbage pickup, on a contract with the band administration. He held this contract from 1972 until 1995 when a competitor made a successful bid for the work. Antoine also owned a boat which

he used to ship freight from the interior, where the Albany River passes close to a Canadian Pacific Rail line at Collins, Ontario. River freight has since been replaced by air cargo. Antoine has been in business continuously longer than any other independent entrepreneur in Fort Albany.

On the most recent visit I made to Koostachin's store in September 1996, Antoine explained that he "keeps" all of his "skills", maintaining his capacity to make items like snowshoes, mitts, moccasins, along with his proficiency in trapping and hunting. Further, Antoine described that his skills include being a mechanic and running a store. For Antoine, all of these skills together make his household self-sufficient. Combined with this competence in a wide base of skills, Mr. Koostachin also maintains good relationships with other entrepreneurs outside the community with whom he has favourable business relationships, and keeps his favourable reputation with his bank.

Taken together, Antoine was describing his position within the mixed economy to me and demonstrating that the mixed economy draws the regional land-base and the settlement together, just as it brings the national economy into the sphere of the settlement. To state this another way, Antoine's success in business is more obviously his success as the head of a self-sufficient economic unit, his family: providing for his family has required his competence in every area of the mixed economy. One element of the household economy that I am viewing through Antoine's position are businesses, which in turn offer a means of livelihood to his family members who work in the family-based enterprise.

Mr. Koostachin now runs a store and gas station on Sinclair Island, which doubles as a garage for car and truck repairs. Koostachin's son works as a mechanic for the business. Antoine's was the only gas station in Fort Albany until January of 1996 when a second business opened on the mainland, owned by Liz Kataquapit and her husband Kenny. By his own choice, and maybe in response to direct competition, Mr. Koostachin has recently switched the focus of his enterprises, back to woodcutting and rental housing.

To run the woodcutting enterprise Antoine needs trucks, skidoos and chainsaws, and the labour of his sons or men hired to do the travelling, cutting, stacking and delivery of the wood. By the end of September of 1996, Mr. Koostachin had hundreds of cords of wood cut and stacked outside his house in the village. He is guaranteed to sell this wood in the settlement, despite the fact that many people consider cutting their own wood an important sign of individual competence, the ability to provide for the household, and also a fulfilment of responsibilities to other households in the extended family. Many households will buy wood, though it is often explained as a 'last resort' when family members have been too busy to cut wood, or when their equipment is broken down. Buying wood for household use is thus discrepant with commonly held values, and so is often understood as an exceptional practice in exceptional circumstances.

Antoine Koostachin's second major business now is rental housing, and while this enterprise highlights tensions in the community over the lack of adequate housing, it also demonstrates community tolerances. The houses that Antoine has purchased to rent out (and two he built himself) are all in the Cree settlement on Sinclair Island, separated from

the mainland where the airport and Northern Store are today. Houses are bought and sold in Fort Albany on a regular basis, except that it is a select group of houses that have been changing hands. The majority of houses are owned for a long-term within an extended family. For example, the Kataquapit, Metatawabin, Nakogee, Scott and Spence families have each owned and taken care of a specific set of houses for a long term, so that Liz Kataquapit presently owns her grandmother's house and lives in her own house on the mainland, or Mike Metatawabin lives in a house his parents Abraham and Theresa own. Other houses, are 'on the market', and have been bought and sold many times since I started this research in 1994. Most of these are originally band-built, Indian Affairs houses, allotted to a single nuclear family and then sold out of the family network. This is accepted as customary in the settlement. House prices are very low in Fort Albany: houses sold for two or three thousand dollars, even though they might be rented for \$400.00 to \$600.00 dollars a month. Finally, renting houses is a common practice, especially when a family-owned house is rented out because no one in the family needs or wants to live there, though renting keeps the house in the family. Generally, family members do not pay rent.

By buying a house, Mr. Koostachin takes over from the seller the responsibility of maintaining it, and for any repairs to bring it up to rental condition. Renovating the houses requires replacing or repairing internal flooring, panelling and fixing windows, improvements that are costly, since housing materials are extremely expensive, and the work is labour intensive. Each of the houses Mr. Koostachin owns will be connected to

the sewer and water lines by the band, presumably with no extra cost to him, because the band has recently contracted Neegan Ochee, the band-run construction company, to fit existing houses for sewer and water.

Before the band had the funds to connect existing houses in the village to sewer and water lines, the cost had to be covered either by the individual homeowner, or through the band's very limited housing budget. There had been one major sewer and water development on Sinclair Island, the Cree settlement, when a few of the houses on the main road were connected, and these houses are highly desirable accommodations. Some families have gone to the expense of moving their houses to the mainland and paying to have them connected to the more extensive sewer and water system that serves the teachers' and missionaries' residences. The houses Mr. Koostachin has purchased are also all connected to the powerlines. Electrical service connection would be an additional cost, even if Ontario Hydro would approve the connection. Ontario Hydro is limiting new connections because their generators can barely meet the existing demand. Between his own investments in repairs and the improvements inherited with the purchase of the house, Antoine Koostachin has entered a potentially profitable and stable business.

Like any enterprise, Mr. Koostachin's rental housing business conforms to practices accepted in the settlement, even though he now owns and rents more houses than any other individual in the community, making his position unique. It is customary in the Cree village on Sinclair Island for extended families to own, build and maintain their own dwellings. This tradition has been conditioned by the practices of the territorial economy,

in that migration in the land-based economy patterns habitation between two locations: the coast and the inland. Winter hunting and trapping permitted long-term residence at camps in the interior, either in a tent or in a semi-permanent log house (Abraham Metatawabin 1994), just as summer camping nearer the coast provided access to fish and hunting of waterfowl. Camps at both locations were temporary but were also long-term. After the Roman Catholic mission opened the sawmill in the new settlement on the mainland in 1927, Cree people began to build their own plank homes in the village to live in during the summer. Mr. Koostachin's rental business demonstrates that the tradition of home ownership and responsibility for the care of the home is still dominant.

While home ownership is accepted, the practice of renting a house is potentially controversial, as evidenced by my own experience trying to rent a family-owned house in the village. I was offered the house for a short-term rental (two months), but the offer was later rescinded when a local family asked the owners if the house was available. When telling me about the situation, the person who had offered to rent me the house said that it would be better to have a local family there instead of a non-band member, especially without a family. This explanation demonstrates that landlords must be accountable to their community, in this case responsive to the lack of adequate housing in the settlement. With the fact that family members do not pay rent when living in a family-owned house, it is clear that housing is thoroughly entrenched in family and community connections.

Koostachin's enterprise thus operates in a social context where housing is customarily owned by community members, though owners have a responsibility to act in the interests of family members and other community members. It is the network of intercommunity responsibility that seems to provoke the common complaint from community members who are forced to rent that rents are too high. This complaint frames the lack of housing in the settlement as a failure of the community (either the extended family or the community as a whole) to provide for the needs of its members. Single adults very rarely have their own homes, because families are given priority for band housing, rental and family owned properties, a problem that is compounded by the cost of renting. People in the settlement also appreciate that the band does not have enough money and staff to keep houses in good condition, and consequently few people depend on the band for repairs, making improvements themselves if possible.

Complaints about housing show that even as the community accepts the practice of owning and renting houses, there is a strong undercurrent of family and intercommunity responsibility that landlords must negotiate. I think it is in terms of community responsibility that people who keep houses in good condition justify the ownership of houses they do not need for residences, and that they can thus profit from by renting out: people like Antoine Koostachin keep houses in good condition, and thus they are available to the community. Family ownership, community responsibility and economic interest must be carefully balanced in the rental housing market in the settlement, a balance that always leaves landlords open to criticism.

Antoine's businesses have developed out of the combination of careful investments in technology and property, access to cash from wage work and the changing needs of the community. As the settlement at Fort Albany came under band council leadership, the Roman Catholic mission's role providing village services was diminished. Contracts with the band for garbage pick up and road maintenance, for example, presented potential for local entrepreneurs like Antoine. As relationships continue to change within the community in the band administration era, so too the business sector is changing. The existing business sector in the settlement is thus specific to the history of developments in the settlement, when the most recent era is characterized by the growth of local business, and thus local strategies for expanding the cash and wage economy in the interests of members of the community. Business development has been and continues to be most meaningfully defined relative to the settlement's economy, and to goals of household self-sufficiency.

To return to Chris Metatawabin's comments with which I opened this discussion, it is clear in comparison with Antoine Koostachin's representation of his successes as an entrepreneur that the ETP form of entrepreneurship is something different: an introduced formal development strategy that promises to 'help' entrepreneurs negotiate the ins and outs of business development. 'Negotiate' is a good metaphor to describe the process, because the ETP represents a development strategy that is received by the community, and within which local people are both given opportunity to act (to formulate their business) and constrained by limitations external to them. The ETP was offered in a context where,

as Chris Metatawabin noted, not only were there already entrepreneurs, but there were also people accustomed to doing business within the constraints placed on them by the everyday realities of the settlement. The ETP was not able to account either for these limitations, or for the existence of local strategies for running a business. Instead what was attempted through the program was the 'invention' of entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurship.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE MIXED ECONOMY

Mr. Koostachin's practices demonstrate that entrepreneurship within the mixed economy is clearly unique from the cash economy of urban settings. In the mixed economy, individuals regularly make choices within a range of economic pursuits, with harvesting and wage labour among those choices. That Antoine Koostachin's family has provided for itself within all of the aspects of the mixed economy demonstrates that Cree people make their own direction and expand their own options within the specific historical, social and economic circumstances in which they live. Antoine Koostachin's economic practices are representative of how the mixed economy operates to ensure self-sufficiency in the household, but also how the mixed economy is uniquely suited to the settlement already and thus a vital potential.

All locally owned and operated enterprises in Fort Albany are in similar positions within the mixed economy, which makes them distinct from the 'outside' businesses which do not contribute to household incomes on any large scale. A few jobs with Northern

Store or Bell Telephone for members of the settlement do not balance the profits these enterprises make by providing services to the community, while income from small enterprises directly builds family self-sufficiency and increases settlement-based control over cash incomes. The rest of this chapter is framed, then, by the idea that the settlement economy is a site for entrepreneurship, and that entrepreneurs are informal development agents in that economy.

"HIGH HOPES" AND THE POLITICS OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Chris Metatawabin spoke of the Entrepreneurship trainees' "high hopes" as a significant problem with the program. The inherent disappointment is apparent in the words of one trainee, John Roderique, whose family wanted to start a bakery:

W: If you would like to start with why the ETP course appealed to you.

J: Well why I took the course in the first place, they were saying that if we didn't take this business course, in the future it would be harder for us to get the funding that was available to us. So we had to take the course so we'd be able to get the funding, so we'd have the certificate, and that way when we wanted to start the business we'd have a business certificate, a diploma that we had passed it. And when we go to get the money, there would be no hesitation. So I said fine, okay, I enrolled in here, and I finished, with this woman Sandra, we did it all together, and I did get my certificate.

After we got this finished, everything just dropped, nothing came out of it. My budget was too high, the funding was too high, it came out to \$140,000 or something just to start it off. So that was fine, okay we'll send it off. So I did send it off. So, about three months down the road, they said it's too much, they didn't want to give that much money because it was just a start-up business, they wanted to lower my budget, make a

smaller one, around \$30,000. Well \$30,000 dollars for me is just to put running water in my house, I got no running water in my house. And so they only had a little portion, maybe about \$3,500 dollars for water, but that water was only from my house to the trailer, not from the main line right to my house. From there I haven't received anything yet (August 1994 Fort Albany).

The running water required on the family property, a trailer to run the business in, and equipment were the minimum requirements for building a bakery that could serve the community, and make a great enough profit to make the family self-sufficient.

A bakery was run as a business by Emile Wheesk and his family in the old mission bakery, from sometime around 1970 until Mr. Wheesk's retirement in the late 1970's. His business is still well known in the community, was self-sufficient, and as reported by people outside the family, the business closed because there was no one left to run it when he retired. Because the old bakery is part of Mr. and Mrs. Wheesk's home on Sinclair Island, it was also not possible for anyone outside the family to take it over. Like a number of other businesses in Fort Albany, 'development funding' for the first privately owned bakery came in the form of the equity built-in to equipment, facilities and training that was left in the hands of community members when the mission scaled down their operations.

A similar example is Paul Koostachin's hotel, which is really his private home, built out of the old nurse's residence on the mainland, between the Oblate brother's and the Grey nun's residences. Paul Koostachin has maintained it for his family since he took it over in the 1970's, but it has also served to house visitors to the community. It is the

lowest priced short-term accommodation in the community, though not a stable or regular source of income for Mr. Koostachin who runs it more out of duty than interest in running a business. Paul Koostachin was a trader for the Hudson's Bay Company for nine years, having grown up with his widowed mother on the land, and he has witnessed the massive changes in the area as the permanent settlement at Fort Albany was expanded. He worked extensively for the Roman Catholic mission in Fort Albany, and told me that he managed to amass savings from that work. Paul Koostachin's acquisition of the residence is linked to his many years of service to the mission, as is true in each case where the old mission facilities are now family-owned, whether they are run formally as an enterprise or not.

The Coffee Cup, first opened formally as a restaurant in 1993, was being run by Joan Metatawabin in 1994, after she had taken over from her son Shannon:

Joan: When the school closed, this was a residential school, this facility was given to a lady who worked here for many years, because I think she had the idea that she would like to run it even at that time, that was 1975 or 1974. And even then they thought that she would be the best person; they just didn't want to leave it, close it and leave everything to be run down, they thought it would be best if it was open, so she seemed to want to do it, so they just kind of passed it to her, like a dollar and its yours, that's how it happened that she would own everything here, she would own everything that's left.

That's my mother-in-law. She was quite happy to have somebody work it, she's always wanted somebody to work here. She worked here and she did it herself, she and I worked together. And then when she didn't want to run it any more, she had another job anyway, she wanted to keep it open, she doesn't want just anybody running it, she doesn't want to let

it go out of the family, she wants somebody in the family, and I guess I was the only one in the family that showed any interest. She was quite happy to let me run it.

In late 1995, Joan had returned to teaching and rented the restaurant out to a non-family member for the first time.

Around the same time, Eva Metatawabin purchased another of the family owned businesses in the old residential school, the laundromat, from the original family owners. Eva's case, and Joan's choice to rent the Coffee Cup show that family owned businesses, in some cases, are transferable to other entrepreneurs. In Eva's circumstances, her enterprise required a business loan and fairly large personal investment, though nothing on the order of an investment required to build a laundromat from the ground up. Eva's success as an entrepreneur underscores that business funding can be extremely productive for the business person and the community: more machines meant that more people can do their wash here, and Eva's business makes a significant contribution to her family income¹. Eva's business also shows that business is viable in Fort Albany, if the investment is one that is practical for the owners to pay back. In fact, the laundromat has been so successful that it could easily be expanded, and Eva would certainly be able to receive a low interest loan. The problem is that it will be years before Ontario Hydro can

¹ In Eva's household during the study period (1994-1997) she and her partner collected wages from a number of different jobs: short-term full-time and contract work, and part-time jobs. These incomes supplemented cash income from the business. Firewood that her husband Mike harvested was their major land-based resource. Some meat and fish were part of the household income, especially from other family members.

install the electrical service required for any expansion, as they can barely meet the existing demand.

The extreme costs of starting a new business from scratch in Fort Albany cannot, practically, be absorbed by the entrepreneur, but this is what is required by present funding arrangements and limited infrastructure in the settlement. This new era of entrepreneurship, when small businesses apply for funding from the band administration, is illustrated by John Roderique's experience trying to access this funding:

J: I went to the band office for money first. Before the band office used to get a little bit of money, like \$30,000 a year, and then all businesses would take a little chunk of that, but I was only taking a very small piece, I was only getting some for my baking supplies like flour, sugar, milk, eggs, that's all I was taking out of there, because they told me I couldn't take lots. Like to buy a stove or fridge or something I use for my baking, a big mixer, I couldn't take something like that out. If I needed a donut fryer which costs about \$3,500, I couldn't get that much, I couldn't get that amount, I could only get so much, like \$2,500 within that year, for the whole year. That's all I could use it on.

These small business grants were impossible for me to track previous to 1994, and I found only one other person who spoke to me about how he had used one. A full-time, long-term employee, this entrepreneur used the grant to start a homebased and part-time business. The enterprise required capital to buy stock only, with no costs for overhead, to build a business space, or to pay staff, as he would use income to replenish stock and to pay himself. Thus, the grant supported a small business that would supplement a full-time cash income.

Generally, I would say that many people who did not receive these small grants saw their refusal as a result of politics, or favouritism on the part of various band staff members responsible for evaluating the business plans and allotting the money.

Funds that come through the band office should not stop at the band office, because what's been happening here, even today, now, they stop at the band office because staff members, they have a small business that's not really taking off, but they take the money anyway. (Unidentified August 1994 Fort Albany).

From the Band Economic Development officer's perspective, however, there was never enough money to go around, and so someone was always left out. Settlement-level conflicts over this small band development fund only mask the fact that most entrepreneurs in Fort Albany require much larger investments than are currently made available from any source. At the same time, though, entrepreneurship is a successful, proven, development strategy in Fort Albany, but this success has taken place within the existing limits of the settlement. It was this contradiction between external policy and local realities that left entrepreneurs frustrated in their plans.

As John Roderique's experience shows, the amount of funding required to challenge the existing limits on expansion of settlement businesses is simply not available to the entrepreneur. The limitations on entrepreneurial development flow from development problems that effect the community as a whole, in John's case the lack of adequate funding for the development of infrastructure in the settlement:

J: Pasico [the regional development agency] were supposed to come and see me and lower that budget and see what I really need, but then I told them I don't have running water in my house. I asked the band office to

give me running water right away, because I want to start the business up right away, they're really wasting time now, and it was supposed to be last summer and they didn't do it, and it was supposed to be this summer and they can't do it again. I'll have to wait until next summer now. I don't know, maybe next summer they'll say next summer again.

W: So Pasico doesn't think that they can help you pay to get the running water?

J: That's the thing I don't understand. Pasico wouldn't help with the water because its going to be up to the band to put running water in. What we put in there was only to put water and sewer to my trailer; see Sandra [the ETP trainer] thought I already had running water to my house. The extra money was for running water.

The limits on the ETP as a development program, and of external sources of funding for development of private enterprise are clear. While the ETP provided entrepreneurs with a business plan with which they could approach all of their potential funders, including the band office, there were no funders able to accommodate extreme costs related to the existing settlement infrastructure. When entrepreneurs were blocked by the local situation, all external funders offered no hope because of their own limitations.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS LOCALLY UNIQUE

John Roderique had a history in the cash economy typical of most people in his age group, though he worked almost exclusively in wage work most of his life and thus took seasonal work and travelled more than many before he married into the settlement. Helen Roderique, married to John, also has a typical place in the mixed economy, combining incomes from land-based pursuits, cottage industry and wagedwork to contribute to her

own household and to the other households in her extended family. The Roderiques ran a bakery as a cottage industry out of their own home in Fort Albany prior to attempting to develop the business with the help of the band and the training program.

W: When you were doing the smaller scale stuff, where were you doing the baking?

J: Just at my house. My own house, my own stove. We started out with this just for a try out, just to see how people would go for it. So we made some pies, 12 dozen doughnuts and a dozen pies. So my wife made the pies and I made the doughnuts and we went around and said do you want to buy doughnuts, do you want to buy a pie, and everybody came out and said sure, how much are pies. The first time was just small pies, 9" pies, they were \$8.00. My doughnuts were very cheap then, they were \$3.25 a dozen. So they were buying them, they were going crazy over them. And then I said, oh this is going pretty good, but it is very expensive, I had to change my prices all around, to meet what I'm going to buy and my work in there; its very involved. So we basically started the bakery business, we were getting involved in it, we got interested, because we found they liked it. It was about five years ago.

W: So the problem is still..?

J: Its the equipment and the building. I need a big mixer and a big stove, one or two stoves probably, keep them going. I've only got one stove now, and I can only put in two pies at a time, and I don't have a donut fryer, I can only cook four donuts at a time, so it takes me forever to cook six dozen doughnuts here. I cook seven dozen, that's two hours it takes. When I was looking at him over there [on a training visit to Cochrane] he cooked about 16 dozen in half an hour. Plus time, it takes work.

W: Do people ever hire you to do baking for catering?

J: Yes, same with that Coffee Cup, when they need more pastries, they just give me two days notice, and then I can have that ready for that day. I give them cakes, doughnuts, whatever they want, tarts. And whenever anybody orders anything, I just go ahead and make the orders.

W: Where do you get your supplies from now?

J: Right in my store [indicating the nearby Northern Store], my low income store [laughing]. I could buy four bags of flour for the price I pay at Northern for one. My wife bought a bag of flour in Moosonee for eight dollars, here it's eighteen bucks... Robinhood would be the best, because they have everything in stock, and they would deliver it too, if I told them take it to the plane, they'd take it to the plane, if I told them take it to the train, they'd take it to the train. Robinhood in Toronto. They have their shops set up along the road. That's where I got that information was that bakery shop in Cochrane. I asked him where do you get all your baking supplies, he said everything comes from Robinhood, they bring it right to your door.

The Roderiques acquired some specific, important information from the ETP: contacts in the administrative and economic centres outside the settlement to supply their enterprise. The ETP provided for some of the costs (telephone, travel) associated with finding and visiting these suppliers, a form of assistance that could benefit any new entrepreneur, because careful use of travel and communications links are central to the operations of all enterprises on the coast.

For example, the Roderiques used every source available to them when running the homebased bakery they were hoping to expand, taking advantage of visits to Moosonee to buy flour. The enterprise could save freight charges, as well, because the flour was within the 45 pounds Air Creebec permits for each traveller's baggage. The Roderique's cottage industry, thus, was built within the restrictions of the existing infrastructure in the community, but also within the existing social and economic structure: the family business supplied the Coffee Cup, another local enterprise. John Roderique discusses more extensive contacts:

W: To run a business like this, what kind of community support do you have to have?

J: Community support you have to have. Oh yes. It's so good, Moosonee asks for my doughnuts, Kashechewan asks for my doughnuts, Attawapiskat asks for my doughnuts, not only in Albany. So I say, what the heck, if I can start it here, if they sort of get slack down on me, I can go to Kashechewan. If they get sort of slack down on me, I can go to Attawapiskat. And I can keep these all going. You know, when I went to Cochrane there, I ordered a bunch of those yeast doughnuts all covered in chocolate, those fancy doughnuts. Of course, it's all the same dough, just different icing and stuff. But the people don't like that, they don't like the texture of the dough, it's too light; I was stuck with a whole bunch of doughnuts from Cochrane.

Working at the airport at the time, John Roderique could easily ship small orders of doughnuts on the plane up and down the coast. His wage work gave him a strategic location within the links between settlements in the region, complementing his business.

Micheline Edwards is another entrepreneur in Fort Albany, and she acknowledges the social relationships, both within and outside the community upon which her enterprise was founded:

W: Just tell me how you got started with the restaurant.

M: Through Norman Ashamock, he's the owner of the restaurant and the equipment. I worked with Norman for about three weeks to run it. He didn't want to do it full time, he wanted to quit and concentrate on his other business, the store, then he asked me if I was interested in running it myself, and I would just pay the rent. And I was always interested in running my own business, and so there was a great opportunity for me. So I said, sure I'll do it. Now he needed the money up front for the rent.

W: How did you finance you're opening?

M: I had a hard time getting money from agencies, Pasico is it?, they said they needed a business plan, which I didn't have on such short notice. I

only had one day before I had to meet with them, but they also told me that they didn't think they would make a loan to me because they weren't sure that the restaurant business would profit. So, fine, I went around to other business people in town, but I had a hard time there, maybe they don't believe in me, I don't know, so they turned me down too. So my next step was to go through my outside contacts, my friends. And one of them trusted me, and she loaned me the money. I told her that I would give her a report on the first week of how I did. Of course I got all excited because of how well we're doing here, and the loan is already paid back, in a week of business. I must have made over \$5,000 - I made five to six hundred a day. I'm all clear with my loan. So now my friend tells me she could give me some more, and with this loan, I'm just going to buy a big food order from Fasano's in Cochrane to keep me going.

Outside the formal funding process, entrepreneurs have established mutually supportive business connections: everything from investment or operating capital to information and advice.

Entrepreneurs in Fort Albany are skilled in using these links, as Micheline described:

W: Have you brought a charter in yet?

M: Not yet, but in the future I'm sharing one with the school, the Snack Program.

The Snack Program is a provincially funded project that provides healthy snacks to the lower grades in the elementary school, and by sharing a charter with a local business, the organizers can save on freight costs, as does the business. The Snack Program organizers use the charter service, instead of buying from the Northern Store because the former is less expensive, and they can usually get the 'best price' by negotiating directly with the wholesaler.

The following depicts the same process of 'sharing' space on incoming flights and thus saving on freight costs:

W: I remembered one story you told on Saturday night about some meat that came up as baggage on the sched [scheduled passenger flight from Moosonee]?

Unidentified: Yes, it was 50 pounds of hamburger for \$90.00 that my uncle brought up in his luggage for me, so I didn't have to pay the freight (October 1995 Fort Albany).

Sharing charters and having friends and family carry goods on scheduled flights are business practices that take advantage of the constant travel within the region. These practices are a response to the high costs of shipping for small enterprises, because there is no discount rate available for individuals or entrepreneurs, discounts such as the Northern Store enjoys as one of Air Creebec's major clients. A significant portion of the supply process is informal in the ways described above, and thus the actual amount of goods shipped into the community by entrepreneurs is difficult to measure. It is clear that informal links within the settlement such as those described above hold potential, if they could be formalized. By working as a unit, the small business sector could demonstrate that they are a significant client for air carriers, and entrepreneurs could access dependable savings on shipping costs.

More important than forging links based on shared economic interest, the local small business sector requires recognition as central to the settlement economy, both economically and socially. As Chris Metatawabin describes, entrepreneurship and small business development are ideally shared as a community:

W: What are the directions to go for small business development in Fort Albany?

C: This sixteen week course should be extended to two years maybe. Everything should be explained up front: it will take two years to finish this. We will need participation from the group, they must work as a group, and they must also collect information from the community.

And they must also work closely with the band office. That way they would have to draft up a sample BCR [Band Council Resolution], take it to chief and council, saying that chief and council recognizes this student in his or her attempt to set up a video outlet in Fort Albany under the jurisdiction of Chief and Council, something like that. It would be part of their business plan package, rather than trying to sneak around and trying to access money from elsewhere and trying to be independent. It doesn't work that way. You have to inform everybody what you are up to, even share your business plan so people can take a look at it, and not get offended if part of your business plan gets taken away from you.

These are the kinds of things that must be pointed out to the students, they have to understand that. That's what life is: your ideas get stolen, and you don't get emotional about that, you carry on and try and succeed. And to understand that people want you to succeed, but people want you to be part of the community too, they don't want you to be stingy. But, you know, you have to try to find a middle ground between following traditional values and also the modern values, you have to try to find a middle ground. You have to help out your community, but you also have to make a profit to stay alive. It's these sorts of things, someone must be able to explain these things to them. I was trying to do that.

The settlement, as Chris Metatawabin says, and as I have shown above, is a rich social, political and geographic context which entrepreneurs must accommodate, and that they are already skilled in negotiating. The ETP failed to acknowledge the innovation and

context specific planning and development that local entrepreneurs have perfected. The ETP was structured around an assumption that there was no existing business sector, and that entrepreneurs were going to be created in the training process. The program attracted entrepreneurs who had already started their businesses out of their homes, business people who were seeking the funding to expand, but the ETP was never prepared to fulfil their visions.

Entrepreneurship as carried out by local people in Fort Albany has been consistent with the needs and interests of the settlement up to this point: entrepreneurs contribute to their own household self-sufficiency, continuously using and maintaining the few business spaces available in the community, providing services to the settlement and strengthening the settlement's cash economy. As members of the settlement, entrepreneurs are contributing to the economic security of households in their extended family network, while collectively all settlement households are part of the region's mixed economy. As Chris Metatawabin's comments above show, the balance between business priorities and settlement interests needs to be further formalized and elaborated, not displaced by business practices and ideals more appropriate to urban settings.

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE

Wendy: What role does entrepreneurship play in community development, and in the community generally, but I should preface that by asking if you think of yourself as an entrepreneur, if we can use that word.

Joan Metatawabin: Yes, definitely. I think so. I've done quite a few jobs in this community where I worked for other groups or other people, but now I'm working for myself, and I see that as being an entrepreneur. And as far as the role of entrepreneurship in community development and community economic development, I think it's really important right now, at this time, 1994, because it really ties in with self-government so much. If people are really going to go for self-government here, and they have to, we're already on that road, then they have to think about doing something for themselves economically, because there's not always going to be a job for everybody, just to go and apply for a job. That steady income is just not going to be there. With more and more people who want to work now, women want to work, and teenagers don't have that education they need to go and apply for so many jobs. I think entrepreneurship is one of the ways to go for many people, and people see that now, and that's why that program [ETP] was so important, that's why you had so many people signing up. People want to do that type of thing; they want to run their own business, they want to be self-sufficient, they just want those kind of skills or that chance, that opportunity to do something like that.

W: Self-sufficiency is really key to how people are thinking about entrepreneurship here. 'I'm not going to become a big mogul, but I'm going to be able to do what I have to do'.

J: That's the other thing: you're not going to become too rich here doing any kind of project, any kind of business. But you're going to be able to provide for yourself and your family (September 1994, Fort Albany).

Though she did not take the program, Joan Metatawabin's comments above show that the ETP had a high profile in Fort Albany in 1994 when I started interviewing entrepreneurs, and that the program was interpreted and given meaning in the local context. Joan underscores the social meanings of entrepreneurship in the community: entrepreneurs

provide for their families, provide opportunities for other community members and contribute to local control over life in the settlement, self-determination.

Community interest and individual interest are woven together for Micheline Edwards, who above discussed funding her enterprise, and here speaks about becoming an entrepreneur:

W: How do you think your own experiences and your own life up to now have brought you here?

M: I used to be a Chef at the hospital for four years here in Albany. And I was on training for about six months, and then I was promoted to Assistant Chef. There I learned a lot, making bread, everything. I've catered too, banquets, weddings, the smallest would be twenty, weddings, large things. I worked with Joan Metatawabin, I learned a few tricks there. And so that was my interest.

And then I became a social worker for about eight years! It was too stressful, I was doing both communities. It was nice, but the restaurant business is mine, no worries. It's going to get better too, expanding the menu. Right now it's just fastfood, so I want to add nutritious foods. I want to please everybody, there's a lot of diabetics here. I am a diabetic, so I have to balance the meals for everybody.

Running a business was one option among many for the entrepreneurs in Fort Albany whom I interviewed, a natural alternative to working for someone else in the wage economy, and also provides some service to the community.

Each entrepreneur I interviewed had some experience with wage work, though some, like Micheline above and John Paul Nakogee also had experience with small business through other entrepreneurs:

JP: It's something that I've always wanted to do, I've always wanted to run a business of my own. I used to admire my uncle, he used to run a

business, I used to look at him and say, maybe that's what I want to do. John Nakogee. [W: General Store?] And also heavy equipment. That's what gave me the idea. From him that's where I get to know that's what I want to do. More or less determined to do it, not to fall from grace, I don't want my business to go down, I always keep it going. And I have to open every night, no matter what. If it's Christmas, or New Years Day, just like Jumbo video. That's what I'm trying to do, is be open everyday. Not everyday, but every night I guess.

This is not the first video store to be established in Fort Albany; there were others before me. Like Peter Nakogee and Henry Noah, they come and go. They're not really into it I guess. But if you're really into something that's what you want to do. I'm not open long hours, I'm open 6:00 until 10:00, that's the only hours I'm open, that's the only hours I can open. If I was really into money, I guess I'd be open all day. But I try not to make big money. If I made a lot of money, I'd be living in a big mansion, in a new building, but I don't do that. I try to stay the way people are in Fort Albany. I'm not trying to be, like I'm better, whatever. I try to be the same, like other community members, the way they're living, so I don't have any high standards, no limos and all of that. That's what I believe in, I'm not really into that at all, being a big guy, I just open it, because, the community, maybe they're bored with t.v., that's the only reason why I opened this kind of business I guess.

John Paul Nakogee later closed his video rental business and sold all of the stock. He has continued to work in the wage economy in Fort Albany. Like some businesses today in Fort Albany, the store is on family property, and so not likely to be rented out to another small business.

Annie Ashamock planned to run her business from an office in her home, and required only a small investment:

A: Well, I've always been very much involved with the [Cree] language, I even went to school for that. The first year we took a language skills program, it involved interpretation and translating services, using computerized syllabics. I also took over four years the Native Teacher's Certification Program. I started a language program at Northern College. After that I got a job with the Timmins Board of Education as a Native languages teacher for the highschool students, and then I moved on to being a court translator. I supervised the freelance interpreters in all of the Northern and northwestern communities. I supervised all of those translators and then we did workshops on court terms, the language itself is different. So I did that with the Attorney General. I came back here and applied for this job, but in my mind I still wanted to work with the language. And I heard there was a need for translation services. Mushkegowuk has their own translation services, but they are not enough for all of the different organizations that need translation. So all in all, that's how I came up with this translation services. And then there was the course I took last year, and started getting my business plan together. The ETP came at the right time. I always wanted to start a small business on my own, something to do on my own, and that course helped me a lot with everything I had to know, the documentation, the legal aspects, how to register with the Ministry of Finance. And of course I already had the idea of what I wanted. Especially with numbers that was my weakness, and I needed help in that area. But I can do it, I just have some weakness there. I manage the business here [at Iskwayuk Kapeshewin]. You just have to put your mind to it and then you can do it (September 1995 Fort Albany).

Annie Ashamock's experience as a teacher and a translator have made her part of the links that are increasingly important between Fort Albany and external agencies. Annie's business is a response to the fact that local people are more and more involved in controlling these relationships, and her business plan shows that ideally, the external world will be negotiated in Cree.

Annie Ashamock's enterprise is potentially at the centre of the links between inside and outside; her plans show how business development can serve larger purposes than those of the individual. Businesses can strengthen a community's position, here, Fort Albany's position as a Cree speaking community.

Annie: I'm going to use this as a training program too, and apply for money from Jobs Ontario to train people who will also be working in the area for me. I also hope to turn this into an institution for language teaching and study, it's something that the Native people are interested in, working with the elders. How can the language be utilized better, and how will the language be expanded. There is a dictionary of the language already.

Annie Ashamock's plans are part of her role as an educator, and as someone negotiating the expansion of the Cree language to meet new needs. Like the enterprises Joan Metatawabin, John-Paul Nakogee and Micheline Edwards were running, Ashamock's plans show that an awareness of the social setting of the settlement is part of entrepreneur's activities.

FAMILY: HOUSEHOLDS, INCOMES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Wendy: You left your old job to work in your mother's business?

Susan: Yes, my mom was anxious for me to come there, and I said okay because I wanted to support her business. I wanted to help her try and succeed.

W: What were the goals of having a business?

S: Partly self-sufficiency for my folks, partly to have something for people in the community.

The business Susan (a pseudonym) worked in had a very short life, closing after only a few months of good business. Bad planning, and an unexpected downturn closed the business, leaving a small debt. A certain amount of the debt (such as worker's salaries) was forgiven, and Susan was able to return to her fulltime job, the major source of income for her own household. Susan's mother was left with the business's debt and for a while most of her income from part-time employment and another cottage industry went to paying it off.

Family and other close contacts in the community can contribute to the growth of a business, and help buffer the difficult times. By taking the job in the family business, Susan ran the risk of losing a secure cash income, the major source of cash in her household. And cash is important: clothing, telephone, electricity, gasoline, and many food items require cash. While Susan was not liable for the business debt, her income was reduced when business was slow, and during those times other workers were laid-off and she had to do their work. Susan thus took a great risk leaving her full-time job to join the family business, and took on extensive responsibility in her commitment to the enterprise. Susan's example demonstrates that enterprises put family income security at risk, and shows why so many small enterprises contribute to households where economic stability is ensured by a cash income from wage employment.

Dual incomes would appear to contribute to a concentration of cash in some households and contribute to a hierarchy based on cash wealth. However, it is not clear to me that this is simply a problem associated with small businesses. As often as small

businesses provide 'extra' cash income, they are also the core or most important part of family life. Cash incomes from wage employment (or even other sources) are important to the business, sometimes in surprising ways. For example, one entrepreneur with a fairly new business told me that one partner's income from a full-time job went primarily to paying the wages of the business's employee - the other partner was working 'for free' and income was going towards paying off the initial investment and paying for inventory. In another case, two employees of the business agreed to work for free, as a favour to the business owner, with hopes of better times ahead. In this case, the employees were in receipt of social assistance payments which they considered to be their pay. The value of having a business in these cases, as with Susan, superseded the interest in 'getting rich'. In many cases, the income from wage employment is the entrepreneurs' own investment in their enterprise, their ongoing 'equity' commitment.

'Investments' are also more than just cash, and whole families are linked to the enterprise, between enterprises, and between communities. Joan Metatawabin's comments summarize the social web entrepreneurs are part of:

J: What it means for my family, gee I don't know. I know they like having a place to come to eat, they like good food to eat all the time and lots of food at home. There's also the other side, the negative side too, which is things don't get done at home because I'm not there. We're not together as a group as a family unit very much. Most of our time as a family unit is spent here, sitting around the table here, washing the dishes or whatever. They're hardly in my kitchen that I don't ask them to do something, my kids or Ed or anybody can't stand around long in my kitchen. Another thing, it's good for them to see me working, you know, working at a business. It's probably going to give them some ideas about

what they can do, hard work, and doing something for yourself is important.

W: Your little girl Cedar is in the daycare?

J: That works so far. It was pretty hard before she went into daycare. For the first three months or so, that was very difficult. People in businesses with young children really have a hard time, they must have a hard time coping with their family and their business, because the hours are so long. With us it was extended family! If worse came to worst, we could always drop her off at her grandmother's, because her grandmother was home all the time. But one of my kids seemed to be home all the time, and any days when everybody was working at the same time, then we would take her to her grandmother's. The effects on the family, can be quite negative if you don't organize and arrange things. It's not like I went to everybody in the family and said 'do you think it's okay if I open a business'. You just, expect, I guess I just expected my family would support me, they'd always done it before. My kids grew up in the kitchen. Running this kitchen as a catering restaurant when they were small, so it wasn't anything new to them. There's another girl comes in here all the time, Sylvia, [my brother-in-law] Danny's [wife] Sylvia. Every time she walks in my kitchen, she stirs something, she'll do something, she just can't walk in and stand there, because she grew up in a business too, she grew up in her dad's store, stocking shelves and then she was cashier, she did everything in the store from the time she was really young to the time she left home. Her dad's [Greg Koostachin's] grocery store in Attawapiskat. He runs the tractor train from Moosonee every winter. He's the guy who is trying to get the charter going for the groceries, he's looking at buying a plane. The freight, that's what would kill any business here, especially the grocery business, because you're steady, steady having freight coming in, ongoing, two or three times a week. Some businesses have less freight because they can get their inventory, stock it up, and then maybe months later, get some more of something, have little pieces coming in. But not the grocery business.

As both an economic and community development strategy, entrepreneurship holds great potential: it is through the entrepreneur that community interest (a locally controlled cash economy) joins economic interest (entrepreneurs provide for themselves and their families).

Joan's comments speak to the larger social web entrepreneurs make up: "the guy who is trying to get the charter going", Greg Koostachin from Attawapiskat, is not just part of the background for economic development directed by federal and regional policy. Greg Koostachin, and each of the entrepreneurs from Fort Albany that I interviewed and quoted are the core of small scale, local, economic development. It is their combined experience, interest and skill that is the most important development knowledge in these communities. Entrepreneurs do not work independently, but depend on strengths from family, community and intercommunity networks. These networks cannot be replicated artificially, nor can they be measured. Entrepreneurs are potentially agents of development at the community level because of how they are positioned within their communities.

SUMMARY: THE PLACE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Mushkegowuk Council measures the success of its ETP through the most salient, measurable result: each entrepreneur translates into one less unemployed worker. Focusing on employment too narrowly as a development goal defines economic development as only the growth of the cash economy, and masks the integrity of the mixed economy to

provide means of livelihood to community members. Within the settlement economy the tradition of entrepreneurship, exemplified by Antoine Koostachin, has provided self-sufficiency for extended families, not just employment. The Nakogee family ran a number of businesses in the 1970's and 1980's, businesses which employed and provided cash incomes for part of the family. Entrepreneurship thus is not simply an answer to 'joblessness' in Fort Albany, but instead, as the above has shown, one strategy among many for providing for the household. It is providing for the household that is the primary economic concern in the settlement, and entrepreneurship, wage work and harvesting are all part of each household's income.

Entrepreneurship operates within the mixed economy in the settlement, and so it can continue to be adapted to this existing economy. First, wagework in Fort Albany is unstable: short-term contracts on projects, employment in short lived institutions and businesses, and seasonal employment are the rule. Entrepreneurship can provide, ideally, more stable income than that provided by wagework, though cash from the business is likely to be combined in the household with wage income and certainly with resources from harvesting.

Second, because land-based incomes are a significant part of household incomes, a feature of the mixed economy, all wageworkers (and entrepreneurs) need to continue to have access to this income, just as Antoine Koostachin and other entrepreneurs in Fort Albany have. Formal support for harvesting is as necessary as support for entrepreneurs in development planning, especially to extend harvesting opportunities to as many

community members as possible. If policy focuses narrowly on economic development as 'job creation', it misses the value (both socially and economically) of land-based activities to the whole community, including those people with incomes from small business. Development planning can continue to elaborate the mixed economy, not merely the cash economy.

Third, entrepreneurship in Fort Albany has a more extensive impact than employing a few people and increasing wealth in those households. Entrepreneurs, as is clear in this chapter, hold together a web through which economic development has been happening and can continue to happen. Entrepreneurs like Norm Ashamock manage businesses that offer opportunities to other entrepreneurs. His store has helped to pay for renovations to his restaurant which he tries to keep rented out to other community members, entrepreneurs like Micheline Edwards. Micheline, in turn, hires two or three other community members, whose wages contribute to their household incomes. Micheline Edwards can also help out the Snack Program, while this collaboration is a benefit to her. Micheline's practices, like those of every other entrepreneur in Fort Albany, demonstrate that entrepreneurs take skills and abilities (Micheline worked in the hospital kitchen), turn them to their own use, and also to the benefit of the community. These neverending links are among the intangible benefits of entrepreneurship that could be exploited by a development strategy which builds on these links within the community and between settlements in the region.

Entrepreneurship has recently been given priority as a national development strategy, in programs like Employment Canada's Self-Employment Assistance which guarantees monthly income for new entrepreneurs. In the national picture, entrepreneurship is seen as a way of replacing the full-time, stable jobs that are disappearing in the mainstream economy. This strategy is attractive because entrepreneurship training costs very little, no more than any training program, and small enterprises require small investments in urban settings where infrastructure exists and markets (and thus potential profits) are larger.

In Fort Albany, however, this model for training and funding entrepreneurs amounts to 'opting out' of development planning at a crucial stage in the expansion of the cash economy, since large amounts of capital are required to make investments on the scale of settlement-wide infrastructure improvement. Small business owners in urban, industrial contexts depend on already developed and established facilities. In Fort Albany, very little infrastructure suitable for running a business exists, and so businesses cannot simply spring up in existing facilities.

The small business sector in Fort Albany also competes in a market that is dominated by a single retailer, the Northern Store. In the present cash economy, the scale of the Northern Store's operations limits competition by smaller, independent stores, given the Northern's storage facilities, contractually low freight rates with Air Creebec, well established network of suppliers and shippers throughout northern Ontario and Quebec, and their role as a surrogate bank. The Northern Store does have some use to

entrepreneurs: restaurant owners, for example, can depend on the store for supplies, because the store's freight delivery is regular. Some items, such as eggs and bread, can end up costing less per case at the Northern than if they are purchased and shipped by the entrepreneur through a small charter company. Also, Northern Store employees (though very few are from the community) have retail training, which could be and has been useful to local businesses.

However, the Northern Store cannot continue to displace local enterprise, and development planning and funding need to be directed to ending their monopoly. First, community or regional money needs to be invested in storage facilities. Second, bulk buying must be instituted to benefit local enterprises throughout the region. Third, business facilities must be developed with community or regional money. Some entrepreneurs like Norm Ashamock and Antoine Koostachin have developed their own facilities, but development on a larger scale for other entrepreneurs is required. Without large investments in infrastructure development, the smallest programs (like the ETP) do not serve the larger interest, and entrepreneurs in the community will continue to be blamed for problems and failures with development planning. As I have argued here, this amounts to the local small business sector being scapegoated for problems that are beyond their control.

Such regional developments are needed to compete with the regional connections that have established the Northern Store at the top of the cash economy in the settlement. Developing the regional business sector to compete with the Northern Store provides a

unique opportunity for the locally controlled business sector to increase their cooperation. This cooperation is already a feature of the small business sector in Fort Albany and this could be formalized in local and regional chambers of commerce.

The local business sector in Fort Albany could consult with the band administration to determine the disbursement of the small business investments available to the settlement. These small amounts of money would be best invested in business operators whose enterprises take over existing facilities, or for homebased and cottage businesses that other members of the business community saw as worthy of support. Such 'micro' investments can replicate the kind of interpersonal loans that some entrepreneurs in Fort Albany have used, especially if other community entrepreneurs can create a community enterprise group through which applications could seek approval. These support programs have already been tested in First Nations communities in Canada, such as Calmeadow's First Peoples Fund, and the RCAP recommends that governments could provide core funding to the groups that coordinate such funds (1996b: 912-913).

Thus, entrepreneurship demonstrates the need for cooperative development planning at the local, regional and national level. Development planning, however, needs to accommodate three features of the settlement economy: the existing limits on development; the central importance of the mixed economy; the specific features of the small business sector already in place. Responsible formal policy can emerge from these realities.

CONCLUSION RENEWAL THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Economic development planning and action are social processes that embody community values and ideals, and not merely strategies for acquiring cash resources. This conclusion has implications at two levels in regard to the position of First Nations in Canada. First is at the national level where Aboriginal economies are potentially strategically misrepresented, whether in policy or in an economic development discourse. In this national frame, First Nations communities generally share a similar position in regards to federal, provincial and territorial bodies: they are more often administered to than the originators of policy and compete with each other for limited funding. To this similarity is added that settlement economies are typically marginalized and exploited within the wider industrial economy. The exploitation of Fort Albany's cash resources by the Northern Store and other service providers is such an example. In the case of competition over resource development rights, such as forestry, the dominant society typically enjoys sweeping rights to development which can displace the interests, practices and rights of Aboriginal people. These existing circumstances, while in the process of change, generally result in the muting of the meaning and value of Aboriginal economies, and of local economic development planning as I have argued in this study.

When the discourse about economic development is caught up in this general state of affairs the core issue for development too easily becomes 'why are Aboriginal

communities so heavily subsidized by governments'? Exploring development problems from this perspective obscures the specific historical, political and economic relations that systematically permit the domination of First Nation communities. Here is Alex Metatawabin again summarizing these relations in the Fort Albany region:

In the 1600's, the area was reconditioned as a major trading post by the strangers from overseas and it was such a success, being in a strategic location, that even today the Northern Store still exists and still retains a profit. However at the end of the fur trade, nothing was left - animal life was depleted, people were lost, nothing had been gained for the people. No profits were received or shared, no infrastructure built or inherited, hence no progress for the people (Fort Albany Band Economic Development Office 1995: 4).

The mission's settlement economy similarly left minimal inheritances for the settlement, though it had thrived in its own terms through a combination of government subsidies and rigid control of a poorly paid or unpaid workforce. It was through this 'workforce' that the mission achieved both its own economic stability and measured its success as a 'civilizing influence'. It is only by erasing these specific developments that the present economy can be considered dependant on government subsidies. These same subsidies are an inadequate response to the need for major structural improvements in Aboriginal settlements. Major improvements would provide the tools that could dismantle the conditions of economic exploitation and marginalization the settlement endures.

The demand for stable and sizable funding for Aboriginal economic development is specifically the demand to renew their authority over the economic exchanges that take place in Aboriginal communities. As I have demonstrated throughout this study,

responsible development planning can emerge from social values inherent in community relations. Development as a social process requires the capacity to be self-determining in development planning and action, as the Royal Commission concludes:

Aboriginal governments need to regain effective control over their economies if they are to pursue their own culturally and situationally appropriate forms of development. To do so, they need general powers in the economic realm, but they also need to be able to shape their economies through the design and delivery of economic development programs (RCAP 1996b: 836).

At the national level, this imperative implies that Aboriginal economies must be recognized as both viable and capable of adaptation and change (Elias 1993: 7). Aboriginal economies must be supported as formal economic structures that fulfil human social and economic needs, especially significant for communities like Fort Albany where the mixed economy operates. Development planning must be able to acknowledge all aspects of the mixed economy, and support harvesting, entrepreneurship and cooperative regional enterprise alike.

Recognizing that development is a social process has implications at a second level, at the settlement or community. The integrity of the economy for community members has obvious consequences, as in Fort Albany where the mixed economy circulates resources in a process that reproduces codes of reciprocity and interdependence within extended families, providing economic stability to residential households who achieve self-sufficiency. The mixed economy provides opportunities and obligations that enhance and shape daily life. At the same time that the settlement economy is a set of

resources that are circulated among households, resources (cash in particular) also leak out to the benefit of the mainstream economy. Leakage threatens the integrity of the settlement economy and prevents expansion that would benefit extended family networks of residential households. In this, Fort Albany is like Aboriginal communities across Canada that do not recirculate cash resources within a settlement business infrastructure, but that support providers of goods and services to the community that then reinvest those profits in wages, benefits and developments in the mainstream economy.

Settlement economies are therefore under threat or undermined in specific, demonstrable ways, but they are also viable. Similar conditions of economic exploitation and marginalization are widespread, while they are most meaningfully understood as human issues from within a particular settlement or community. The close focus of this study on day-to-day experiences with the settlement's mixed economy shows that the economy is a site of contestation. First, it is within the settlement that local interests conflict with the interests of federal, provincial and regional economic planning. Development goals at these levels are shown in this study to conform to the terms of the dominant discourse, and so employment, job training and experience are standard measurable goals and outcomes. Competence, opportunity and cultural viability would be more appropriate goals of community development as described in this study.

Second, local interests conflict with the interests of the mainstream economy which enter the community through providers of goods and services. These specific conflicts however, do not preclude the fundamental viability and value of the mixed economy as

a structure within which families achieve self-sufficiency. As shown here, these conflicts make the process of providing for the household everyday fraught with contradictions. It is these contradictions that generate the "objectivity-maximizing questions" (Harding 1993: 54-55) that researchers can learn to ask of policy. The fundamental question to be asked of economic development policy is thus not how to reduce government dependency, but how to use those same resources to augment viable structures already in place. To equate economic development planning with goals of reducing "dependency" is simply an unnecessary (political) move that disguises what 'development' means in Fort Albany: development encourages community control over their economy, increasing opportunities for the settlement to benefit from the exchanges that take place here.

The contest to direct economic development in manners consistent with the values of the mixed economy is part of a deeper fundamental conflict that has been a constant in the history of the settlement. The settlement, itself, has been a site where the interests of another group (the Hudson's Bay Company, the mission) have been dominant. This does not mean that Cree people did not maintain independence and autonomy from the structures these actors controlled and dominated, though it does mean the relationship between Crees and others in the settlement has been imbalanced, favouring the social, economic, political and cultural interests of those sanctioned by federal, provincial and international relations to dictate the shape of life in the settlement. The heritage of Cree people is selective engagement with such structures, and self-determination within the mixed economy.

As this dissertation has demonstrated, economic development has become one process through which the settlement community is asserting its autonomy, its own identity, its own interests, and setting its own direction. This process is still a struggle, though it does prove what the authors of the RCAP argue:

The economic development of any community or nation is a process - a complicated and difficult one - that can be supported or frustrated. It cannot be delivered pre-fabricated from Ottawa or from provincial or territorial capitals. The principal participants, those on whom success directly depends, are the individuals and collectives of Aboriginal nations. The role of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal governments should be to support the process, help create the conditions under which economic development can thrive, and remove the obstacles that stand in the way (RCAP 1996b: 778).

Despite the restrictive lack of funding and inadequate infrastructure, economic development in Fort Albany is specifically directed at the long term goals of keeping and expanding options for individual members to provide for their household, and for the settlement as a whole to make the most of incomes and investments.

Entrepreneurship in Fort Albany demonstrates how existing social structures encompass business development, so that extended families run enterprises and benefit from the profits of these enterprises. The existence of enterprises and the initiative of entrepreneurial families provide other benefits to the community generally, especially as they keep business facilities functioning and available to the small business sector. In many cases business facilities were inherited from the mission's settlement administration, and are now run as enterprises within extended families. Housing, similarly, has entered into the structure of responsibility and sharing that pertain in extended families, while

renting houses has also emerged as an enterprise. Entrepreneurs have achieved a balance between business interests and community tolerances.

As the community renews its authority within settlement institutions, a similar balance is being met between the structure of policy and the needs of the various segments of the community. Training and development programs like Student Summer Work, Trapper Training and Arts and Crafts are opportunities for the communication of shared community values, priorities as well as opportunities for development, while these are also curtailed by funding restrictions.

Control over the functioning of settlement institutions holds the responsibility to make consistent, meaningful action. Settlement, regional and national institutions must have the capacity to take action motivated by and accountable to the people they serve. The success of Fort Albany's development depends on the parallel development of national and regional structures that promote self-determination. In a strong network of regional services, such as healthcare, Fort Albany can be an equally strong component, providing services for a region while benefiting through training and stable employment for community members. Innovative structures like Iskwayuk Kapeshewin and Neegan Ochee provide services within the region, while using the cash investments available to the region to benefit the settlement. Iskwayuk provided a facility and job training, just as each of Neegan Ochee's construction contracts injects training and wages into the settlement economy.

Across Canada, regional governments or tribal councils unify the variety of communities within a shared territory, asserting their status as a broad collective with a shared history and shared interests. Regional institutional development is particularly important to the future goals of self-determination for small communities as an antidote to the national policies that once held sway over northern Native communities. This 'welfare colonialism' not only defined the partial integration of northern regions into the urban industrial economy and political structure of the nation, but also the imbalances in authority between one group of people and the structures that administered to them. This still holds today, as for example the cut in provincial Social Assistance payments made to the household is a measure of vulnerability relative to the state: affected households were manipulated by the provincial government for its own political, economic and historical interests, with the harshest consequences (deepening cash poverty) falling to the most vulnerable. Responsible planning for economic and community development reduces the vulnerability of the community to the arbitrary and self-interested actions of every level of governance that touches the community. As I have described here, the Fort Albany settlement is already setting its own standard for responsible planning.

The conflict between the regional body, the Mushkegowuk Council and the local band council described in relation to the Entrepreneurship Training Program is indicative of a larger set of issues facing settlements and tribal councils across Canada. As described, regional policy may in fact reflect the goals of the largest, wealthiest communities to the disadvantage of the smaller communities. This is a reflection of

historical developments, as in the case of the Mushkegowuk Council where Moose Factory bears a closer resemblance to its neighbour Moosonee than it does to Fort Albany and the other member communities in the Council. Moose Factory, the more southern community is close to a rail line, has better settlement infrastructure and, most important, is the seat of regional services, the hospital and the tribal council. While all of the Mushkegowuk communities share a common history, language and culture, the distinctions among them in the contemporary period generate intense competition for small development, administration and social service budgets.

Again, however, Fort Albany's regionally-integrated developments have set a positive example of the potential of regional coordination. The regional development apparent in Iskwayuk Kapeshewin, Weenebayko and Neegan Ochee all required development funding, to build facilities and train employees. If basic infrastructure development is not available, benefits of regional development will concentrate in communities that are already the richest in these terms. In the same way, entrepreneurs with access to existing facilities will benefit from small business funding programs while those in communities like Fort Albany will face obstacles stemming from the general inadequacy of settlement infrastructure. It has been precisely these conditions that have increased the instability of the cash segment of the settlement economy over the past twenty-five years: businesses like the Hudson's Bay Company (Northern Store) and industrial housing developers have had the capacity to profit from the settlement because they have had the cash to invest in the cost of running an enterprise. Improved shipping

links have benefited businesses from outside the community, just as technological innovations benefit those who can invest in them. In Fort Albany, one small example of this has recently appeared with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce's debit machine. As technological changes increase the links between the community and outside, the community requires the opportunity to take control over those technologies, determining how these links influence the community. Thus, this is a crucial period in the development of control over both the regional and local economy, and targeted funding, directed by comprehensive local policy is the best hope for renewing self-determination in the new settlements.

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