

**BATTLING PARISH PRIESTS, BOOTLEGGERS, AND FUR SHARKS:  
CCF COLONIALISM IN NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN**

A Dissertation Submitted to the College of  
Graduate Studies and Research  
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of History  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon

By  
David M. Quiring  
Spring, 2002

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Canada

**UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

College of Graduate Studies and Research

**SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION**

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the

**DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

by

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Spring 2002

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## **BATTLING PARISH PRIESTS, BOOLEGGERS, AND FUR SHARKS: CCF COLONIALISM IN NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN**

This study examines the relationship between the government of Saskatchewan and the northern half of the province and its residents during the immediate post-World War Two period. Up until 1944, the people of the region lived in relative isolation and had developed a unique society, culture, and economy distinct from the rest of the province. But under the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), which formed the government of Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1964, the North underwent profound change. During this twenty-year period, the CCF attempted to impose modernization, assimilation, and socialism within the northern Aboriginal society. Northerners experienced a very different CCF government than did southerners. While the CCF drew back from its socialist policies in the South, the party applied strongly socialist economic policies to many aspects of the northern economy. On the other hand, in the realm of social policy, the CCF proved less generous to northerners than to southerners. CCF efforts in the North proved largely unsuccessful. A failure to commit adequate resources, a lack of planning, and resistance from northerners to the intrusive governmental presence combined to limit the success of the CCF project. The CCF also destroyed much of the former northern economic and social system, while failing to build a workable new economy and society. This contributed to the worsening poverty and social dysfunction within Aboriginal communities.

This work breaks new ground in significant ways. Other studies have examined particular aspects of the CCF northern record, but none have employed extensive original research in an effort to grasp the larger northern picture. This research seeks to understand and explain, in a comprehensive fashion, the legacy left by the CCF to the North.

Various sources have provided information for this research. Archival records located at the Saskatchewan Archives Board served as the largest single source. Documents from the Glenbow Archives also have proven valuable. Oral interviews with northern residents and former provincial government employees added new perspectives and invaluable checks on the archival information. The existing body of secondary scholarship has provided a necessary base of information.



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David M. Quiring, 1997. "Mennonite Old Colony Life: Under Siege in Mexico." Masters of Arts Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

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## ABSTRACT

“Battling Parish Priests, Bootleggers, and Fur Sharks: CCF Colonialism in Northern Saskatchewan,” examines the relationship between the government of Saskatchewan and the northern half of the province during the immediate post-World War Two period. Prior to 1944, the people of the region lived in relative isolation and had developed a unique society, culture, and economy distinct from the rest of the province. But under the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), which formed the government of Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1964, the North underwent profound change. During this twenty-year period, using colonial methods, the CCF attempted to impose modernization, assimilation, and socialism within the northern Aboriginal society. CCF efforts in the North proved largely unsuccessful. A failure to commit adequate resources, a lack of planning, and resistance from northerners to the intrusive governmental presence combined to limit the success of the CCF project. The CCF also destroyed much of the former northern economic and social system, while failing to build a workable new economy and society. This contributed to the worsening poverty and social dysfunction within Aboriginal communities.

This work breaks new ground in significant ways. Other studies have examined particular aspects of the CCF northern record, but none have employed extensive original research in an effort to grasp the larger northern picture. This research seeks to understand and explain, in a comprehensive fashion, the legacy left by the CCF to the North. Additionally, this study offers a new perspective on the socialism of the CCF in Saskatchewan. The CCF’s northern record indicates the presence of a much stronger socialism than many observers, who have only examined the CCF in the South, thought.

Various sources have provided information for this research. Archival records located at the Saskatchewan Archives Board served as the largest single source. Documents from the Glenbow Archives also have proven valuable. Oral interviews with northern residents and former provincial government employees added new perspectives and invaluable checks on the archival information. The existing body of secondary scholarship has provided a necessary base of information.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Numerous people and organizations have helped make this research possible. Without information and ideas, this work could not have proceeded. Many northern residents and former government employees freely shared their knowledge, both in formal interviews and informal conversations. The staff of the University of Saskatchewan Library, the Saskatchewan Archives Board, and the Glenbow Archives also proved helpful in many ways, facilitating this study.

W. A. (Bill) Waiser served as the supervisor for the research. Willing to generously share his knowledge and expertise about Saskatchewan and Canadian history, research, and writing, he effectively guided this work since its inception. At the same time, Bill allowed a free exploration of the field of study, permitting the gathering of a wide range of information and freedom to reach independent conclusions.

This research also benefited immeasurably from the structure and guidance provided by the University of Saskatchewan and its people. The Dean of Arts and Sciences, K. S. Coates, chaired the advisory committee. Department of History Graduate Directors B. T. Fairbairn and V. Korinek both served on the committee for a time. Also from the Department of History, L. Kitzan, J. Handy, and J. R. Miller helped direct the research as members of the advisory committee. L. Barron and R. Bone, both from the Department of Native Studies, also participated in the committee. From outside this university, the external examiner W. Morrison of the University of Northern British Columbia provided valuable advice.

Financial assistance for this research was provided by the Messer Fund for Research in Canadian History, a graduate scholarship from the University of Saskatchewan, and a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. I express my gratitude for the generosity shown by these organizations and their people.

My wife, Suzanne, encouraged and supported me in carrying out this project. She accompanied me on various research trips and patiently tolerated the long hours devoted to researching and writing this work. I offer a sincere thank you to her, other family members, and all others who helped with this research.

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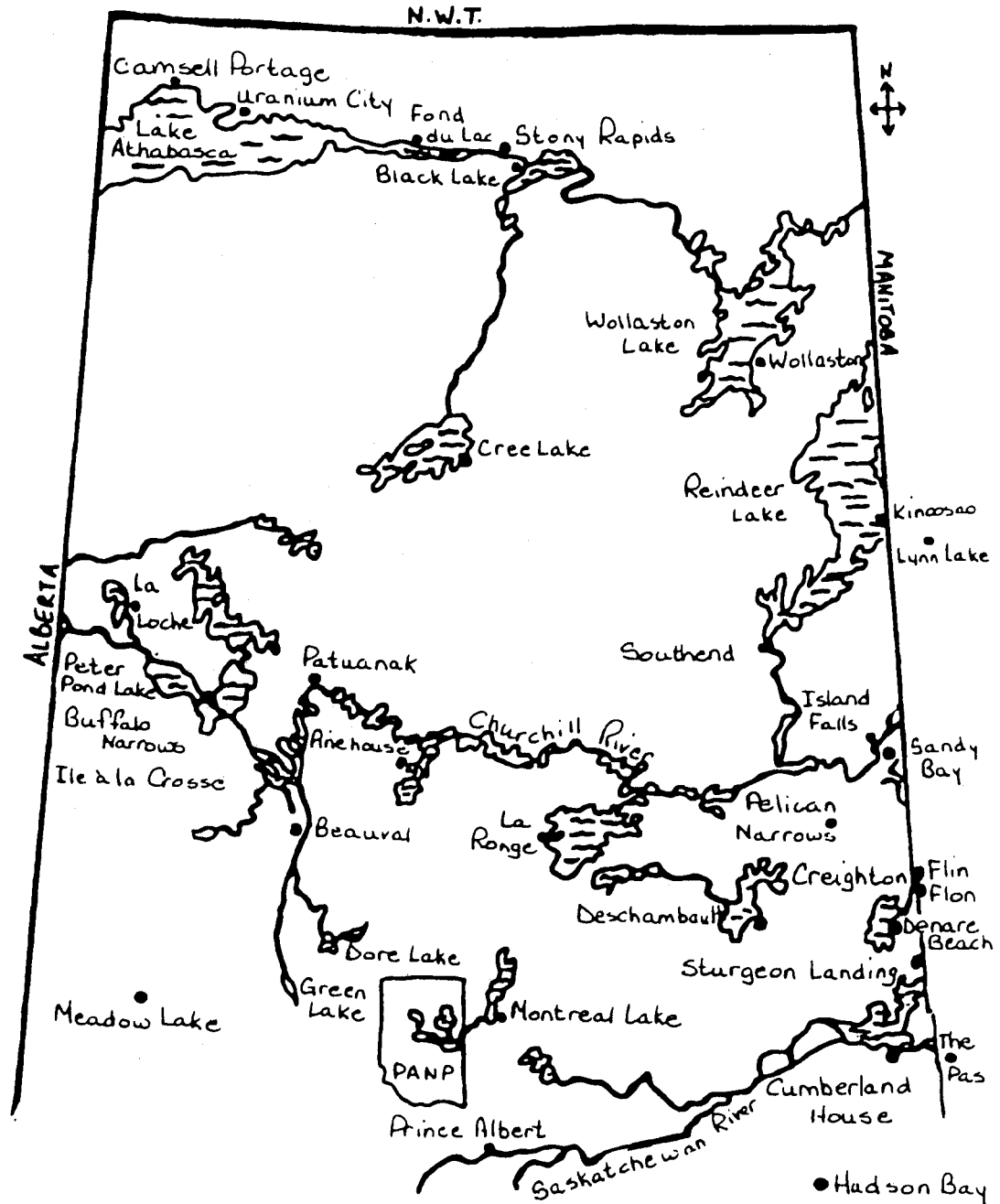
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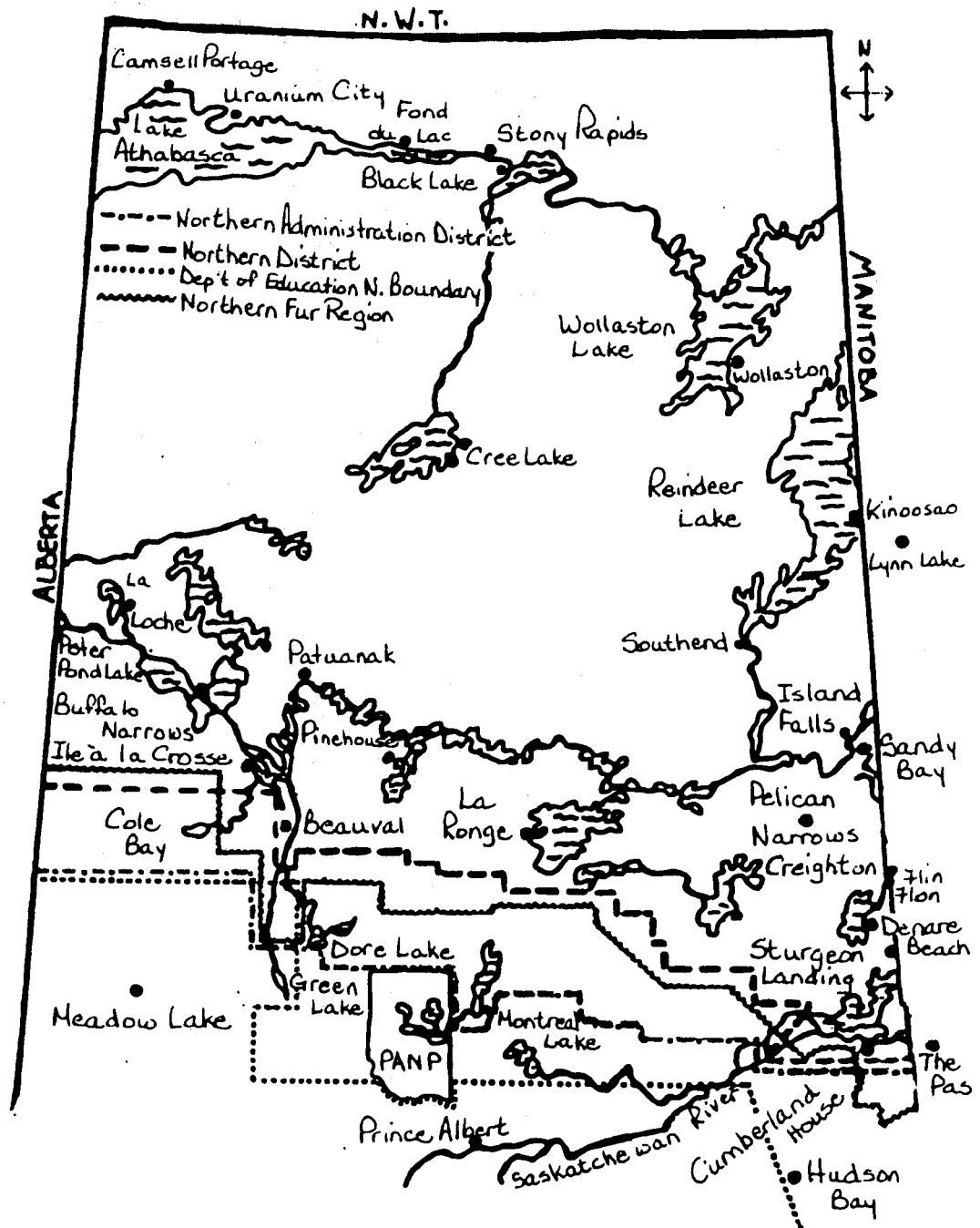
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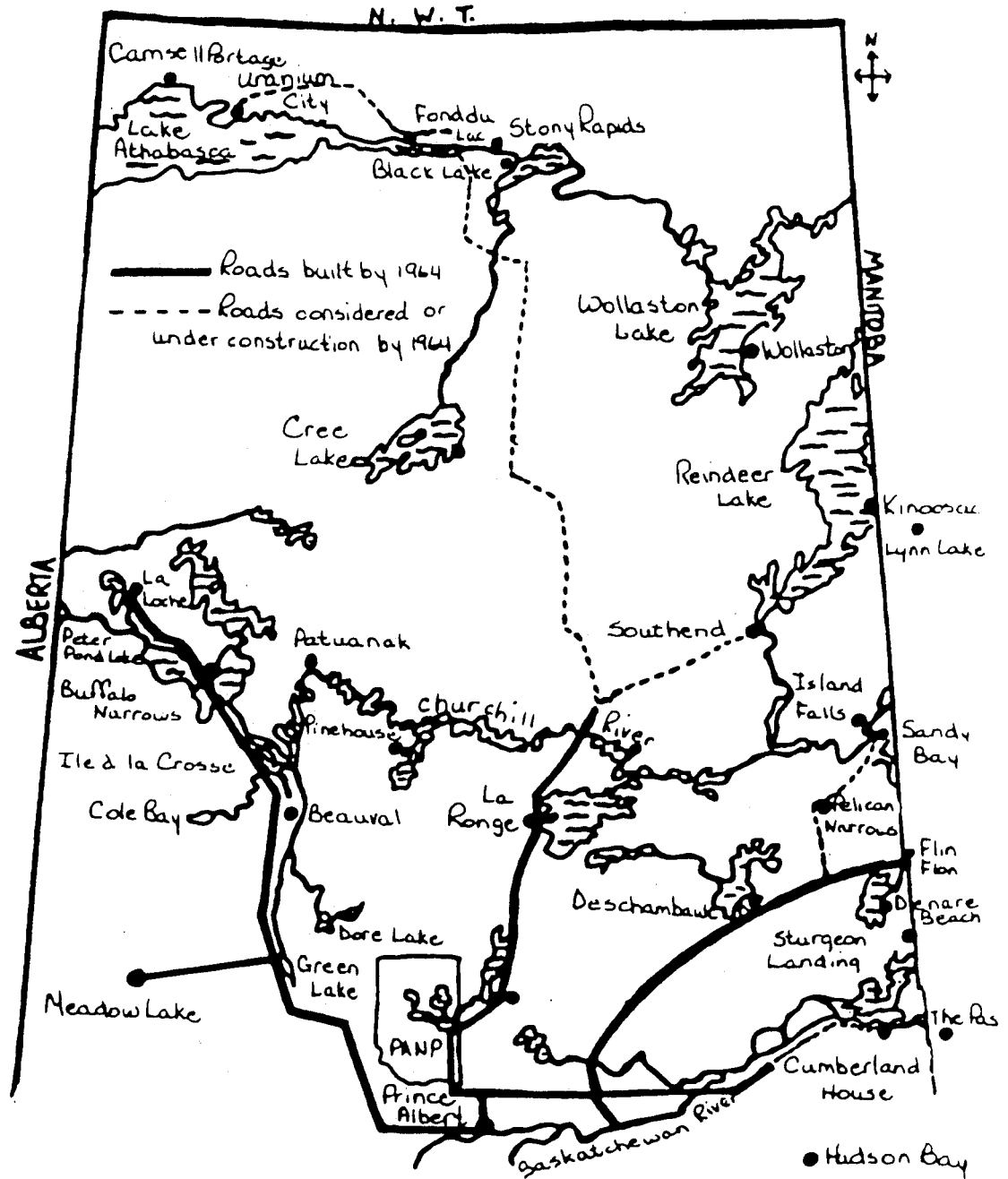




Map Number 2: Northern Administrative Divisions



Map Number 3: Northern Saskatchewan Road Systems



## **Introduction**

My interest in northern Saskatchewan goes back to my childhood, spent growing up on the banks of the Swift Current Creek, an oasis in the dry southern Saskatchewan prairie. Familiarity with northern Saskatchewan first came from neighbors and relatives who traveled there and brought back large fish and tales of lakes and forests. My first visits to the North came when, as a teenager, I traded labour as a fish filleter for trips to the North, spending days on wind-swept rocky lakeshores. Later, as a fresh graduate with a Bachelor of Arts, my willingness to work in the North brought a job as a social worker with the Department of Welfare during the closing years of the Ross Thatcher Liberal government. Although stationed in La Ronge, the job involved administering the department's programs in a large area extending to the Northwest Territories (NWT).

While the Liberal government's delivery of social services in the North differed from that of the earlier Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) era, some of the same persons still worked for the government. My supervisor, a gentleman by the name of John Edgerton Hugh Parsons, once single-handedly provided the Department of Social Welfare presence in the North under the CCF. A tireless spinner of yarns, Hugh whetted my interest in this earlier time in the North with stories about his experiences as a social worker in remote communities.

Working for the Liberals in the North also whetted my interest in the relationship between northerners and the provincial government.<sup>1</sup> Economic and social problems plagued the region, and one could not help but wonder how government might creatively deal with the issues. About two weeks after arriving in the North, I knew the answer to northern problems, but this confidence faded as the northern dilemma became clearer. Yet it clearly seemed that government could do things differently and, in many cases, much better. Shortcomings existed not only in policies made by a remote government in Regina, but also at the local administrative level, where corrupt petty officials twisted northern programs to add to their personal wealth and power. Cynicism and resignation that the North and Aboriginals were inherently dysfunctional pervaded the northern civil service.

When the pull of southern attractions proved irresistible, I left the rugged beauty of La Ronge. My work as a social worker in the area west and north of Prince Albert ensured that my

contact with Aboriginal families continued. A second career as a building contractor, which included work on Indian reserves, provided a different perspective on life in these Aboriginal communities. My family also chose to live in the southern fringe of the northern forest, in an environment similar to that of northern Saskatchewan. This proximity to the North facilitated spending countless days and weeks in various parts of the North over the past decades. In recent years, work on this study also drew me to the North. Having little first-hand familiarity with the area from Beauval to La Loche, it became a priority to spend time there. A trip up the long gravel road north from La Loche to the Clearwater River and on to the Cluff Lake mine near Lake Athabaska revealed some of the wonders of that area. Paddling trips on the Churchill River, time spent in La Ronge, visits to communities along the Hanson Lake road, and voyages by water and road to the Cumberland House delta area provided first-hand experience of some of the issues in these areas.

The North I came to know over the past thirty-five years bore the mark of events which began to unfold in the spring of 1944. At that time, newspaper headlines proclaimed that Saskatchewan voters elected North America's first socialist government, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation government, led by T. C. (Tommy) Douglas. Although preoccupied with introducing changes in the South, including economic diversification, modernization, and new social and health care programs, the CCF concern also extended to the 10,000 or so persons who inhabited the forested northern half of the province. In fact, it made dealing with the previously ignored northern part of the province one of its priorities.

The CCF interest in the North came from a number of sources. In an effort to avoid a repeat of the economic disaster of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the CCF sought to diversify the provincial economy. This would free the province from its over-reliance on agriculture, in particular the production of wheat for the world market. At the time the CCF came to power, the new government faced severe financial limitations and lacked the economic resources to spend as the CCF would have liked. While this situation improved only slowly, northern resources offered hope for increasing the province's wealth.<sup>2</sup> Some in the new government vaguely sensed that the North hid great resource wealth which could contribute to long-term economic diversity and stability. CCF dreamers particularly yearned for riches from northern mines and forests.

Much of the justification for the subsequent massive CCF intervention in the North also came from the ideological fervour of Premier Douglas and others in the CCF. They condemned the primitive capitalism and church control which had evolved in the North. To the CCF way of thinking, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) operated an exploitive and outdated economic

system, while the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches carried out many functions, especially in the areas of health care and education, which belonged to the state. For several reasons then, the CCF set out to destroy the existing northern economic, power, and social structures.

Believing modern ways superior to the old, the CCF set out to modernize northern systems. The North in 1944 remained remote and, in many respects, separate from the South. CCF plans to modernize the North fit well with the new government's push to also modernize southern Saskatchewan, which had lagged behind much of the rest of the North American continent. Southern initiatives included rural electrification, urban water and sewer systems, improved telephone service, road improvements, and building new schools and hospitals. To modernize the North represented a much more formidable challenge, since the northern infrastructure had changed little since the nineteenth century. Although the increasing use of airplanes offered an important transportation option to some, most northerners still travelled on the traditional water routes which traversed the North. The region lacked roads, railways, electrical service, and communications systems. The absence of modern infrastructure also limited the northern economy. While some extraction of furs, fish, timber, and minerals took place, transportation limitations prevented the economy from expanding. Large expanses of the North also received few services, including in the areas of education, medicine, policing, and other government services. While many northerners did not see the need for or want widespread modernization of their homeland, the CCF considered it essential to bring the region into the twentieth century.

The CCF effort included an agenda of assimilating northern Aboriginals into modern Canadian society. This government viewed the Aboriginals' semi-nomadic, hunter-gatherer way of life as a primitive form of economic, political, and social organization, much below that of the Euro-Canadian culture and its "progress." During its two decades in power, the CCF continued to disrespect the choices made by northern Indians and Metis. Its belief that Aboriginals needed to adopt white ways of thinking and acting in order to have a viable future directed many CCF projects.

The CCF set another major goal for the North: to establish a socialist society there. While various other provincial governments and the federal government also worked to modernize their jurisdictions and assimilate Aboriginal populations, only the Saskatchewan government sought to build a northern socialist society. The CCF did so with a missionary-like zeal. This socialist agenda meant that the path of development in northern Saskatchewan would differ substantially from that seen in other northern regions. The new CCF government largely invented the form northern socialism would take as it went along. Unlike some socialist societies elsewhere, the CCF

only very sparingly shared provincial or northern wealth with northerners through social programs. A fear of spoiling northerners' work ethic, financial restraints, and sometimes outright neglect limited CCF spending on social programs. What developed was largely an economic socialism, under which the provincial government took over or controlled large parts of various northern resource industries. Newly-established crown corporations and marketing boards exerted powerful control. The CCF also visualized co-operatives playing a role in creating a socialist society, although involving northerners through co-operatives would have to wait. In its effort to establish a socialist society, the new government attacked free enterprise, even though most businesses, whether in fishing, trapping, or forestry, consisted of small, marginal operations. It viewed the existing northern capitalist society as immoral and wanted to replace it with a new and better society. The CCF looked on the North as a giant "tabula rasa" where, after wiping out the existing worthless society, it would design and build a northern utopia. Only in the North could the CCF impose a socialist society without fear of repercussions at the polls, since northerners lacked the numbers to remove the CCF from power, and southern voters, who would not have tolerated similar programs closer to home, would not interfere in the remote North. The CCF confidently followed its vision, not viewing it as an experiment in socialism; rather, it believed that it had correctly analysed northern problems and knew how best to establish a northern socialist utopia. Even when faced with failure, which became a frequent occurrence, the CCF did not question its basic hypothesis or goals but blamed imperfect subjects and methods.

The CCF simultaneously worked to impose modernization, assimilation, and socialism, expecting their joint application to solve many other problems. Douglas and his ministers placed great confidence in the power of knowledge and planning as applied by those with the benefit of social democratic enlightenment. They held a roughly equal lack of faith in the ability of northern Aboriginals to plan for their future. Although northerners resisted CCF plans for the North both at the ballot box and through numerous actions, this had little effect on the southern-based party.

Although the area known as "the North" covered about one-half of Saskatchewan, this region lacked power. The northern population formed only one to two percent of the provincial population during the CCF era. Only two elected MLAs represented northerners, while the relatively massive southern population dictated what happened in the North. The physical distance between the North and the centre of power in the provincial capital of Regina also meant that the North became a distant periphery of the southern centre. About three hundred miles separated Regina from the near North, and seven hundred miles or more lay between the seat of power and some remote areas.

Possibly as important as what the CCF set out to do in the North was how it sought to bring about change. It utilized destructive, paternalistic, colonial methods to impose its agenda. Northern Saskatchewan already had a centuries-old history of colonial control by outside forces. First Britain, then Canada, and finally Saskatchewan each exerted control over the area. Under each phase, political and economic control remained largely outside the region. This situation was not unique. Governments had long established colonial control, both economically and politically, over far-flung regions of globe. The post-World War Two years brought a global decolonization movement, which saw colonial masters gradually relinquish control over their former possessions. In contrast, the Saskatchewan CCF imposed an unprecedented level of colonial control over northern Saskatchewan. Although northerners accepted and valued the existing northern system which had evolved over several centuries, the CCF showed no concern about wiping it out. Driven by the dual engines of unquestioning ethnocentrism and socialist fervor, CCF ministers and bureaucrats overpowered the North. The early CCF government brimmed with confidence that it would do things much better than had former governments and institutions. While most CCF officials had virtually no experience in or with the North, they consulted only minimally with northerners, considering them incapable of analyzing their society or participating in designing improvements to it. The CCF did not ask northerners whether they wanted the radically intrusive CCF presence or not. At best, a relatively small number of northerners helped determine some minor details of the CCF interventions. CCF surveys about proposed changes to resource policies excluded most isolated and non-English speaking northerners. Even this minimal consultation process did not extend to the other economic and social engineering policies which quickly and dramatically altered reality for northerners. The early CCF government chose the Department of Natural Resources and Industrial Development (DNR) to serve as its strong, colonial arm, greatly expanding its presence and power in the North.

The first few years after the 1944 election victory brought the most aggressive intervention by Joe Phelps, the powerful Minister of Natural Resources, and a handful of dedicated bureaucrats. Yet the CCF's northern actions did not reflect its much-touted planning ability. Goals remained poorly articulated, chaotic natural resource development projects disrupted northern lives, and no competent agency picked up the pieces. This stage of socialist fervor brought the most dramatic change to the North, as Phelps and other southern socialists fought to excise capitalist abuses and introduce socialism and strict state control. Often flying by the seat of his pants, Phelps energetically made and modified policies until his electoral defeat in 1948 marked the beginning of a long period of less aggressive CCF action.

A second stage in CCF northern policy began in the late 1940s. Politicians' interest in the North waned. They came to realize that diversification of the provincial economy through developing northern resources would not come about easily or cheaply. Financial realities also severely limited the CCF's options. While early optimism and hopes of a quick return on northern investments had helped loosen the purse strings after 1944, a more cautious fiscal approach affected provincial spending in the North by 1948. CCF interest in the welfare of northern people also faded. Erosion of earlier reforms took place, radical staff quit, and CCF attacks on the churches and the HBC eased. Perplexed by failures and resistance, the CCF lost faith in its quick and easy answers to northern problems. Yet, instead of giving up, it adopted subtler methods to impose its agenda on northerners. The new plan combined extensive anthropological study of northern Aboriginals with community development methods to achieve its goals. The modernizing, assimilationist, and socialist agenda remained, with DNR still the primary colonial administrator. This stage continued until the defeat of the CCF in 1964.<sup>3</sup>

The contrast between the CCF self-image as a rational, intelligent government and its failure to apply effective planning in its northern interventions stands out as one of the great contradictions of the CCF northern record. Although the CCF wanted to establish a modern, assimilated, socialist society, confusion reigned. Chaos characterized Phelps' time as Minister of Natural Resources, and his replacement, J. H. Brockelbank, also favored action over contemplation, placing little emphasis on developing goals and plans.<sup>4</sup> The lack of effective planning became apparent in the unexpected consequences of CCF actions: health care improvements led to a population explosion, roads brought social problems, market interventions increased poverty, and social aid undermined self-reliance. The new problems created by the CCF often proved more formidable than the old ones.

This thesis breaks new ground in significant ways. Few historians and others in related disciplines have examined the CCF era in the North. While a vast body of literature touches on the issues in this study, virtually no one has specifically examined the CCF record in the North using the benefit of the distance provided by several decades of time. Some earlier efforts attempted to understand the dynamics of CCF interventions in the North. In the 1950s, V. Valentine wrote analytically about the North under the CCF, but his work demonstrates a strong ideological agreement with the CCF agenda; indeed, he helped form and direct CCF policies there.<sup>5</sup> In the early 1960s, the Center for Community Studies carried out the most comprehensive study of the North under the CCF. The Center, commissioned by the CCF to study the North for the purpose of creating new programs, hired numerous academics to scrutinize the worsening northern



problems. Helen Buckley, J. E. M. Kew, and John B. Hawley produced “The Indians and Metis of Northern Saskatchewan,” which, combined with various other reports produced by the Center, captured much of the northern reality in the declining years of the CCF government.<sup>6</sup> The official report produced by the Center let the CCF off easily when it came to assigning blame for the northern situation. Many of the academics associated with the Center’s study dissented from its official report. They wrote their own descriptions of the state of the North under the CCF. Arthur K. Davis pulled together the dissenting works in *A Northern Dilemma: Reference Papers*.<sup>7</sup> These writings provide valuable descriptions of the North during the late CCF era and reveal the sense of frustration experienced by the CCF when confronted by the failure of its plans. Yet they fail to convey the larger history of CCF involvement in the North and tell little about why the northern society’s dysfunction increased under the CCF.

Numerous reports, books, and articles contain relevant information about the North, the CCF, and Aborigines. Bill Waiser of the University of Saskatchewan (U of S), in “Writing about Northern Saskatchewan,” has recently surveyed much of the relevant literature about the region and notes the absence of any comprehensive studies about the CCF northern interventions.<sup>8</sup> Individually and collectively the existing writings fail to adequately depict what happened under the CCF in the North. Many of the available sources rely on little original research. Some present highly doctrinaire opinions and repeat well-worn clichés, helping raise them to the status of general knowledge. A vague sense of CCF good intentions and memories of Tommy Douglas’ charisma have left an impression of a positive CCF record in the North. Many peripheral sources lack a northern perspective, and truisms about the CCF and Metis and Treaty Indian history generated in the South do not transfer well to northern Saskatchewan.

Some of the sources deserve special mention and serve as examples of the type of literature available about northern Saskatchewan under the CCF. Murray Dobbin, a southern Saskatchewan socialist writer, is among the few who have examined the CCF’s record in the North. In addition to numerous articles which approach northern history from a leftist perspective, he has studied the lives of James Brady and Malcolm Norris, two CCF radicals who left their mark on the North under the CCF.<sup>9</sup> At times Dobbin’s lament for the lack of a more radical CCF socialism takes precedence over depicting the CCF North. Laurie Barron, former head of the Native Studies program at the U of S, also offers recent and original work about the North under the CCF in *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF*. While Barron’s exploration of the relationship between the CCF and Aborigines includes some information about the North, he concentrates more on the record of the CCF in the South. Barron’s

research does not expose the most devastating northern CCF policies and actions. James Waldram, formerly of the U of S Native Studies Department, includes research about northern Saskatchewan in *As Long as the Rivers Run: Hydroelectric Development and Native Communities in Western Canada*. He focuses on the effects of hydro-electric development on the Saskatchewan River which devastated the south-east area of the North. Waldram's work provides a critical evaluation of hydro development, including that carried out by the CCF.<sup>10</sup> Various other persons contribute information about specific aspects of the North under the CCF. Keith Goulet, a Saskatchewan NDP cabinet minister, offers information about Sandy Bay and developments there.<sup>11</sup> William D. Knill and Lionel George Marshall furnish valuable details about the development of education in the North.<sup>12</sup> Dan Beveridge of the University of Regina and Trimension Research have recently carried out separate studies on the northern fishery. Neither deals extensively with the problems of the fishery under the CCF.<sup>13</sup> Yet, in spite of the vast body of information, no one provides a broad and detailed look at northern Saskatchewan under the CCF.

While the secondary sources already mentioned furnish invaluable information, archival sources provide the backbone of this study. Governmental records located at the Saskatchewan Archives Board and the personal papers of James Brady housed at the Glenbow Archives in Calgary, Alberta have proven invaluable to this research. These archives preserve the letters, memoranda, and reports of hundreds of persons who wrote about events as they unfolded. They often provide dates, names, and other details with a high level of accuracy. These sources, however, usually describe the North from the perspective of those outside the Aboriginal community and the North. This apparent weakness also serves as a strength, since the records candidly portray the plans, schemes, and actions of those who reshaped the North and also reveal these interveners' perceptions about the North and northerners. While some undoubtedly censored their writing, many wrote as if they never expected their reflections to undergo scrutiny. The archives also contain the thoughts of numerous northerners, in the form of letters and petitions directed to the CCF.

Oral history also makes an important contribution to this research. Collection of oral history involved interviewing northern residents and persons who worked there for the provincial government. In some cases, the persons interviewed lived both in northern Saskatchewan and worked for the province; most still lived in the North at the time of the interviews. Using oral sources helps overcome some of the shortcomings of the archival documents, which fail to adequately include the viewpoints of Aboriginals and women. The North was a man's world under the CCF, where men made and administered CCF policies. The party also viewed the northern

economy and society as a male-dominated realm. Men wrote nearly all of the relevant archival information, usually writing about and to other men. Interviews conducted with women as part of this study help provide the perspective of women on northern events. Saskatchewan Archives Board audio tapes of interviews with several CCF ministers also add to this study by providing a more intimate understanding of their thoughts and recollections. Oral history provides invaluable insights and checks on the information obtained from other sources. Appendices A to D provide detailed information about the methods used to collect interview data, while Appendix E discusses various issues encountered.

This work presents a fairly comprehensive view of the people of the North and of the CCF governmental presence there from 1944 to 1964. Numerous examples serve to illustrate the major arguments of the study, but do not provide a complete history of any one community or group of people. The dissertation demonstrates that the CCF used a colonial apparatus to govern the North very differently than the South, striving to impose a modern, assimilated, and socialist northern society. The significance of this study also extends beyond providing an analysis of two decades in northern Saskatchewan. It sheds light on the nature of CCF socialism in the larger context of Saskatchewan and Canada. Many Canadians look on the CCF and its successor the NDP as the originators of many of the best aspects of Canadian society. They accept that Tommy Douglas and his party helped save Canadians from the excesses of capitalism by developing and implementing a kinder, more humane society. The CCF record in southern Saskatchewan serves as the primary basis for this belief. Yet little is known about the actions of the CCF in the northern half of the province, where the CCF had much more freedom and power to show its mettle.

This study, initially prompted by my interest in and love of northern Saskatchewan, has unexpectedly led to disturbing conclusions about some underlying reasons for many of the problems which have existed and still exist in northern Saskatchewan. Some of the CCF goals for the North, including socialism and modernization, found and still find many sincere and devoted supporters. Many also would agree with Joe Phelps in his desire to end the reign of parish priests, bootleggers, and fur sharks in the North.<sup>14</sup> Yet, instead of serving as a liberating presence from forces which the CCF viewed as corrupt and capitalistic, the party brought a new destructive oppression to the North. Some of the negative effect of the CCF presence came from its failure to reconcile its actions with its ideology. As a result, the CCF left a legacy riddled with contradictions. Even though it prided itself on being an intelligent, thoughtful government, it often acted on impulse and emotion. While the CCF thought of itself as a kinder, gentler alternative to capitalism, it built and employed an ugly, heavy-handed colonial apparatus. At the same time that

it claimed to care for northern Aboriginals, the CCF judged their culture as worthless and worked to assimilate them. Discord also appears between the CCF attempt to impose economic socialism on the North, while opposing expanded sharing through social programs. Similarly, the CCF viewed northern wealth as belonging to all Saskatchewan residents, while it harshly refused to fairly share the province's wealth with northerners. Another major contradiction exists between the CCF choice of pre-industrial vocations for northern Aboriginals and its stated goal of assimilating Indians and Metis. CCF policies which established isolated Aboriginal ghettos also limited assimilation. Additionally, while the CCF wanted to modernize the North, it failed to devote the needed resources to bring this about, leaving northerners living in semi-modern poverty. This study demonstrates that the CCF imposed its ideology and programs in the North, ignoring and overruling the desires of northerners, while attempting to bring modernization, assimilation, and socialism to the region. It did so in a haphazard and destructive fashion, destroying the old without successfully building a new North.

**Part One**

**AT THE CROSSROADS**

## **Chapter One**

### **ANOTHER COUNTRY ALTOGETHER**

Northern Saskatchewan found itself at a crossroads in 1944. Technological advances in transportation and communications, together with a growing southern hunger for northern resources, meant that the North's former isolation could not continue indefinitely. The informal governance of the Hudson's Bay Company and the churches would have to make way for an expanded governmental presence. Developments in neighbouring provinces and the northern territories demonstrated that change would inevitably come to northern Saskatchewan, no matter who governed the province. Yet, the nature of the impending transformation remained undetermined in 1944. The landslide election victory of T. C. Douglas and the CCF granted this party the authority to choose the direction to follow at the crossroads. The new CCF government held great power over and responsibility for the future of northerners.

On June 15, 1944, the CCF defeated W. Patterson's Liberals, winning 53.1% of the popular vote and forty-seven of fifty-two seats. Various southern issues contributed to the CCF election victory. The Liberals had alienated supporters by their ineffective handling of the Great Depression of the 1930s and subsequent economic and social problems. In 1944, southern Saskatchewan appeared as a beaten-down and obscure area which had not yet fully recovered from the devastation wrought by the Depression. Poverty there had reached legendary proportions, dashing the hopes of the immigrants who had come to this place once thought to be a Garden of Eden. By provincial election day, although rains again fell and the war economy created a demand for prairie wheat, poverty still dominated. Patterson and his party lost further support by extending their term past the customary four years; voters simply tired of the long-serving Liberals. For its part, the CCF and its energetic leader, T. C. Douglas, attracted voters by offering benevolent government planning to prevent a recurrence of economic catastrophe. The party held out hope that its skilled planning would solve existing problems and prevent new ones from developing. The new government also promised changes in education, health, and labour legislation.

The CCF also owed much of its election victory to a moderation of its more radical earlier socialist policies. The party once had called for nothing short of a complete elimination of

capitalism. Even though it did not denounce socialism, the CCF convinced most voters that they need not fear its new mild socialism. Voters became familiar with the CCF while it served as the Opposition in the Legislature, where its moderate stance and advocacy for farmers assuaged fears somewhat. CCF roots in the Christian Social Gospel movement and Douglas' position as a Baptist minister also helped appease fears of dreaded communism. Consequently, the Liberals' characterization of the CCF as radical socialists or communists had little effect, and voters ignored some of the more radical roots of the CCF. Many who feared Soviet-style socialism accepted the democratic Christian socialism advocated by the CCF, and some former opponents supported the party.<sup>1</sup>

The CCF northerners would come to know began in the early 1930s, springing from various socialist and non-socialist roots. Some of its strongest roots came from the western Social Gospel movement of the early twentieth century. J. S. Woodsworth, the first leader of the national CCF organization, and others had long applied Christian principles to solving society's problems. Social Gospel influenced the Progressive Party in the 1920s, and when the Progressives faded, many idealists looked for a new political party which would apply Christian principles to everyday life. Yet, while the CCF did not turn against Christianity and continued to advocate some Christian ideals, its socialism incorporated various secular influences. It became the political party for many radicalized workers who experienced defeat at the hands of big business after World War I and who again suffered economic hardship during the Great Depression. These workers introduced views which came from a variety of European socialist movements. The CCF also accepted ideas from the League for Social Reconstruction and its eastern Canadian intellectuals who drew up the Regina Manifesto for the new party in 1933. As a result, the CCF moved far beyond advocating the limited social reforms of its predecessors in the Social Gospel and Progressive movements. The Regina Manifesto, which for a time formed the official ideological basis for the CCF, said "No C.C.F. Government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism and put into operation the full programme of socialized planning which will lead to the establishment in Canada of the Co-operative Commonwealth." Although such statements made the new party an easy target for critics, it believed in the perfectibility of mankind and that it had the right answers to society's problems.<sup>2</sup>

Many observers accurately see only a mild and very limited socialism in the twenty-year record of CCF government in southern Saskatchewan. The CCF, following unsuccessful elections in the 1930s, backed away from its more radical pronouncements and policies to attract a broader base of support. By 1944 it appeared as a social reform party. While the CCF originally wanted

to nationalize farmland, it abandoned this policy in the 1930s. It then restricted its plans for social ownership to taking over financial institutions, public utilities, and some natural resources. Farmers who did not support the earlier, more radical CCF policies, which threatened their survival as independent farmers, liked and came to trust the new CCF platform which offered to protect them and give them higher wheat prices. By voting for the CCF, Saskatchewan electors did not necessarily vote for socialism. Yet the CCF did not abandon all of its socialist inclinations even in the South and adopted a cautious evolutionary approach, which, by 1964, moved Saskatchewan towards becoming a “welfare state.”<sup>3</sup>

The CCF did try a limited socialization of the southern economy after their election victory. It acted quickly, passing the Crown Corporations Act of 1945 which authorized industrial and commercial enterprises. The new initiatives fell under Joe Phelps and his department, the renamed Department of Natural Resources and Industrial Development, a name which reflected its new mandate. Phelps, the dreamer, likely had the biggest job in the government, with responsibility for industry, natural resources, and for remaking the electrical supply system.<sup>4</sup> While Douglas wanted to limit public ownership to monopolistic industries, Phelps went much further, taking ownership of many non-monopolistic industries.<sup>5</sup> Wanting to diversify the economy and produce a broader range of products locally, the CCF tried Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI). Douglas hoped to build a non-agricultural economy and use the profits to pay for social programs.<sup>6</sup> By 1948, the CCF set up more than twelve crown corporations. They operated buses, made bricks, tanned hides, cobbled shoes, processed wool, built boxes, refined salt, and slaughtered horses.

Since the CCF lacked business competence, all of the state ISI efforts folded, resulting in a loss of face and money. The plan for economic diversification also failed with the CCF retreat from extensive state ownership and private enterprise’s hesitancy to invest in a “socialist” province.<sup>7</sup> Douglas later acknowledged that government expansion into artificially created secondary industry did not work, blaming failure on the small market. He regretted some of the early experiments with crown corporations. “We did too much in the first four years,” he said, “and we unsettled a lot of people by trying to bring about a social revolution in almost every aspect of human life, instead of tackling two or three fields, and bringing people to this gradually.”<sup>8</sup> The CCF moved even farther from radical socialism in southern Saskatchewan. Phelps’ failure to win reelection in 1948, resistance from ordinary people and capital to socialism, and the Cold War all added to the “siege mentality” which developed in the CCF.<sup>9</sup> In 1948, Douglas and others “pledged fair play, assistance, and the assurance of no expropriation to private enterprise.”<sup>10</sup> The



CCF did implement many relatively non-controversial aspects of its platform in the South. Largely thanks to the Canadian economic upturn of the 1950s, it initiated medicare, new labour legislation, rural electrification, telephone expansion, highway construction, and educational improvements.<sup>11</sup> Crown corporations, meanwhile, continued in safer enterprises, including in the monopolies of power, gas, and telephone. Provincially as well as nationally, the CCF continued to move away from a hard socialist line, without completely relinquishing its image as a socialist party.

A very different situation existed in the North than in the South. The charm of Douglas and the CCF failed to sweep the North in 1944. Had the rest of the province voted as did the North, the CCF would not have won their landslide victory. Additionally, northern voters did not give the CCF a mandate to impose its programs on the North. The CCF garnered only 7.4% of the vote in Athabasca constituency, compared to 80.7% for the Liberals, while Cumberland constituency voted 58.7% for the CCF, compared to 39.7% for the Liberals.<sup>12</sup> CCF support in the North came disproportionately from white residents since Treaty Indians could not vote. Had Indians voted, quite likely the Liberals would also have won in Cumberland. Many Indians followed the Roman Catholic church, which supported the Liberal party. Throughout the CCF era, northern voters demonstrated their resistance to key CCF policies for the North through opposition on election day.<sup>13</sup> Appendix F contains details of the northern electoral record.

The North also had a distinct earlier history from that of the South. When the CCF turned its attention to the North in 1944, in a sense white residents of southern Saskatchewan revisited some largely-forgotten roots. The Euro-Canadian presence in Saskatchewan and western Canada had northern beginnings. Hardy white traders and explorers used natural water routes to visit the area which now forms northern Saskatchewan long before interest grew in settling the southern prairie. Aboriginal people had lived in the hospitable bush for millennia, and the furs they trapped became the first major northern attraction for white people. The fur trade founded Cumberland House as the first permanent trading post in the area in 1774. By 1800, fur trading companies strategically placed numerous trading posts on the maze of northern inland waterways. The Saskatchewan River provided access to the south-eastern area of the North and to the Sturgeon Weir River, which led to the Churchill River. It spanned the province from east to west. From near the western end of the Churchill system, Aboriginals and traders crossed the Methye Portage into the Clearwater River and the Mackenzie River watershed which flowed to the Arctic Ocean. Aboriginals provided much of the labour for the trade, trapping furs and supplying traders with food from the land. Many white men took Aboriginal wives, which led to a substantial mixed-blood population in the area. Adding to the white presence, the Roman Catholic and Anglican

churches established missions in the North by the 1840s.

Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's vision for Canada led to the building of a transcontinental railroad in the 1880s and the influx of tens of thousands of white settlers who ploughed the southern prairie and parkland area. The growth of agriculture in the South took attention away from the North, and the fur trade declined in relative importance to the economy of western Canada. After Confederation, the North comprised part of the North-West Territories until it became part of Saskatchewan with the creation of the province in 1905. Government placed the northern boundary of Saskatchewan at the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel, optimistically and unrealistically believing this to be the northern limit of agriculture. Partnering the North with the southern farming area appeared illogical from the northern point of view, since in reality the two areas held little in common. Yet creation of the province had little immediate effect on northerners, particularly because the federal government maintained control over crown land and resources until 1930, when it transferred these to the province. Although most southerners seemed oblivious to the existence of the North, some exceptions developed. Large lumber companies cut accessible trees and some mining companies developed ore bodies. Wanting to confirm the agricultural potential of the North, government sponsored expeditions, including that of Frank Crean in 1908 and 1909, to explore the region. The city of Prince Albert, while outside the North, viewed its proximity to the North as a key to prosperity. It led various futile efforts for northern development. Prince Albert National Park, established in 1927, became one of a few successful major developments, creating a substantial tourism presence in the near North.<sup>14</sup> Many young, white males also ventured north in the years before 1940 seeking the riches of fish and fur while escaping the ravages of the southern drought.

Prior to 1944, the Hudson's Bay Company and other traders exerted benevolent control in the North. The Roman Catholic and Anglican churches also played major roles in caring for northerners. Over many decades, these outside forces helped shape a workable economic and social system. The traders used a credit system to carry northerners through hard times, and the churches established hospitals and schools. Sometimes government reimbursed the traders and churches for their efforts. Neither the federal nor provincial government offered extensive welfare, health care, or education services in the North. Few bureaucrats ventured north, leaving the area unregulated and northerners doing much as they pleased. Even after Saskatchewan gained control over northern crown lands in 1930, southern politicians, distracted by the Depression and World War II, largely ignored the North. It was not until the election of the CCF that government turned its attention northwards. The CCF found an undeveloped, isolated North, with no roads or railways

entering it.

Since 1905, northern Saskatchewan had formed a distinct geographic region of the province. Travellers immediately knew when they reached the North--the prairie grain fields disappeared and trees and lakes dominated the landscape. Yet farther north, rock outcrops became common. As Joe Phelps once said, it was "another country altogether."<sup>15</sup> Northern Saskatchewan includes about one-half of the province. Its definition has varied over time and for various purposes, although all definitions use the sixtieth parallel, the line which divides Saskatchewan from the Northwest Territories, as the northern boundary, and the Manitoba and Alberta borders as the eastern and western boundaries. The southern boundary is less certain, since governments have drawn and redrawn this line for various purposes. Different lines delineate the southern edge of Census Division 18 and federal constituency boundaries for Ottawa. The provincial definition of the North has a more complicated history. During most of the CCF era, a Northern Administration District (NAD) defined the North for natural resources administration. The NAD extended farther south in the east than in the west. On the east side it included Cumberland House, while on the west side it stopped north of Meadow Lake. The line of agricultural settlement in the province followed a similar pattern, although in a line somewhat south of the NAD boundary. The CCF also defined the North differently for education, health, and electoral purposes. For most purposes, this study follows the NAD definition of the North.

The drawing of lines on the map divided northern Saskatchewan from Manitoba, Alberta, and the NWT, breaking a natural region into a number of powerless pieces. These areas shared a geographic, cultural, economic, and historic unity which political division disrupted. Splitting the North into many pieces helped create northern colonies of the South, colonies which lacked power and control.<sup>16</sup> The location of the provincial boundaries lacked rationality from the point of view of the interests of northern Saskatchewan. Yet these borders helped define reality for northerners.

Various areas of northern Saskatchewan also had little contact with each other during the CCF era. The west side area, extending from Beauval to La Loche, remained distinct. On the opposite side of the province, Cumberland House and the Saskatchewan River delta formed a separate area. La Ronge, located midway between Alberta and Manitoba, served as the CCF governmental centre within the North. In the far North, near the north shore of Lake Athabasca, Uranium City grew as a white mining community. The North also contained the mainly white communities of Island Falls and Creighton. Aborigines greatly outnumbered whites in nearly all other settlements.

Although the existing northern economic and social system seemed to work for northerners, the election of the CCF speeded change and brought largely unexpected consequences to the North. The CCF turned northern development in directions it would not otherwise have taken, using ideologically-based planning and highly controlled programs. To bring rational planning to government, Douglas and the CCF relied on various sources for advice. Early advisors included the Economic Advisory Committee comprised of “three ideologically sympathetic” University of Saskatchewan (U of S) faculty members, a Legislative Advisory Committee, and Carlyle King, the provincial CCF president and a U of S professor of English. It established the Economic Advisory and Planning Board (EAPB) on January 1, 1946 as its main economic planning mechanism. The EAPB also co-ordinated most government enterprises. In addition to its chairman George Cadbury, the EAPB included the maverick Minister of DNR Joe Phelps, other members, and nine professional staff. The EAPB proved more conservative than Phelps, moving away from instituting socialism in the South, although it supported Phelps’ aggressive plans and actions in the North. In 1947, one section of the EAPB became a crown corporation, the Government Finance Office (GFO), a holding company for crown corporations. Chairman Cadbury held a lot of power as he also managed the GFO and acted as the Chief Industrial Officer. The CCF established Budget Bureau in 1946. It examined spending proposals before they reached Treasury Board and had the task of connecting budget making and program evaluation with a view to the longer term.<sup>17</sup> Budget Bureau had a profound effect on northern developments, often controlling the purse strings. The CCF continued to value rational planning throughout its time in office, although it made some changes to how it did this. It decentralized research and planning by the early 1950s, delegating some research and planning to individual departments. In theory, this made the entire system of government a planning instrument.<sup>18</sup> The CCF passed much of northern planning to DNR, and by 1951 DNR had a Planning Division, staffed largely by geographers.<sup>19</sup>

The CCF confidently relied on its own planning expertise, proceeding without much public consultation. Yet the highly-touted group of planners included few with successful business experience and some lacked the credentials to plan and run crown corporations and the economy. While crown corporations played a large role in carrying out CCF plans for the North, the CCF did not hold public inquiries into most of its new enterprises. Not even the Legislature debated the corporations before their creation. The CCF deflected criticisms by having a Crown Corporations Committee deal with questions about the corporations after 1949.<sup>20</sup>

While southern voters and failed experiments limited the radicalism of the CCF in the South, CCF planners operated with many fewer restraints in the North. Although lacking northern

support, the CCF had a number of reasons for including the North in its energetic and optimistic efforts to remake Saskatchewan. The dust storms and collapsed world wheat market which characterized the agricultural disaster of the 1930s had shown the folly of nearly complete dependence on agriculture. Along with a new southern program of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI), which aimed to have locally manufactured products replace imports, the North offered hope for provincial economic diversification. The CCF only had to tap the North's mineral, timber, and other resource riches. The CCF confidently expected northern riches would help lift the province to a life of prosperity and justice for all within a new prairie utopia.

In contrast to the previous Liberal administration, which had lacked a strong vision for the North and seemed content to allow the status quo to continue there, the CCF wanted to bring change to the region. The new government sought to modernize and socialize the North, believing that modernization and socialism would liberate northerners. To have an un-modern society dominated by fur traders and churches continue under its jurisdiction seemed intolerable to the party. Even though the traders and priests provided stable leadership, Douglas and Joe Phelps condemned this antiquated system. The CCF viewed the HBC as the worst villain, thinking it controlled Aboriginals through a Canadian version of the third world's debt peonage system. The new government did not oppose personal religion, but wanted to separate the functions of church and state, secularize northern systems, and remove the Anglican and Roman Catholic presence in education, health care, and community leadership. Phelps saw a "pretty grim" situation and described most parish priests as fighting the government.<sup>21</sup> The CCF judged northern society as problematic, with little worth salvaging. It simultaneously wanted to wipe out the old and build a new socialist society there, in which content Aboriginal inhabitants would follow a perceived natural proclivity to share and work co-operatively, once free from the depredations of capitalists. Demonstrating great confidence in its plans for the North, the CCF sought to apply its wisdom to all nooks and crannies of the northern area. The party refused to tolerate the continuance of unregulated industries and areas and used its rapidly expanded bureaucracy to impose regulation and control.

The CCF set out to bring the North into the twentieth century and build there a socialist society and economy to replace what it saw as a problematic capitalist system. The party believed that intelligent and rational planning could solve northern problems. It thought that socialism and social engineering offered solutions to society's problems and that it could rationally design a new and better northern society to replace the haphazard one which had grown up over the centuries. Government would take Aboriginals from the land and move them to settlements; schools would

educate them; hospitals, nurses, and air ambulances would lower child mortality and lengthen lives; and roads, regular airline flights, and radio communications would bring the North into the provincial system. CCF plans for trapping, commercial fishing, and forestry included creating crown corporations and marketing boards and ejecting entrepreneurs whom it thought made huge profits from the resources. Mineral riches, buried in the rocky Precambrian Shield, would help free the provincial economy from its dependence on farming. The CCF would return profits to the people and the province.

While the socialism applied by the CCF in the North had ideological impurities, it had many socialist characteristics. The CCF primarily imposed an economic socialism which increased government ownership and control over northern land and resources. The CCF did not need to nationalize northern land to control it, since the province received nearly all of it as crown land from Ottawa in 1930. The CCF added strict control over the use of various resources, imposing a level of state control much greater than in the South. Prior to 1944, the Liberal government allowed some transfer of resources, including land, trees, minerals, furs, and fish, to private hands. The CCF withdrew the rights of private parties to extract, own, and sell most resources, reclaiming them for the "people of Saskatchewan" in a heavy-handed, authoritarian manner. CCF socialist economic policies had a powerful effect and transformed reality for most northerners. Joe Phelps wrote about a coming gradual transition "to social ownership in the industrial development of our Natural Resources." He hoped for eventual "complete social ownership and management of key industries in the development of our resources."<sup>22</sup> Although he served in government for only four years, Phelps introduced the most aggressive CCF socialist policies and set long-lasting directions in the North.

The CCF took steps to see that the entire province would share northern resource revenue, yet, contradictorily, it refused to equally share provincial wealth with northerners. This occurred for several reasons. The CCF strongly feared that northern Aboriginals would take advantage of generous social programs and become lazy; in a sense then, the CCF limited benefits to northerners for their own good. Secondly, the CCF simply ignored northern needs, knowingly permitting the continuance of third world-like conditions in the northern half of the province. The CCF consequently applied a weaker non-economic socialism in the North than in the South, which received many more benefits from social and health programs.

Crown corporations and co-operatives played instrumental roles in implementing the CCF northern socialist projects. The party believed that northern resources, unlike many southern resources, belonged to everyone and that private trappers, fishers, loggers, and miners had, as Joe

Phelps said, “taken millions of dollars out of our province as a result of planless ravaging.” The CCF created crown corporations and marketing boards to handle fish and fur and took full ownership of crown land forest products. It thought that revenues from government enterprises would improve the lives of northerners and that taking economic opportunities from outsiders and giving them to local groups would improve the lives of fishers, trappers, and loggers. The CCF blamed private capital for underdevelopment and expected its actions to increase development.<sup>23</sup>

While it continued northern crown corporations, the CCF shifted its emphasis to creating co-operatives during the 1950s. These met CCF goals since they excluded private capital and encouraged community ownership of assets. The CCF also saw co-operatives as a way of reducing costs and increasing incomes for northerners. In a move which helped advance northern co-operative development, the CCF removed co-operative affairs from the Department of Agriculture and created the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development with Lauchlin McIntosh as Minister. In 1949, Douglas gave up his cabinet post in Public Health and took responsibility for Co-operation, which involved him more in northern matters. He strongly favored co-operatives, viewing them as “the most important form of social ownership.”<sup>24</sup> Faced with weak northern interest, both DNR and the Department of Co-operation found it a difficult challenge to establish northern co-ops.

Under the CCF, and much more so than before, northern Saskatchewan was very much a colony of the South. A southern planning apparatus and a substantially expanded administrative system designed and carried out CCF plans for the North. The Department of Natural Resources became the key agency to apply programs there. Other departments also helped, and bureaucrats from many departments visited the North. The CCF’s top-down system in many respects resembled colonial rule in various third world countries. This far-reaching northern colonial system continued until the end of the CCF time in office, even though CCF policies evolved to later include an emphasis on community development and co-operative programs. Colonial methods served to apply the CCF program of directed change to northerners and extract wealth from the North for the benefit of the South. While the primary CCF goals for northern Aboriginals were modernization, assimilation, and socialization, colonialism served as the method to reach these goals.

The CCF was not alone in Canada in creating a colonial system, although no other jurisdiction sought to impose socialism as did the CCF in Saskatchewan. In some respects a colonial or neo-colonial situation existed throughout other provincial norths and in the NWT. Colonialism grew at various rates, increasing greatly in some areas during and after World War

II when capital and workers moved north to extract resources. A dual economy and society resulted, with the original inhabitants subordinate to the newcomers and with the older economy and society hurt by the new. The fragmenting of the Canadian North by provincial and territorial borders added to the colonial status in northern Saskatchewan and elsewhere, since it broke a natural region into pieces and tied northern provincial areas to more populous and powerful southern areas. Various efforts made over the years to unify the different jurisdictions included those by Lew Parres, a Flin Flon mining engineer, and Richard Rohmer, who developed the idea of a Mid-Canada Corridor. These attempts failed and the colonial situation continued.<sup>25</sup>

For the CCF era, the term “colonialism” fits northern Saskatchewan better than does “neo-colonialism” because of the low level of private capital investment. The lack of class stratification among the Aboriginal population, the dearth of development, and the CCF opposition to monopoly capitalism also confirm the existence of colonialism rather than neo-colonialism.<sup>26</sup> Developments in the Creighton area and at Uranium City appear more neo-colonial, since outside capital dominated there. For most areas though, “colonial” describes the situation more accurately than does “neo-colonial.” The colonial situation existed at several levels in the North. Both whites and Aboriginals suffered under the structure which gave the North little power and placed it under southern control. Another level saw non-Aboriginals colonize the Aboriginal population.<sup>27</sup>

Contradictorily, while the CCF wanted to assimilate Aboriginals, it designed and perpetuated a colonial system of two economies and societies. This included a newly-created, separate Aboriginal economy and society. Phelps and others in the CCF visualized happy, sober, educated, healthy, hard-working, and co-operatively minded Aboriginals living in orderly settlements, while participating in what the CCF viewed as “traditional” economic pursuits. The CCF accepted the myth that Aboriginals had a natural aptitude for trapping and fishing, while thinking they lacked the aptitude to participate in non-traditional industrial activities such as mining and forestry.<sup>28</sup>

Typical of a colonial situation, the CCF did not want or rely on local input. J. H. Brockelbank, Phelps’ successor as DNR Minister, said “how would you get a change in the North except suggestions coming from the top?” He viewed natives as quite undemanding and as making only simple requests.<sup>29</sup> DNR’s Deputy Minister J. W. Churchman admitted that in the early CCF era “in many instances things were done in a dictatorial manner.”<sup>30</sup> Morris Shumiatcher, Douglas’ assistant, depicted the northern Indians’ “way of life” as “unacceptable” to CCF doctrines. “The lack of organization and the dearth of planning ran counter to the socialist ideal of what was best for the native,” he said. “The C.C.F. assembled a vast clutch of administrators who undertook to



change the habits of the native in the North to accord more perfectly with their own theories of social justice.”<sup>31</sup>

Some see the CCF’s increasing promotion of community development in its later years as a move away from colonialism. P. M. Worsley described the CCF as “a government which is favourable disposed to assisting the process of decolonization.”<sup>32</sup> In 1964 he claimed that the provincial government “with a markedly co-operative ethos, and a strong belief in popular participation in ‘devolved’ government, is engaged in decolonizing the province’s undeveloped north.”<sup>33</sup> Worsley and the Center for Community Studies failed to identify the role played by the CCF in perpetuating the northern colonial system. They also did not recognize the colonial nature of the so-called tools of decolonization, including the forced promotion of co-operatives and community development used by the CCF.

During its twenty years in office, the CCF implemented various aggressive projects to achieve its goals for the North. In 1944, the North stood at a crossroads, faced with inevitable modernization and change. The CCF held the authority and power to decide the nature of much of this change and did not hesitate to quickly establish a firm direction for the North. In a multi-faceted initiative, it set out to build a northern socialist society and economy to replace the long-standing capitalist system. In doing so, the CCF showed its true face much more than in the South. The new North visualized by the dreamers in Regina would also provide a modern environment for an assimilated, prosperous, healthy, and educated Aboriginal population. In addition, the North would play a major role in bringing prosperity to the entire province. The CCF confidently thought it could achieve these goals. While northerners did not share the vision, the CCF believed that it knew best.

In order to successfully introduce its plans to the North, the CCF needed to create an administrative structure and hire devoted people who agreed with its goals and methods. Failure to skilfully do so would jeopardize CCF plans for the North and the economic future of the province. Was Douglas and his colleagues’ faith in their ability to rationally plan a new administrative system justified?

**Part Two**

**BUILDING THE OUTDOOR CUSTODIAL INSTITUTION**

## **Chapter Two**

### **FROM THE TOP**

In order to introduce its ambitious plans to the North, the CCF created a colonial administrative structure. While its primary northern agency, the Department of Natural Resources, also operated in the southern part of the province, the CCF gave DNR numerous special and greater powers to carry out its northern work. The CCF created a Northern Administration District which covered the northern half of the province. There, DNR and other government departments applied various programs, many of which the CCF designed especially for the North. The geographical isolation of the North and the application of special CCF programs there made CCF efforts resemble a large laboratory experiment. This analogy applies in so far as the CCF efforts broke new ground, since no government in Canada had ever tried to simultaneously introduce modernization, assimilation, and socialism to a large Aboriginal population. The CCF also invented and designed many of the methods it used in the North. Yet, unlike some who exercise great caution and skepticism when exploring uncharted ground, the CCF approached this project with immense confidence and did not admit the possibility of failure.

The CCF had no northerners in its caucus in 1944 from whom to obtain advice about northern matters. J. L. Phelps, a Wilkie area farmer who represented the Saltcoats constituency in east-central Saskatchewan, became the key person to bring change to the North during the early CCF era. The mark of his efforts remained long after he left government, even after CCF fervour for northern reform faded. Phelps, an ardent socialist, aggressively introduced socialism to the North, while continuing his own entrepreneurial farming enterprise. Phelps was not a Marxist, differentiating him from some who came to work for him. Yet he described the result of the CCF coming to power as a "real revolution." Phelps' brand of socialism came from the southern Saskatchewan farm tradition which viewed large private monopolies, including the CPR and elevator companies, as the worst of capitalist villains. In the North, the HBC became Phelps' primary capitalist target, although he extended his attack on northern capitalism to even some very small enterprises. Phelps' socialism justified his northern actions, actions which spoke of an immense self-assurance even in things he knew little about.

Phelps only reluctantly took the job of Minister of Natural Resources and Industrial Development, the CCF's most powerful northern position. He preferred the other job he received, that of overseeing the Power Commission and the electrification of southern Saskatchewan. Phelps had never visited northern Saskatchewan until after the 1944 election. He and his wife then flew to various parts of the North in DNR's only plane, piloted by Floyd Glass. Phelps saw the North as a vast new frontier, similar to space. His visit to the North seemed to kindle a passion in Phelps to bring change to the North. With his characteristic vigour, he created a northern colonial system to introduce the CCF agenda there. Phelps did not waste time studying the North. Instead, he rapidly decided that unregulated white fish and fur dealers, bootleggers, and the church had caused many northern problems. Phelps quickly made three trips north by September 1944 to meet with people about fur, fishing, and forestry. He often took the midnight train from Regina to Prince Albert, which the CCF made its centre for much of the northern work.<sup>1</sup>

Phelps and his cohorts hastily developed new policies and a structure largely separate from that in the South to introduce the CCF's plans for northerners. Douglas and cabinet generally supported Phelps' fur, fish, timber, and other northern initiatives. They also gave him a lot of free rein. Several reasons explain Phelps' unusual freedom to act in the North. Possibly most importantly, the CCF accepted the view that the northern society was not worth preserving. Wiping it out would leave a clean slate on which to build a better society.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, many southern politicians knew or cared little about the North and let Phelps do as he pleased there as long as his actions did not create problems for them. Phelps also liked to act independently, without bothering with prior approval from cabinet. This left the CCF with little choice but to support his actions.

Motivation for Phelps' aggressive actions in the North had several sources. He easily substituted the HBC and other northern villains for the CPR and other traditional enemies of prairie farmers whom he fought in the South. This gave his northern campaign a mission-like zeal. Additionally, Phelps typically tackled any project he deemed worthwhile with an all-out effort, trampling all opposition. Phelps disliked even the loose controls imposed by cabinet, bureaucrats, and budgets and often would not accept "no" as an answer. Phelps said cabinet thought "I did too many damn things," and did not see the same urgency that he did. His energetic, unconventional style caused problems. His successor, J. H. Brockelbank, claimed that Phelps made people mad, even when he did good things. In 1946 the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* possibly expressed the concerns of many when it said "the blithe way in which the minister (Phelps) stacks one good intention on top of another to build his pretty dream castles would be amusing if it were not for the

fact that he is a responsible minister and not merely an idle dreamer.” The article described Phelps as having “undisputed nuisance value” while in the opposition, but thought he lacked “hard, shrewd common sense” once in power. Phelps became so animated at times, with his arms flying, that one reporter expected him to “take off like a whip-lashed aeroplane.” Tommy Douglas had his own analogy for Phelps, describing him as a “steam engine in pants.” Phelps’ style alienated political colleagues including T. C. Davis, the former Liberal attorney general, who suggested that Phelps’ head should be put over the speaker’s chair once he died. Davis also suggested slitting Phelps’ throat. Many within the CCF may have wished they had taken Davis’ advice, particularly when Phelps’ actions dragged the CCF into controversies.<sup>3</sup> This fiercely determined man set out to remake the North and the lives of its residents. He practically dismantled the existing economy and society over four years.

Phelps’ decisiveness extended to selecting staff to implement his ideas. He refused to tolerate those who did not agree with him or work as he wanted, and he disposed of many staff. His concern about the quality of the civil service extended beyond DNR. While he identified and tended to dismiss “loafers,” others in the CCF safeguarded most jobs. Phelps did manage to fire fifteen workers, including some senior employees.<sup>4</sup> He had trouble filling the critical position of deputy minister of DNR. After several quick changes, Vern Hogg, who agreed with Phelps’ socialist ideas and in whom Phelps showed vast confidence, took over as deputy minister in 1946.<sup>5</sup>

Consistent with the establishment of a separate administration for the North, DNR took over the hiring of northern staff from the public service. Phelps hired CCF supporters to fill both high and low northern positions since only by having ideologically sympathetic persons administer policies could the CCF hope to successfully introduce its plans to northerners. The CCF also expected some whom it hired to work for the party when elections came along. Some CCF supporters, including at La Ronge and Cumberland House, asked for employment, expecting special consideration because of their political affiliation.<sup>6</sup>

Phelps apparently considered known Marxists as ideologically suited to apply his plans to the North. He hired the Metis Albertans Jim Brady and Malcolm Norris who openly espoused their more radical beliefs. Norris, one of the most influential Aboriginals to work for the CCF, came to Saskatchewan in 1946 from Alberta, where he and Brady had worked to organize fish co-operatives and the Metis Association of Alberta. Norris also held the position of president of the Metis Association and helped organize the Indian Association of Alberta. Norris held various jobs with the CCF, including DNR officer, researcher, advisor, promoter of mineral prospecting, and liaison between government and Aboriginals. Norris supported Phelps’ interventions in the fur,

fish, and timber industries and in developing marketing boards. Yet Norris also showed a loyalty to and understanding of Aborigines. When people spoke of the "Indian problem," Norris told them that the white man, who did not understand, had the problem. He also worked as an organizer for the Saskatchewan Metis Society and the Union of Saskatchewan Indians. Although a CCF member, Norris took a position to the left of the CCF, joining the communist Labor Progressive Party (LPP) in 1957. He remained with the civil service until the end of the CCF time in office in 1964.<sup>7</sup>

Jim Brady, likely more radical than Norris, also had helped organize the Alberta Metis. While he was a member of the CCF, Brady joined the LPP in 1947. He did not participate greatly in the LPP after 1953, possibly because of the party's lack of interest in helping with his northern activism. Brady also moved away from the CCF, not renewing his membership. This possibly occurred because the CCF overruled the nomination of A. Quandt, a friend of Brady's, as the CCF candidate in La Ronge in 1952. Brady held several positions under the CCF. He managed the Saskatchewan Government Trading post at Deschambault Lake and worked as a DNR officer at Cumberland House. His work went far beyond that of most DNR officers, since he helped establish a fishermen's co-operative, the first northern wood producers' co-operative, and a credit union. He also held classes for adults, began a village council, and put out a community newsletter.<sup>8</sup> Murray Dobbin, Brady and Norris' biographer, claims the CCF forced Brady to resign after Phelps' defeat, as part of the CCF move away from radicalism. This explanation does not make sense, since DNR thought highly of Brady, even after Phelps left. In 1949 it rated him as "clearly superior in his position, very dependable," and the Public Service Commission approved his permanent appointment. It seems that Brady quit rather than accept a transfer to the remote far northern Goldfields District. DNR wanted to transfer him because of rumours that Brady had fathered children by two women at Cumberland House. Brady moved to La Ronge, although his ties with Cumberland House continued. Further difficulties resulted in 1952 when a Cumberland House woman pursued him for child support for another recently-born child.<sup>9</sup> Brady spent most of his remaining years in the La Ronge area, where his reputation as a womanizer grew. He also organized area Metis, gained local renown for his large library, did some writing, and had people turn to him for loans of money. He briefly returned to work for the CCF, joining his friend Malcolm at Mineral Resources. His travels in 1960 to promote Aboriginal prospecting met with little success. By 1963, Brady drank too much and appeared defeated.<sup>10</sup> While working on mineral exploration in the Foster Lakes area in 1967, he and another man disappeared. Local people speculate that they met with foul play. While the police laid no charges, rumour blames his death

on the son of a woman Brady allegedly had an affair with.<sup>11</sup>

A. K. Quandt, another idealist, also went to work in the North for Phelps. By 1947 Quandt became the field supervisor and assistant superintendent for DNR's Northern District. A strong believer in socialism, Quandt approved of CCF plans and expected to see a "a really progressive programme" which would help humanity and produce great wealth. Quandt did not remain long with DNR, leaving soon after Phelps left. He took up permanent residence in La Ronge, from where he and others in the local CCF Club acted as a perennial radical thorn in the CCF body.<sup>12</sup>

Other CCF adherents and sympathizers held high offices within DNR and other departments. These included F. Glass, Northern District Superintendent and head of Saskatchewan Government Airways, and J. J. Wheaton and C. L. MacLean, Northern Administrators. Still late in its mandate, the CCF hired ideologically sympathetic persons for top jobs. A. H. MacDonald, a man with a strong commitment to socialism, became Director of Northern Affairs. Some employees proved only luke-warm supporters of the CCF. Glass, for example, left and went into direct competition with the CCF airline. Employees who filled the lower ranks showed varying degrees of socialist fervour.

While Phelps wanted staff who agreed with his plans for the North, he interfered in petty matters and lacked confidence in his staff's judgement. This undermined morale and at times created defiance. He required district superintendents to submit monthly reports including details of daily activities. If reports did not arrive on time, Phelps chastised the superintendents. He expected Adam Cook, head of the Fur Marketing Branch, to submit reports of the past week's activities and his plans for the coming week. Phelps told Northern Administrator J. J. Wheaton to watch travel expenses, and questioned whether another employee needed to accompany Wheaton on a northern flight. Phelps once criticized a DNR officer for charging fifty cents for lodging and thirty-five cents for meals when away on government business. He also refused to give female office employees, whom he referred to as "the girls," much responsibility.<sup>13</sup> Working for Phelps was likely not easy.

The Saltcoats voters rejected Phelps in 1948. It seems they felt neglected, since he spent little time in the constituency. His northern policies had also created controversy. Phelps said that the Liberals hired a northern fisherman to spread exaggerated stories about how Phelps ruined the North, although the man later felt remorse and admitted his actions. Patronage and suspected corruption also likely added to Phelps' defeat. He hired acquaintances, including his brother Don, A. Quandt, and K. E. Dickson, the manager of the Beaver Lake Fish Plant. The opposition discovered that Dickson came from Phelps' home area. The legislature also heard that Phelps

“stored” two nearly-new 1½ ton trucks at his farm, letting his neighbours rent them from the CCF. While he claimed the government planned to dispose of the trucks anyway, the scandal hurt his reputation.<sup>14</sup> The CCF could have given Phelps another seat to run in but did not do so. And, when seven DNR bureaucrats asked Douglas to give Phelps a position in DNR, Douglas did not reply.<sup>15</sup>

With Phelps’ defeat, much of the energy went out of the northern program. His successors showed less interest in implementing innovative and radical policies in the North. Still, the CCF continued with a separate administrative structure and policies for the North and did little to undo Phelps’ work. J. H. Brockelbank, the Minister of Municipal Affairs from 1944 to 1948, became the new Minister of Natural Resources. Brockelbank lacked Phelps’ impatience and desire for quick change. Yet he also supported the CCF agenda of imposing socialism and modernization in the North. His commitment to socialist solutions appeared strongly when he fought for the survival of the controversial compulsory Fur Marketing System in the 1950s. Brockelbank used a more orthodox “hands-off” style of running DNR, relying more on his staff. He liked to keep in touch with the North though, and travelled around the area most autumns in a CCF plane. In 1956, Brockelbank took over the new Department of Mineral Resources, also an important position to the North. Alec Kuziak then became the Minister of Natural Resources. Kuziak distanced himself more from involvement with the North than had his two predecessors. During his time as minister, cabinet and other ministers increasingly shared responsibility for decisions affecting the North.<sup>16</sup> E. Kramer succeeded Kuziak as minister, holding the position until the CCF defeat in 1964.

Dobbin says that the CCF removed “radicals and native sympathizers” from positions of influence in the North after Phelps left, leaving those who opposed Phelps’ reforms in control.<sup>17</sup> This claim appears an exaggeration, as Norris remained, Quandt left voluntarily in 1949, and Brady also left willingly in 1951. The CCF did not undo its socialist economic reforms, and ideologically sympathetic persons continued to oversee programs.

For its first years in power, the CCF handicapped its northern program by not passing legislation which would have facilitated its effort to establish a separate government structure and programs for the North. In an effort to overcome this deficit, the legislature passed the Northern Administration Act, copied from the Local Improvement Districts Act of 1940. This took effect on January 1, 1949. The CCF hoped that the new legislation would help co-ordinate northern activities and guide northern development. Yet the act proved poorly designed. It did not define northern problems or outline clear goals, and it failed to provide an adequate northern taxation system. The act and the administrative structure proved unable to carry out CCF plans for the North, adding to the CCF’s growing frustration over the intransigence of northern problems.



Although Budget Bureau in 1951 questioned the suitability of the act, the CCF never did replace it. Instead, severe administrative structural design problems continued, contributing to program failures.<sup>18</sup>

The CCF chose Prince Albert, located on the banks of the North Saskatchewan, as its main administrative centre for the North, even though the small city fell outside the North by all definitions. Prince Albert grew in stature, receiving the headquarters of various branches. DNR placed its assistant deputy minister there by 1949 to direct and co-ordinate northern programs. It also received DNR's Northern Administrator, Northern District, Forest Fire Control, Construction, and Communications offices, and the northern headquarters of Saskatchewan Government Airways. A grand, new provincial office building opened there in 1948, in celebration of which the *Prince Albert Daily Herald* ran a "Northland Progress Edition." While describing La Ronge as "becoming the base for remote development," it said Prince Albert had "a new, greatly changed and infinitely more important position . . . and plays a leading part in virtually everything happening in the entire North." It retained its position as a secondary centre to Regina for northern activity throughout the CCF era, with high level DNR, Agriculture, Co-operative, Education, and Social Welfare staff stationed there. Prince Albert also had most of DNR's Planning and Research Group, while Regina retained the top level program and policy design role. Conflict existed between the two groups.<sup>19</sup>

The CCF demonstrated its commitment to northern change by establishing a new administrative structure within DNR to implement northern municipal, natural resource, and other policies. For municipal administration purposes, the government had formerly designated the North as Local Improvement District (LID) "A." Government used LIDs in place of municipalities in areas it thought not ready for full municipal government. The CCF did away with the LID designation and created the Northern District of DNR by 1946 to handle municipal and other matters there. Three pre-existing DNR districts, Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, and Hudson Bay, continued, each also covering part of the northern area.<sup>20</sup> F. Glass held the position of Northern District Superintendent.

The confusing administrative system created by the CCF in the North contradicts the CCF self-image as skilled planners. Administrative structural flaws hurt the application of CCF programs in the North for the entire CCF era. Even those working under the system could not understand its logic or why the CCF did not design a workable system. Although it had already created and staffed the new Northern District, the CCF added the Northern Administration Branch (NAB) to DNR in 1947. The NAB had a separate staff from Northern District and operated within

what became known as the Northern Administration District (NAD). The NAD covered all of the Northern District area, plus an additional area to the south.

The CCF gave the NAB's Northern Administrator most day-to-day power within the northern DNR organization. J. J. Wheaton and his successors had broad municipal responsibilities, including those normally held by a reeve and municipal council. The CCF also expected its northern administrators to co-ordinate the activities of all departments and administer crown lands and the Northern Administration Act. The men who held this position helped determine details of CCF policy and how DNR staff introduced CCF projects to northerners. Wheaton left by about 1950, after which C. L. MacLean held the position for a number of years, followed by C. S. Brown.<sup>21</sup>

For efficient administration, DNR needed only one structure in the North, operating within the larger NAD boundaries. Instead, confusion reigned. After creating the NAD, the CCF seemed unsure what to do with Northern District but refused to do away with it. It did not fill the Northern District Superintendent position after Glass left, instead hiring Quandt to work as Assistant Northern District Superintendent. He had little authority, and his work overlapped with that of the NAB in many areas. DNR recognized the problems, and as a temporary fix, Wheaton supervised Quandt by 1949. Appearing frustrated, Quandt resigned from DNR in 1949. Further administrative confusion resulted from the CCF giving the Northern Executive Assistant the power to supervise many of the DNR operations. Even employees found the system confusing. The fact that the NAB and Northern District southern boundaries did not coincide added to the mayhem, as Prince Albert, Meadow Lake, and Hudson Bay Districts handled some matters within the NAD.<sup>22</sup> The Prince Albert District extended nearly as far north as La Ronge, and Meadow Lake District reached even farther north in the western area. Northern District had eighteen sub-districts, Prince Albert had sixteen, and Meadow Lake had eight, each supervised by conservation officers.<sup>23</sup>

DNR's Northern District continued, as did administrative discord. Boundary and jurisdiction problems never disappeared under the CCF, since only minor alterations of the southern boundaries took place. Other program boundaries also did not match with either the NAD or the Northern District boundary, adding to the problems. The Northern Fur Region boundary jogged crookedly across the North, Public Health used its own boundaries, and provincial electoral boundaries frequently changed. Indian Affairs divided the North according to its whims, and Census District 18 included all of the North along with some southern areas. The multiple and overlapping divisions caused confusion and inefficient program delivery, a problem the CCF never

dealt with.

A major reorganization occurred in 1958, when the CCF appointed A. H. MacDonald as Director of Northern Affairs, a new position which replaced that of Northern Administrator. This move accompanied new CCF northern initiatives, including expanded community development and social aid programs. The creation of the new organization continued the CCF policy of devoting a separate DNR structure to administer the North. MacDonald had charge of a revitalized Northern Affairs Branch, and sensibly the CCF did away with the Northern District. Yet, confusion continued as the new NAB boundaries appeared the same as the former Northern District, not extending as far south as the southern boundary of the ongoing Northern Administration District. The NAB had a west and east district, with a field supervisor in each. Cabinet also approved the creation of the Advisory Committee on Northern Affairs, which included high officials from various departments.<sup>24</sup> In a final reorganization just before leaving office, effective April 1, 1964 the CCF created separate resources and recreation branches, except in the North. There Northern Affairs continued to hold responsibility for resources, recreation, municipal, welfare, housing, and community development.<sup>25</sup>

In spite of the shortcomings of the Northern Administration Act and DNR's organizational structure, the act and DNR's role as a co-ordinating agency created a single departmental presence to a much greater extent in the North than in the South. This had potential advantages for introducing the aggressive CCF program of change to the North, since DNR held most of the responsibility for planning and implementation of plans. A major weakness resulted, though, because the CCF expected DNR officers to administer a wide range of programs, even though they lacked expertise in many of these areas. The Departments of Health and Education had stronger separate northern programs than did most departments. Some increased their presence during the CCF years. By 1959, the Department of Co-operation had five co-operative management advisors, Public Health had about twelve professional positions, Education had an administrator and assistant, Agriculture had an agricultural representative, and Social Welfare had a supervisor and maybe one social worker.<sup>26</sup> The need for co-ordination of services increased as departments expanded their staff.

Throughout its era, the CCF stressed co-ordinating northern programs to a far greater extent than in southern Saskatchewan, both for administrative efficiency and because the CCF agenda of directed change for the North required a co-ordinated effort. The term "co-ordination," while sounding praiseworthy, carried a hidden meaning, since it meant a co-ordinated implementation of the CCF program for the North. A lack of co-ordination within the colonial

structure would compromise the CCF goals of imposing modernization, assimilation, and socialism. Some thought that the CCF could best co-ordinate services by creating a single northern agency, which would have powers yet greater than those the CCF gave to DNR. The radicals of the La Ronge CCF Club and various CCF employees frequently discussed and promoted the idea of a single agency.<sup>27</sup>

The CCF perennially spoke of the need to improve co-ordination to have its program of directed change succeed in the North. It established the Advisory Committee on Northern Co-operative Education in 1952, which brought together people from various government organizations. A larger step took place when cabinet created the Northern Advisory Committee (NAC) in 1953 to examine northern problems, recommend actions, and co-ordinate programs. Yet, the NAC lacked authority, and as the need for co-ordination increased it proved unfit for the task.<sup>28</sup> The CCF depended heavily on DNR's anthropologist Vic Valentine to improve co-ordination, and he developed plans for unified action at the field level. However, Valentine left in 1957, and most of his plans did not proceed.<sup>29</sup> A strong call for co-ordination of services came in 1957 from J. A. Collier, the CCF's director of public relations, who denounced the conflicting northern empires of various departments. Collier concluded that a single, new department should handle all northern matters, with at least twice annual reviews to keep the "gentle sleep" from resuming.<sup>30</sup> In 1958 five cabinet members, including Brockelbank and Kuziak, also wanted action to improve co-ordination. This accompanied the revival of the Northern Affairs Branch and the appointment of MacDonald as its director.<sup>31</sup> MacDonald soon pointed out that the new organization did not work. He lacked the authority to co-ordinate activities.<sup>32</sup> Cabinet finally approved the idea of a single agency in 1959, and Budget Bureau worked to find a suitable structure. Opposition soon arose in some departments, and politicians turned against the idea, stopping its implementation. As the Center for Community Studies pointed out in 1963, departments continued to work at cross-purposes, hurting the application of CCF plans for the North. CCF inaction on improving co-ordination of services continued. Its heir, the NDP, used the single agency idea to attract votes in the 1971 election and subsequently created the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.<sup>33</sup> While the CCF quite effectively attacked the northern status-quo, a lack of co-ordination compounded the administrative inadequacies which handicapped its efforts to build a workable new system. Legislative and administrative shortcomings demonstrate that the CCF overestimated its ability to design and implement intelligent programs.

A large increase in staff was required for the CCF to apply its aggressive new plans and extend control throughout the North. It found large areas where natural resources officers had

never visited. Some companies who should have paid royalties apparently had not done so for more than a decade. DNR rapidly expanded northern field staff to about six by late 1945. It claimed to have most areas adequately staffed by 1948, with a total of eleven field officers, two junior field officers, and three Fish Board post managers helping fill gaps. Yet hiring continued, and by 1952 DNR had multiple staff at La Ronge, Cumberland House, and Flin Flon, while other locations had one employee. DNR changed the designation "Field Officer" to "Conservation Officer" (CO) by 1953.<sup>34</sup> Staff numbers grew until the NAB had thirty-five employees in 1962, including seventeen COs. Prince Albert headquarters included a director, a supervisor of community development, two field supervisors, and specialists in municipal services, housing, and forestry.<sup>35</sup> Men held all top northern administrative posts during the CCF era, with the highest jobs occupied by women likely those of nursing supervisor and welfare supervisor.

At the field level, COs ran the system. They provided law and order, interpreted conservation and other rules, administered municipal and social aid matters, acted as counsellors and patrons, carried news, made medical decisions, promoted government policies, controlled tools and equipment, regulated access to many jobs, and carried out many other tasks. They operated with an appearance of great authority, an image reinforced by the use of police-like uniforms, airplanes, and powerful cars. A Center for Community Studies report compared the COs to British Colonial Service officers. According to the Center's Peter Worsley, the CO, with southern perspectives and an income much higher than that of most Aboriginals, appeared as a "local deity" with a "trinitarian nature." DNR dictated to the Metis much as Indian Affairs controlled Indians. While people could appeal over the head of the CO to his superiors or to a politician, these actions often proved futile, since the complaint often came back to the CO for his opinion. In addition, local people lacked skill in making complaints.<sup>36</sup>

Cumberland House, the site of many CCF pet projects, received an unusual number of DNR employees. Prior to Officer J. Johnson moving there in 1945, the community had only one permanent provincial employee, a nurse. By the end of 1945, DNR posted three staff there. It added four more by 1948.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, DNR delayed in assigning officers to some areas. Wollaston Lake still did not have an officer in 1953, though senior DNR officials "agreed that practices in game, fur and fish in the Wollaston region are exceedingly bad." Local hostility to DNR attempts at imposing regulations made DNR reluctant to visit there. Wollaston's low population also did not justify placing a permanent officer there.<sup>38</sup> DNR briefly had a headquarters at Cree Lake, largely to inspect Waite Fisheries operations there. It ended this posting by 1953.<sup>39</sup>

Concerned about a continuing lack of supervision of northerners, DNR created the Game

Management Officer position in the early 1950s. This increased CCF control and supervision over trappers. DNR did away with most of these positions in 1956, when this work reverted to conservation officers.<sup>40</sup> DNR also held responsibility for mineral resources work until the creation of the Department of Mineral Resources in the mid 1950s relieved DNR of most of this work.<sup>41</sup>

A large part of DNR's work in the North involved enforcing law and order in the colonial state. Officers often acted reasonably when enforcing fur, fish, and game laws. At other times, they officiously applied the letter of the law to Aboriginal people who did not understand English or the new laws. Morris Schumiatcher, T. C. Douglas' assistant, later wrote "I never ceased to be shocked by the unyielding attitude of that department in its enforcement of laws that ostensibly had been passed as ameliorative measures to assist rather than to oppress those engaged in the fur industry."<sup>42</sup> The RCMP and voluntary Deputy Game Guardians also aided with enforcement of the laws.

DNR engaged in relatively few prosecutions. This suggests a high level of compliance by northerners with conservation laws. Fourteen northern DNR employees only carried out thirty-three game and fur prosecutions from 1951 to 1955, compared to 1,806 for the entire province. For its part, the RCMP prosecuted only six game and fur cases in the Northern Region during the same years. The pattern remained much the same for the next few years. Senior DNR officials repeatedly urged officers to increase prosecutions. In 1955 E. L. Paynter, Game Commissioner, denounced the attitude of DNR Officer R. Lockhart, who intended to overlook bush workers taking deer without licences. Paynter pointed out that even DNR Surveys Branch could not take caribou on the isolated boundary survey. The same year, A. T. Davidson, assistant deputy minister, made an issue of the scant prosecutions. In defense of his staff, Northern Administrator C. S. Brown pointed out that about one prosecution for every 1,430 persons occurred there per year, a level higher than that of one for 6,300 for the rest of the province. Yet in a memo to his officers, Brown then wrote "an occasional prosecution, however mild the punishment, has an educational and beneficial influence."<sup>43</sup>

While prosecutions were few, they often involved trivial offences. In 1952 DNR found that a young Beauval area girl illegally sold moose meat for one dollar. Since her father had not properly tagged the moose hide, also a minor offence, DNR preferred to prosecute him for that instead.<sup>44</sup> In another case, DNR charged Ben Bradfield of Molanosa with unlawfully hunting and killing big game without a permit. DNR confiscated four pounds of moose meat, which it destroyed. The infraction cost Bradfield forty-nine dollars.<sup>45</sup> A now elderly Aboriginal woman related how DNR officers prevented her parents from trapping in their customary fashion. On an

autumn day, the couple travelled by canoe through their trapping area, hanging traps in trees near where they planned to later place them once the season opened. Although the pair broke no laws, DNR officers flying overhead landed. Likely not understanding the Cree-speaking couple's intentions, they confiscated the load of traps and laid charges.<sup>46</sup>

While DNR officers applied and enforced CCF policies at the field level, DNR also employed other staff. Consistent with the CCF emphasis on expert planning, DNR relied heavily on geographers to design and implement northern change. Over the years, many served in the planning office and as administrators. DNR had five geographers on staff by 1954, with three doing administration, one mapping, and one geographic research.<sup>47</sup> DNR's Construction Branch also played a key role in CCF plans for the North. The CCF relied on this branch to provide much of the infrastructure in its colonial world. As head of the branch, R. N. Gooding exercised great power, overseeing the building of roads and airstrips, heavy trucking, providing heavy equipment for fire fighting, and constructing buildings.<sup>48</sup>

The CCF considered it important to educate the northern public about its programs. For this purpose, it created the Conservation Education Branch within DNR by 1953. This later became the Conservation Information Service. It distributed information, handled press releases, created the Northern News radio program, and worked with the public on conservation.<sup>49</sup>

In order to successfully apply its plans for the North, DNR needed to train its staff. It took a major step towards improving northern staffing when it opened its Conservation Officers' Training School in Prince Albert in 1953. Eleven graduated from the first class after about nine months. DNR soon required trainees to spend time in the field before entering the training program to allow advance assessment of their suitability. The training program continued in the 1960s. In 1960-1961 DNR chose twenty-five candidates from 220 applicants before reducing the number further to fourteen after a two-month field proving period. All graduated from the six and one-half month course, and DNR appointed four as conservation officers and ten as patrolman graduates. DNR also trained new candidates as well as existing officers in anthropological matters and community development techniques. DNR anthropologist Vic Valentine began this specialized training in the mid 1950s. Later, the Center for Community Studies provided much of this instruction.<sup>50</sup>

DNR wanted to keep its experienced staff for its northern program. Problems with staff morale worked against this. Complaints from staff in 1956 included problems with housing, transfers, and promotions. Assistant Deputy Minister Davidson blamed the grumbling partly on supervisors, who had asked the men if they had complaints. He considered this "a dangerous

technique” and wanted a “firmer approach.”<sup>51</sup> Morale seemed to worsen by the early 1960s, as uncertainty increased, caused by repeated unsuccessful reorganizations and fruitless talk about a single northern agency. Staff lost faith in the CCF planning expertise. In 1960 for example, Malcolm Norris, after obtaining a copy of a proposed NAB reorganization, called those who would fill higher positions “reactionary personnel” and field workers “dedicated fools.” He compared it to “A Mexican Army arrayed with numerous Generals at the top with a meagre field force.”<sup>52</sup> In 1962, Norris confided to Brady “Dept filled with personnel jealousies and rivalries. A most unhappy state. . . . Hardly anybody can be trusted anymore.”<sup>53</sup> Others also saw the problems. One observer compared a northern posting to “banishment to Siberia” in terms of career effects. Some employees also felt alienated because they did not have the skills DNR came to value. Higher education and community development expertise increasingly mattered for career advancement.<sup>54</sup>

CCF northern staffing problems included a high rate of staff turnover and unsuitable attitudes towards Aboriginal people. In 1955, Brockelbank wanted civil servants to remain in the North for at least five years, considering one or two years insufficient to develop a “proper perspective.”<sup>55</sup> Yet, in a typical situation, Public Health hired eighteen nurses to work at the one-nurse Sandy Bay hospital from 1950 to 1970. One stayed for over five years, while nine stayed for only two to ten months.<sup>56</sup> Most teachers hired by the Department of Education also stayed only a short time. A majority of whites viewed their northern time as temporary. Not all liked the rugged outdoor activities the North offered, and many missed southern culture, including radio, television, movies, libraries, shopping, and countless other items. Alice Jenner of the Department of Public Health wrote: “It requires a missionary zeal, a strong conviction that something ought to be done about this, and an affection for the people to stay at this job.”<sup>57</sup>

Although many of those who worked only briefly in the North were young and single, many wives and families of married employees also did not appreciate northern life. Mr. Stene resigned from DNR in 1951 because his wife did not want to move to Pelican Narrows.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, after DNR built an expensive new house at Buffalo Narrows for Mr. Halvorsen, his family stayed in the South where his children attended high school.<sup>59</sup> In 1954, Mrs. Laurier Poisson, the wife of the Ile a la Crosse conservation officer, wrote an irate letter to J. W. Churchman, DNR’s deputy minister. Her outburst followed three years of living with isolation and inconvenience brought to a head by DNR building a new staff house there, not for them, but for another officer. Churchman reassured her that they did not intend the construction as a personal affront to her, and DNR transferred her husband out of the North later that year.<sup>60</sup>

The CCF offered some extra compensation to its northern employees, paying small



isolation allowances and providing subsidized housing to make up for higher prices and travel costs. "Being bushed" also added to travel costs as workers fled isolation, and "social boredom" contributed to northern employees eating and drinking more. With complaints increasing and DNR fearing increased resignations and transfer requests, it gathered information on the northern cost of living in 1957. The study found food costs at Uranium City thirty-two percent higher than at Regina and about twenty percent higher for the North overall than at Regina. DNR rent rates however stood at a lower level than in the South. Calculating various factors, the study found an increased cost of living for Uranium City of \$1,250.17, compared to the allowance of \$900. Some communities had larger discrepancies, while in others the allowance exceeded the difference in cost of living, although calculations did not allow for additional travel costs. By 1962, employees of numerous departments could charge some travel expenses when going on annual leave and to obtain medical treatment.<sup>61</sup>

Most northern communities had dismal housing stocks and little or no rental housing. As a result, the CCF tried to provide adequate housing for its employees, although it could have done much more. At first the CCF bought some existing housing. By 1949 it owned a three-room shack at Stony Rapids, where Field Officer Oliver Shaw lived and worked. He conducted business in front of the two bachelors who lived there with him and various travellers who stopped in. DNR planned to build a three-bedroom house for Shaw, who planned to marry. DNR adopted a policy in 1949 of charging rent to all staff using its housing. By 1952 a point system determined the rental rate, up to 12 ½ % of the employee's salary. DNR had about twenty-five residences by 1953, a number which continued to grow. The CCF struggled to keep up with housing needs as staff expanded. La Ronge still had poor and overcrowded staff housing in 1956: two employees each occupied a "cottage," a radio operator lived in a renovated bunkhouse, one employee lived in the former government store, and several lived in an old house. All these staff had wives and most had children.<sup>62</sup>

Where the CCF devoted resources to building new staff housing, government residences often stood out as the most lavish in the community. This helped create two distinct societies: the white middle class and the poverty-stricken Aboriginal. DNR built what it called Type 1, 2, and 3 houses, but developed the superior Type 5 design by 1952. It had six of the latter in 1953, each with water and sewer--luxury almost never seen in the North at that time. By 1957, DNR houses at Ile a la Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, and La Loche had basements, two to four bedrooms, bathrooms with tub, sink, and toilet, refrigerators in place or on order, propane or wood/coal stoves, furnaces, and other amenities. The CCF also frequently provided its houses with furnishings and electrical

generators. Its dwellings often cost from \$12,000 to \$18,000, many times the cost of most northern homes.<sup>63</sup>

The CCF hired few Aboriginals for better government jobs, adding to the presence of two northern societies. White people held nearly all full-time jobs, while the CCF employed Aboriginals primarily for temporary, low-paying work. Shortly after the election of the CCF, RCMP Corporal M. Chappuis at Cumberland House thought of Aboriginals as “hopeless” for the position of DNR officer, without “direct supervision.”<sup>64</sup> In contrast to Chappuis’ reservations, Oblate Father F. X. Gagnon lobbied the government to employ area men as wardens and fire guardians on the west side.<sup>65</sup> In 1950, DNR’s Earl Dodds indicated they would use some Aboriginal labour for road work, but needed experienced and reliable workers to run the equipment, which likely meant non-Aboriginals.<sup>66</sup> About one-half of fire detection and prevention staff consisted of Aboriginals, with fire suppression crews usually all Aboriginal. Fires provided only short-term, low-paying work.<sup>67</sup>

DNR hired Aboriginals for more than short-term work in isolated cases. It hired J. Favel as a native patrolman at Patuanak, but considered firing him in 1954, after CO L. Poisson set more rigid work expectations than Favel was accustomed to. C. S. Brown, Northern Administrator, wrote that Favel “has a number of the usual traits of the northern native and in some respects lacks a proper sense of responsibility.” Mr. Dodds of DNR spoke to Favel and “left him in some doubt of the permanency of his employment with us.”<sup>68</sup> Nap Johnson of Ile a la Crosse also worked as a DNR native patrolman and special constable for the RCMP.<sup>69</sup> Northern Crown Corporations employed some Aboriginals. A Metis, Norman MacAuley, held various governmental positions, including managing stores at Pine House and Deschambault Lake.<sup>70</sup> Public Health hired several Aboriginals to work in outpost hospitals, but let one go for lack of ability and the other for theft.<sup>71</sup>

The CCF often viewed its experiences with Aboriginal employees negatively. Northern Crown Corporations seemed disillusioned in 1956 after Aboriginals quit their jobs, likely because of local pressure and jealousy.<sup>72</sup> C. S. Brown, Northern Administrator, considered Aboriginals as poor potential employees because they lacked education and suitable work skills.<sup>73</sup> In a positive case, DNR began a “pilot project of community development” in 1963-1964, where Pelican Narrows area trappers elected a fur patrolman. DNR called the results “outstanding.”<sup>74</sup> Yet the fact that only a handful of Aboriginals held permanent positions demonstrates the nature of CCF hiring policies as well as the lack of preparation of Aboriginals for wage labour. The CCF record on employing Aboriginals does not necessarily indicate the presence of racism. To have hired large numbers of Aboriginals for permanent positions would have required the committal of

substantial resources to educating and training potential employees and the introduction of affirmative action programs. The CCF was not willing to take these steps. Instead, the CCF's dismal record in employing Aboriginals added to northern unemployment and underdevelopment.

In addition to the contrasts in housing and employment, differences also existed between government employees and Aboriginals in virtually all other aspects of life. Placing a large number of white government employees in the North widened a pre-existing rift within northern society and also worked against the CCF policy of assimilation. DNR officers, nurses, teachers, and other CCF employees formed a separate class within the small, primarily Aboriginal villages. Civil servants also became part of the white upper class in the larger communities. White government workers frequently considered themselves superior by virtue of their race. The mandate given them by the CCF to bring forced change to northern Aboriginals gave them additional prestige and authority.

Some Aboriginals established special relationships with DNR officers similar to the earlier "Patron-Client relationship" with the HBC, and officials had a special clientele who supported their programs, as part of a system of reciprocal obligations. Yet many northerners felt "contempt and hostility" to the CCF and its employees, largely because of conservation policies.<sup>75</sup> Administrators also often did not relate well to Aboriginals, since they did not know the Aboriginal languages or grasp local ways.

Instances of white government employees lacking respect for Aboriginals abound. In 1954, H. P. Michaud, a DNR employee at La Loche, feared turning Indian if he stayed in La Loche longer than several years.<sup>76</sup> A teacher told how his opinion of Indian males changed over twenty years, from thinking them "very nice and well-mannered" to seeing them as improvident, boastful, easily insulted, arrogant, and dishonest. He added "The more they come in contact with the whites, drunkenness becomes their favorite pastime, as then they think they are real men."<sup>77</sup>

While most government employees sent north to implement CCF programs maintained a social distance from Aboriginals, they usually felt safe living in Aboriginal communities. Exceptions occurred, as when a critical situation arose at Buffalo Narrows in 1957. Although Aboriginal males there had threatened the lives of Aboriginal females with knives while demanding "sexual submission," government employees and their families felt safe. C. S. Brown, Northern Administrator, claimed that previously "decent white women have been inviolable almost everywhere in the North." This changed when Victor Ratt, a repeat violent sexual offender, raped the outpost hospital nurse, also causing brain damage and physical disability. Soon after, another repeat sexual offender, Leon Sylvestre, broke into the house of J. B. McLellan, the CO, presumably

to rape Mrs. McLellan, not realizing that her husband had returned from an extended trip. Although outraged, McLellan persuaded local white people, including government workers, not to take vigilante action. Yet he described the Aboriginals as eighteenth century people, to whom laws designed for twentieth century people should not apply. He also advocated the use of public whipping and stocks. The light sentence of three years received by Ratt further outraged whites. The nurse resigned from her job after the judge passed sentence. CCF employees approved of the two-year sentence meted out to Sylvestre for his less serious offence. His sentencing "had a most worthy effect on the people in the region."<sup>78</sup> Many officials saw increased and more punitive law enforcement as the answer to these problems.

Sandy Bay government personnel charged with implementing CCF programs also experienced violence at the hands of local Aboriginals. In one case, the outpost hospital nurse, Miss Houston, and the hospital caretaker, J. H. Nichols, investigated a complaint of "neglected and starving" children. The children's drunken father lunged at the nurse with a knife, who ducked, while the knife stuck deep into the wall. One person commented "It could have been a little worse the nurse could have been killed. Perhaps a human sacrifice is necessary. . . . for the last two years . . . this loyal and devoted caretaker has protected the nurse . . . If liquor is forced upon this little community I think we should employ male nurses only or shut-up shop."<sup>79</sup> Female government employees, especially provincial nurses who went into unknown situations in remote communities, found themselves vulnerable to mistreatment and violence. This danger added to the unusually high turnover rate among nursing staff. Although incidents of Aboriginal violence directed against government employees did not occur frequently, those that took place caused whites to fear Aboriginals and their communities.

The CCF created a colonial structure in the North to implement its agenda of modernization, assimilation, and socialism. As in other colonial situations, control remained outside the region, where politicians and bureaucrats chose goals, designed programs, and hired staff. While it used the pre-existing Department of Northern Resources as its primary colonial agency, the CCF created a separate administrative organization within DNR for the North. In effect, the North had a separate governmental structure from the South. The CCF gave this organization great power, including the power normally held by municipal governments. Yet, unlike in the South, those living in northern Aboriginal communities could not elect their municipal governments. Northerners also had little say in electing the provincial government. About one-half of northern Aboriginals, Treaty Indians, could not vote in provincial elections until 1960. Even those who could vote had little influence in determining CCF policies for the North, as the

region had only two elected representatives in Regina. Outsiders made most decisions for northerners without consulting with the local people.

Imperfections plagued the northern colonial structure, belying the much-touted CCF planning expertise. Many saw the need for changes to the administrative structure, but the CCF failed to provide an efficient organization and appropriate legislation. This added to program failures and compromised the achievement of CCF goals for the North. From the point of view of northern Aboriginals, many of whom did not want the intrusive CCF presence, governmental inefficiency permitted their former society and ways to continue to a some extent.

The top-down colonial approach of the CCF brought many negative consequences to the North. It played an instrumental role in creating a deep rift in the northern society, with alienated Aboriginals on one side and a self-confident government and its employees on the other. With few exceptions, those who brought the CCF presence north did not come from the North. Many bureaucrats never even moved to the region, applying programs from southern offices. Most who did move north only did so temporarily, without making a long-term commitment to the region. The colonial presence also helped institutionalize and perpetuate unemployment, poverty, and social dysfunction within the Aboriginal community by ensuring that Aboriginals would not share equally in employment and economic opportunities. CCF colonialism effectively altered and remade practically every aspect of the northern economy and society, creating a reality very different from that which existed in 1944. Yet the result did not please northerners or the CCF. Most northerners never had approved of the CCF goals or the colonial presence, while the CCF failed to predict and control the many unforeseen and devastating side-effects of its interventions.

With its newly-created colonial apparatus in place, the CCF sought to introduce modernization, assimilation, and socialism to northerners. The new government actively worked to bring fundamental changes to how Aboriginals lived their everyday lives. An examination of CCF words and actions will demonstrate the party's intentions for Aboriginal people.

## **Chapter Three**

### **THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION**

Convinced of the superiority of Euro-Canadian culture, the CCF saw little of value in the traditional Aboriginal cultures of northern Saskatchewan. It used the strong arm of government to impose white ways on Aboriginal people, aiming for their complete assimilation into the white world. An essential part of this effort included a large-scale forced movement to settlements where the CCF could teach Aboriginals to live as white men and women and better deliver its various programs to northerners. The CCF also thought this change would help Aboriginals by providing them with the opportunity to benefit from modern ways. Contradictorily, the establishment of separate Aboriginal settlements and pervasive racism worked against the goal of assimilation. For most Aboriginals, the move from the bush brought life in semi-urban squalor, and the better world visualized by the CCF remained far away. The expansion of mining and government also brought urbanization, as thousands of white people relocated to the North. Two societies grew there: the prosperous white and the destitute Aboriginal. The northern population increased dramatically, which particularly caused problems within Aboriginal communities. While the CCF could see the growing problems, it did not admit responsibility for these. Nor did it develop effective solutions.

Traditionally, the area of northern Saskatchewan supported only a small population, possibly about 5,000 at the beginning of the fur trade era. At that time, Cree and Dene (Chipewyan) people formed the population. The Dene lived a life centered on the barren land caribou, following seasonal caribou migrations between the tundra of the present-day Northwest Territories and the wooded area of northern Saskatchewan. The Cree inhabited the large woodland area to the south of the Dene territory. The fur trade brought various changes to where Aboriginals lived. One change occurred when Cree from farther east moved into northern Saskatchewan, joining with and sometimes displacing Cree already there. Dene people also moved farther south into former Cree territory. This occurred particularly on the west side of the province in the La Loche and Patuanak area. The Cree and Dene remained separate, with cultural differences and animosity reinforcing their distinctness. Prior to the election of the CCF, northern Aboriginals continued to enjoy a great amount of freedom to follow their traditional life style. They had little

need for cash, as the northern environment provided them with most necessities of life. What they could not obtain from nature came from trading posts, where they traded furs and labour for the white man's goods.

Prior to CCF intervention, the two major outside influences on northern Aboriginals came from traders and missionaries. Both the fur trade and Christianity had left their mark. Aboriginals trapped furs to supply the fur trade, and much about their lives revolved around the trade. The churches concerned themselves with spiritual matters, medical care, and basic education, and introduced Aboriginals to some aspects of white society. The Aboriginal population included many devout Christians in 1944. Nearly all claimed to belong to a Christian denomination. The 1951 census counted fifty-seven percent of Division 18 as Roman Catholic, nineteen percent as Anglican, and ten percent as United Church. Many Aboriginals combined aspects of their traditional beliefs with Christianity, finding the two compatible in many respects.<sup>1</sup> Northerners generally accepted the churches and the traders and the limited change and assimilation they brought.

Contact with other white people also increased before 1944. Many southerners moved north prior to 1940 to trap, fish, mine, or farm in the forest fringe. Most left the North by the end of the Second World War. The southern economy strengthened, again providing jobs for the unemployed, and large numbers enlisted in the armed forces during World War II. Unlike the majority of white people, northern Aboriginals showed a strong attachment to their northern homeland and did not want to leave the area permanently. Most who left to fight in the war or work in war-time industry soon returned.

Government also influenced northern Aboriginals by 1944. Treaties made between Indians and the federal government covered all of northern Saskatchewan, giving Ottawa legal title to ancestral lands. Treaty 5 covered the Saskatchewan River delta and the surrounding area. Aboriginals in a large part of the southern area of the North adhered to Treaty 6, originally designed primarily as an agricultural treaty for the prairie. Treaties 8 and 10 covered the rest of northern Saskatchewan and much of the larger Canadian North. In comparison to the earlier treaties signed for agricultural areas, government tailored these two treaties for the northern situation. Their signing took place largely to open the way for resource extraction.

Contact with white society split northern Aboriginals into three groups: registered or status Indians, most of whom held Treaty Indian status; non-status Indians, who appeared Indian in all respects except by legal criteria; and Metis. The federal government had primary responsibility for Treaty Indians and jurisdiction on reserves. Many Indians had not located on reserves by 1944

and still enjoyed freedom to roam the bush. Their continuing presence outside of reserves and the dearth of federal programs meant that the CCF included Treaty Indians in many of its efforts.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of the 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, which transferred crown lands to Saskatchewan, various Dominion orders-in-council provided reserves for northern Indian bands. Yet the establishment of reserves remained incomplete. Clause 10 of the agreement allowed for the later transfer of land to Ottawa to meet treaty obligations. By the late 1950s, La Loche, Fond du Lac, Black Lake, Stony Rapids, and Lac La Hache Bands still had not settled on reserves, apparently never having asked for land.<sup>3</sup> In the case of the La Loche Band (Clearwater River Dene Nation), when negotiations for a reserve began in about 1939, the band had seventy members, but by 1964 it had 183 members, and it eventually received over 23,000 acres in 1970.<sup>4</sup> Similar processes took place in other areas, with many land issues remaining unresolved when the CCF left office. Some claim that the treaties only gave up “*aski puko*,” or “the land alone,” leaving Indians with ownership of water, mineral, and other resources. Oral history provides the basis for these claims, since the written treaties do not clearly outline many things.<sup>5</sup> The CCF generally proceeded as if it had full ownership of northern land and resources, other than on established reserves.

CCF policies discouraged expansion of the northern reserve system. In one instance in 1954, the CCF opposed a request by Indian Affairs for additional reserve land in the La Ronge area to accommodate the growing Indian population. DNR’s Deputy Minister Churchman and Director of Conservation R. G. Young viewed the reserve system as outdated and working against Indians’ best interests. Minister Brockelbank thought the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement allowed the Minister of Natural Resources to choose land for reserve expansion. The CCF particularly wanted to stop extension of the reserve system in areas with recreational and mining potential, including in the area between La Ronge and the Churchill River.<sup>6</sup> The province even tried to take back some land in 1950, wanting Kitsakie Indian Reserve, which adjoined La Ronge, for townsite expansion. DNR claimed the Indians made little use of the largely rock and muskeg covered 139 acres, but the federal government found about sixty people and twenty homes there. The Indians also opposed surrendering the land, and the federal government turned down the request.<sup>7</sup>

Some northern Metis, particularly those on the west side and in the Cumberland House area, appeared distinct from the Treaty and non-status Indians. Metis there had long-standing connections with the Metis of the prairie, with some having moved north after the Red River Resistance and the Batoche Rebellion. Yet, in many communities, non-status Indian and Metis meant much the same thing, with the term “Metis” used to describe all Aboriginals who did not



have Treaty status. Government also referred to all non-Treaty Aboriginals as Metis. While cultural and racial differences between the groups often seemed non-existent, the legal definition between status Indians and the non-status Indians/Metis increasingly split communities, causing tension and conflict. Treaty Indians accepted the government definitions and considered the non-Treaty group as not real Indians, while Metis seemed critical of the Indians' dependence on Ottawa. Some Metis lived partially in both white and Indian cultures. The CCF's anthropologist Vic Valentine agreed with a Metis fur trader's definition of a Metis as "'a man who, when he had money, lives like a white man, and when he has no money lives like an Indian.'" <sup>8</sup> The west side Roman Catholic Metis carried French surnames, while mainly Scottish names identified the largely Anglican central and east side Metis. In the Athabasca Region, cultural differences divided the Metis and the Treaty Indians. Many of the Metis from Fort Chipewyan and Camsell Portage had Cree origins, while practically all Treaty Indians there were Dene. Disparities between federal and provincial services caused problems, since Metis received fewer benefits and faced more restrictive hunting and trapping rules. On the other hand, Metis could legally drink liquor and vote, while Indians could not do so until 1960. <sup>9</sup>

Whether it considered them Metis or Indian, the CCF actively tried to assimilate all Aboriginals into white society. Douglas, other politicians, and bureaucrats confidently believed in the superiority of Euro-Canadian ways. They accepted a linear view of progress and thought the Aboriginals' hunter-gatherer, nomadic lifestyle represented a low form of economic, political, and social organization. Western society often held little respect for other cultures, as seen in countless colonial situations throughout the world. Possibly socialists placed even less value on preserving racial and cultural distinctness, since their analysis of society emphasized distinctions based on class. Class analysis minimized the importance of racial differences. Within the northern CCF organization, the Metis Marxists Norris and Brady viewed the class struggle as holding primary importance. The CCF appeared very sure about forcing assimilation on Aboriginals and did not give Indians or Metis a choice in the matter.

Disagreement exists about whether the CCF aimed for integration or assimilation, partly because the CCF itself often did not differentiate between the two terms to describe their goals for northern Aboriginals. Assimilation and integration meant much the same thing to the CCF. As practised by it, neither allowed for much survival of Aboriginal culture. Today, many view integration as acceptable, since it respects the other culture and allows aspects of it to survive. Integration describes HBC and church policies prior to 1944, when Aboriginals enjoyed more choice about what they wanted to accept from outsiders. The HBC preserved hunting and

gathering, which fit with its own goals, and missions maintained local cultures, as much as religious changes it considered necessary would allow. With successful assimilation, in contrast, outside forces overwhelm the former culture, altering it until racial conflict and discrimination disappear. Strong links connect assimilation with colonialism.<sup>10</sup>

Using today's terminology, the CCF generally followed a policy of assimilation. It tried to assimilate all categories of Aboriginals, although, lacking full jurisdiction over Treaty Indians, the CCF attacked this group's culture less aggressively. Yet the CCF worked with Ottawa to remove special treatment and status for Indians and move Indians from their traditional society into the Canadian mainstream. The CCF used DNR officers, teachers, health workers, and others to force assimilation.

The agenda of assimilating Aboriginals permeated top levels of the CCF administration. T. C. Douglas said "social and intellectual assimilation is absolutely vital." He fostered the creation of Aboriginal organizations, including the Union of Saskatchewan Indians in 1946. Yet the Union did not operate independently and had a reputation as a captive organization which served CCF purposes. Douglas favoured ending reserves and wardship and wanted Saskatchewan to handle health, education, and welfare for Indians. Under him, "progress for Indians was measured in terms of integration," which meant assimilation.<sup>11</sup> Joe Phelps also wanted Indian status ended and the province to administer Indian affairs. He did not favour "aborigine rights," which he interpreted as Natives wanting land and control. Phelps thought Indians should let "bygones be bygones."<sup>12</sup>

Commitment to assimilating Aboriginals continued throughout the CCF's time in office. Phelps' successor as DNR minister, J. H. Brockelbank, wrote "We are convinced that the long-term solution to these social problems, is cultural assimilation."<sup>13</sup> In 1952, CCF politician Bill Berezowsky wanted to quickly put Aboriginals into the "melting pot." He blamed the lack of CCF support among trappers and fishermen on the HBC and the church helping Aboriginals remain distinct.<sup>14</sup> In 1956 Northern Administrator C. S. Brown described assimilation as their attainable goal, which they should "guide and speed" as much as possible.<sup>15</sup> Cabinet instructed minister J. H. Sturdy to head up a study into Indian problems and how to integrate them "as ordinary citizens in Saskatchewan." Historian Dr. Lewis H. Thomas was to chair a sub-committee to help determine how to reach this goal.<sup>16</sup> In 1962 DNR's C. L. MacLean, also a CCF candidate, described "economic and cultural assimilation" as "the only lasting answer to the so-called Metis problem."<sup>17</sup>

While some increasingly used the term integration by the 1960s, only the terminology changed. The new integration would only tolerate "vestigial ethnic traditions."<sup>18</sup> Official

documents, including the 1960 Saskatchewan brief to the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Indian Affairs, increasingly referred to integration. Yet the CCF still wanted to see reserves disappear and viewed treaties and treaty rights as relatively minor rights which Indians would voluntarily give up.<sup>19</sup>

The CCF increasingly adopted community development as a method for assimilation within the North. Vic Valentine, the CCF's anthropologist, helped develop this program beginning in 1953. By the late 1950s the CCF relied heavily on the Center for Community Studies for policy direction in community development. The Center reflected the beginnings of a shift in societal attitudes from demanding assimilation to favouring integration. W. B. Baker, the Center's director, thought community development balanced assimilation with a respect for the integrity of Aboriginal culture. The Center took a neutral position in 1963, saying "Complete integration, i.e., the disappearance of the socially identifiable Indian, may not be accepted as a goal by everyone, but its achievement lies so far away in the future that there is no need for a consensus of opinion on this issue."<sup>20</sup>

Initiatives to give Indians the right to vote and drink liquor in the North and the South formed part of the CCF drive for assimilation. Douglas, possibly ahead of his time, already favoured full citizenship rights for Indians in 1943. The 1945 CCF convention also called for extending the vote to Indians. While other Indians showed ambivalence, northern Chief Simon Linklater of Pelican Narrows supported the proposed changes. The matter gained urgency by 1958 when the province invited Treaty Indians to a conference, addressed by Douglas, at Fort Qu'Appelle. Chiefs and councillors did not support receiving the franchise then or in the following year. The CCF gave Indians the provincial franchise anyway in 1960 and asked Ottawa to grant them liquor rights, which occurred in July of 1960. Douglas reassured chiefs that the right to vote was a "new right" and would not affect Indians' "special rights."<sup>21</sup> These changes proved important for northern Indians. Their new right to vote could greatly affect northern election outcomes since the previously disenfranchised Indians formed a large percentage of the population. In the view of many whites, moreover, giving northern Indians the right to drink might worsen social problems. Both rights would also serve to increase assimilation since they broke down barriers between Indians and non-Indians.

In an additional step towards assimilation, the CCF strove to take over the care of Treaty Indians from the federal government. During the early part of the CCF era, Indian Affairs provided only minimal services in the North, which caused the province to repeatedly intervene with Indian Affairs on behalf of northern Treaty Indians in matters of housing, health, and welfare. The dearth

of federal northern services provided a logical reason for having Saskatchewan take responsibility. Various officials, including Phelps, wanted more co-operation with Indian Affairs on northern development, but in spite of seeming agreement for joint development and a partial transfer of services in 1947, nothing further came of this. Instead, Indian Affairs actually expanded its services and staff. The CCF did not give up though. In 1956 it appointed a committee under Sturdy to investigate Saskatchewan taking over services to Treaty Indians. Surprisingly, Sturdy recommended against a transfer of responsibility.<sup>22</sup> Yet the CCF continued to work for this.

In a move which affected many northern Indians who did not live on reserves, cabinet decided in 1957 to provide full social aid services to off-reserve Treaty Indians. Deputy Minister J. S. White of Social Welfare viewed extending provincial social aid on and off reserves as the "keystone" to solving "welfare problems."<sup>23</sup> In about 1960, Douglas asked for "joint provincial-federal conferences on Indian Affairs" to equalize services, including in the areas of infrastructure, education, medical care, and the extension of co-operatives.<sup>24</sup> This issue had great relevance to the North, as it was there that the CCF applied its most aggressive programs. The presence of a separate federal organization, which often followed different policies, threatened CCF plans to promote assimilation as well as its agenda of modernization and socialism. The legislature unanimously passed a resolution in 1961 asking Ottawa to give complete Indian Affairs administration to any province which wanted this, if a majority of the Treaty Indians agreed. Concerned with the cost, Douglas suggested a twenty-five year transition period to phase out federal financial support for Treaty Indians. Had Ottawa agreed, this change would have aided the CCF in applying its assimilation and other plans in the North. It would have brought a nearly complete removal of the Indian Affairs presence from the North.

In 1963 Saskatchewan politicians and bureaucrats again strove to take over services to Treaty Indians. Director of Northern Affairs A. H. MacDonald expected resistance from Indians to making them "masters of their own destiny." J. S. White renewed his efforts to have the province take over the full range of social services on reserves, and the Department of Education proposed a complete transfer of Indian education to the province. A Community Development Branch submission wanted to see movement from reserves to urban areas. Premier Woodrow Lloyd led Saskatchewan's delegation to a Dominion-Provincial Conference on Indian Affairs called by Prime Minister Lester Pearson. Saskatchewan's brief spoke of reserves as an obstacle to Indian off-reserve participation and portrayed assimilation and acculturation as desirable for Indian economic advancement.<sup>25</sup> This fit completely with the CCF's northern agenda.

For a time it seemed that the federal government would help CCF plans for northern

assimilation by giving up its responsibility for Indians. Ottawa also wanted to see assimilation and an end to separate services, special status, wardship, and Indian reserves. Already in the 1940s, the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons wanted to see the shift of some services to the provinces. The transfer of responsibility for Indian health to National Health and Welfare in 1945 and the move of Indian Affairs from the Department of Mines and Resources to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in 1949 both fit with the plan of bringing full assimilation. In 1953, W. E. Harris, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, opposed "treating Indians as a special class of citizens" and used this as a reason for not subsidizing northern Indian fishing with federal funds. The Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Indian Affairs' final report of 1961 encouraged shifting administration of Indian education and welfare to provinces and called for a Dominion-Provincial Conference to discuss the transfer of various matters. Yet, the shift of responsibility did not happen. Indian Affairs instead again expanded services. By 1963 it directed services from Prince Albert for Carlton Agency, which covered La Ronge and the north-east side, and from Meadow Lake for Meadow Lake Agency, which looked after the north-west side. Indian Affairs also had northern staff at Ile a la Crosse, Stony Rapids, La Ronge, and Pelican Narrows.<sup>26</sup>

Still in 1964, the CCF hoped northern and other Indians would voluntarily give up the treaties and move into white society. This wish conflicted with the emphasis Indians increasingly placed on group rights and on a permanent relationship between themselves and the Canadian government based on the treaties. Great similarity existed between the CCF position and that of the 1969 federal white paper in their emphasis on treating all Canadians the same. The CCF still opposed Aboriginal distinctness and the establishment of Indian self-government at the end of its time in office.<sup>27</sup> Any increase in Aboriginal independence jeopardized CCF assimilation and other plans for the North.

The CCF also used Aboriginal organizations to help with its agenda of assimilation and integration in the North and the South. CCF involvement in Indian organizations co-opted their effectiveness at representing the issues of northern and other Indians. Douglas' assistant Morris Shumiatcher met with the northern chiefs in 1946 as one step in the formation of the Union of Saskatchewan Indians. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians (FSI), which officially began in 1958-1959, also felt strong CCF influence. CCF funding, which began in 1961-1962, brought further provincial control over the organization. Malcolm Norris viewed the FSI as ineffective, describing it as existing in name only.<sup>28</sup>

Metis from the North made some attempts to organize. The CCF seemed less concerned

with controlling Metis organizations than those of the Indians, possibly because it considered the Metis as already more assimilated. Northern Metis formed the Saskatchewan Metis Association in 1943, as a rival to the Saskatchewan Metis Society (SMS). Douglas made some efforts in 1946 to organize the Metis, but failed due to rifts between northern and southern leaders. The CCF did little more to promote Metis organization. Malcolm Norris and Jim Brady struggled to organize the Metis over a long period of time but did not meet with much success. A La Ronge local of the SMS operated for a while, but the Metis appeared quite uninterested. Norris' and Brady's position as CCF supporters may have added to the failure.<sup>29</sup>

Even though Saskatchewan never secured control over Treaty Indians, the CCF believed that northern Aboriginals should be assimilated rapidly and aggressively. In fact, the government's attempt to move all Aboriginals who still lived in the bush into settlements became one of the boldest of the CCF assimilative policies. Unlike some other CCF northern initiatives, success met most CCF efforts to nucleate Aboriginals in villages. Yet, while the shift to semi-urban life brought profound change to Aboriginal society, complete assimilation remained elusive.

C. H. Piercy, commissioned by the CCF to study the educational situation in the North in 1944, found nomadic Aboriginals, who moved to trap and hunt for the winter and fish for the summer. Unable to carry many goods, they "squandered" their wealth and did not save for the future. Some already lived in or near settlements for six months of the year or permanently.<sup>30</sup> The CCF had various reasons for not wanting Aboriginals' nomadic life to continue. Nucleation into settlements would facilitate assimilating Aboriginals into white society. Village life would also permit the CCF to efficiently apply education, health, housing, social, and other services to the formerly mobile population. Further, nucleation formed part of the CCF effort to bring all aspects of the North under state control--to identify, count, and monitor the population. The CCF refused to allow human life to continue in wild spaces beyond its control, and it hoped that nucleation would expedite the creation of a modern, well-planned society in the North.

Some movement to communities predated the CCF era, since the presence of fur trading posts, missions, or boarding schools led to some Aboriginals living nearby. This occurred at numerous northern spots, including Ile a la Crosse, Cumberland House, and La Ronge. Treaties and the creation of reserves, although delayed in much of the North, also moved people into settlements. Montreal Lake offers an example. There the Cree adhered to Treaty 6 in 1889, wanting the protection of a treaty and a reserve. Fur trading posts and the Anglican church also drew them to the settlement at the south end of the lake.<sup>31</sup>

The CCF prodding of Aboriginals into settlements included those Treaty Indians who had

not chosen or moved to reserves. This process resembled that followed by the federal government in the southern prairies beginning in the 1870s, where it signed treaties and drove Indians onto reserves to prepare the way for agricultural settlement. That served the dual purpose of pushing Indians out of the way of white settlers and placing them in small areas where Ottawa could apply assimilative policies to make them into white men. Contrary to the hopes of some, reserves often served as a barrier to assimilation. The sites chosen by the CCF for northern Aboriginals lacked reserve status, but since few white people lived in them, most villages also became enclaves of the surviving Aboriginal culture. Yet these communities allowed the CCF to efficiently direct its interventions at Aboriginals.

Nucleation to the “micro-urban village” happened in northern Saskatchewan sooner than in most other areas of the Canadian North, largely due to CCF actions. Hospitals, schools, and federal family allowance cheques which required school attendance pulled people into settlements. The CCF’s Conservation Area trapping system greatly limited mobility, and orderly fur marketing led trappers to spend more time in settlements, waiting for cheques from Regina. Settlement life increased the need for cash, reduced access to subsistence items, and increased welfare and other dependency on government. It also made the nomadic people instantly poverty-stricken, as they moved from the bush into urban shacks. While living on the land had sometimes proven harsh, the natural northern environment had often abundantly provided Aboriginals with the necessities of life. Under the new reality, loss of traditional subsistence patterns, welfare dependency, decreased trapping, and increased contact between Aboriginals and whites all occurred. A complete shift to settlement life took time. Many continued to move between the village and their traditional hunting, trapping, and fishing areas, as dictated by the seasons. But over time, government programs solidified year-round residence in the communities.<sup>32</sup>

Government nucleation policies brought changes in family dynamics. Women received federal family allowance payments and often also the family’s welfare payments. They frequently had a larger cash income than did their husbands, which increased women’s status from that of “domestic slaves.” This change took status from men. Male prestige declined further when CCF changes to the economic system resulted in trappers losing credit with traders. Women also often received higher levels of education and dealt with the bureaucracy, further changing roles. Men and women worked together less, while many men trapped and fished alone or with other men. Women helped less with trapping, lost traditional skills, underwent acculturation, and found themselves trapped in the village, caring for children. Yet, in some respects, women experienced less cultural disruption than did men, as women’s role as mothers continued and their traditional

roles also had more flexibility than did those of men. Men also found themselves under pressure to move away for job opportunities, while women could remain at home. The reduction of Aboriginal men's status and self-esteem, and their resulting dysfunctional actions, affected entire families. Domestic problems grew with changes in people's roles. Fewer married, many matrifocal families came about, and government payments helped support families. Children assumed adult roles later in life and the family held less social control than it once had. Parents' role as teachers of children also diminished. Schools often took over much of the education of children, teaching them white ways.<sup>33</sup>

The CCF vigorously worked to prevent Metis from living outside communities it designated or approved of. In 1948, Rev. S. Cuthand, a Cree Anglican missionary and the secretary of the Saskatchewan Metis Society at La Ronge, sent a petition with about fifteen signatures asking for the survey of an area separate from the La Ronge townsite for the Metis. Numerous Metis lived, or in CCF terms "squatted," on land near the mouth of the river flowing into Lac la Ronge. Some had gardens and plots much larger than town lots. Bereskin, the provincial surveyor, responded by offering the Metis leases in two blocks in the townsite. He wanted to split the already small lots into two, making them thirty-three feet in width. Bereskin wanted to see the Metis move to the townsite to increase work opportunities, to allow easier supervision of the liquor traffic, to remove the risk of having a shantytown, and to head off the demand for school and hospital services in the outlying area. The Metis had thirty days to accept the lots. While two applied for lots, others resisted, fearing friction with whites, a lack of peace, and the loss of space to garden and keep their dogs. The Metis Society intervened on behalf of the Metis. Its provincial secretary, J. Z. LaRocque of Lebret, wrote "Surely there is enough room in the Northern part of the Prov. to allow for permanent homes for our people." J. H. Sturdy, the Minister of Social Welfare, opposed a separate Metis area there, since the "ultimate solution" for the "Metis problem" required "assimilation." Bereskin, J. J. Wheaton, the Northern Administrator, and J. W. Churchman, DNR's assistant deputy minister, all seemed to agree that the Metis should move to La Ronge for purposes of assimilation. Malcolm Norris, while not opposing nucleation, pointed out that whites had taken many available lots and that the Metis lacked "foresight and ability" to compete. He viewed the Metis as not yet ready to deal with whites and wanted government to protect them. Norris favoured the use of "miscellaneous use permits" to raise the status of Metis from squatter to permit holder.<sup>34</sup>

With ongoing CCF coercion and the attraction of expanding services, Aboriginals moved to dozens of communities across the North. On the west side, people moved to La Loche, Buffalo



Narrows, Ile a la Crosse, Beauval, and various smaller settlements. La Loche-area Dene formerly lived dispersed over a large area. Some had chosen to live at Garson Lake, Descharme, and West La Loche, but after the HBC store at West La Loche burnt in 1937, the store manager and the priest wanted the people to move across the lake to the new site of La Loche. The construction of a school and store in 1940 and of the hospital and convent in 1943, the advent of family allowance with its required school attendance, and the addition of DNR headquarters and an RCMP detachment attracted residents. Many would have preferred to stay at West La Loche, feeling tricked into moving by the white man. Unfortunately, at La Loche and elsewhere, the package did not include jobs, and people found unemployment and poverty.<sup>35</sup>

Near La Loche, Treaty 10 reserved four tracts of land on the Churchill River for Patuanak-area Dene. The HBC built a store at Patuanak in 1921, and RC Father Moraud served the area for almost fifty years until his death in 1965. After WW II, CCF fur programs and schools drastically reduced seasonal nomadism. People built log houses at Knee Lake, Primeau Lake, Dipper Lake, Cree Lake, and Patuanak. Later, the first four communities declined, as Patuanak increased in size.<sup>36</sup>

Farther south, the mainly Cree community of Buffalo Narrows became the primary supply centre for the west side. It offered a church and school by 1931. Major growth came when L. Waite built a fish plant in 1943, which dominated the village physically and economically. Under the CCF, a new school opened and construction of an outpost hospital proceeded. By 1953, Buffalo Narrows, with about 800 people, also boasted a DNR headquarters, an RCMP detachment, two hotels with cafes, four food stores, a pool room, a sawmill, mink ranches, and an air base.<sup>37</sup>

Still farther south on the west side grew Ile a la Crosse, Saskatchewan's second oldest community. The HBC established a trading post there in 1779, and Louis-Francois Laflèche and Alexandre-Antonin Taché founded the first Roman Catholic mission in Saskatchewan there in 1846. Grey Nuns provided medical care and education from 1860 to 1996. The area's large Metis population included descendants of Red River French Canadians and Scots. Under the CCF, Ile a la Crosse expanded greatly. Services included a DNR headquarters, RCMP detachment, hospital, residential school, church, stores, hotel, café, and pool room. In the mid 1950s, the CCF planned to relocate the community to the new highway, where a more compact settlement would ease provision of services. These plans fell through in 1957, since the mission built a new hospital and the RCMP a regional headquarters at the old site. It also seemed that Ottawa would build a public dock and that a new filleting plant would locate nearby. DNR then organized the old townsite.<sup>38</sup>

South of Ile a la Crosse, Beauval offered a school, an Indian residential school, a fish and

fruit plant, two stores, a café, and a pool room by 1953.<sup>39</sup> Commercial development took place at nearby Beauval Forks at the junction of the highway to Buffalo Narrows where DNR wanted to lease, not sell, lots for service station and restaurant development.<sup>40</sup>

Not far away, the CCF helped relocate Metis to a new community at Cole (Cold) Bay on Canoe Lake. The post office there received the name of Canoe Narrows. The relocation, with remuneration to the Metis from Ottawa, took place to make way for the Primrose Lake bombing range. The province expected the Metis to use some of the compensation money to help pay for the twenty-two new houses built there, but a drinking spree took the money instead. A one-room school opened in October of 1962. About twenty-eight pupils attended in the spring of 1963.<sup>41</sup>

West of La Ronge, at Snake Lake, the HBC established a post in 1786, and the first missionary visited the Dene population in 1899. After a small pox epidemic in 1900-1901 killed about one-half of the area people, survivors left for Patuanak or Stanley Mission. Cree Metis later moved into the area from the west side, forming a scattered village by 1939. Roman Catholics completed a church in 1944, and the CCF soon established a store. School began in 1948, further increasing the draw to the settlement. While DNR laid out a townsite, most Metis chose to squat outside the surveyed area. By 1950 only the government store manager, one other family, the store, and the church had located in the townsite. Eventually, more complied with the CCF plan for them to move to the new site. In 1954, local initiative led to renaming the community, Pinehouse Lake.<sup>42</sup>

Nucleation into settlements occurred later for some far northern Dene bands, including the Hatchet Lake Band, the Black Lake Band, and the Fond du Lac Band. A disorganized community grew at Wollaston Lake by 1954, with thirteen single whites, about twenty-five Treaty Indian families, and four Metis families in the area. Aboriginals still followed the caribou and whites lived in their winter fishing camps. While the CCF delayed introducing trapping areas and other regulation to the area, DNR officer Chas. Salt wanted to see the CCF intervene by establishing a village, airport, and compulsory school. Only three children had some education, about two years each. He noted "We bring a little bit of the law to these people who have been doing pretty much as they please."<sup>43</sup> Over time, dependence on the caribou lessened and most moved to a settlement lifestyle. The CCF's extension of the registered trapline program to the far North in 1958 and the establishment of a CCF fish plant, co-op store, and a new mission helped Wollaston Lake grow.<sup>44</sup>

On the Fond du Lac River near the east end of Lake Athabasca, Stony Rapids began when the HBC established a store in 1927. The Roman Catholics also built a church. Many Chipewyan, formerly from the Selwyn Lake area of the NWT, then spent more time at Stony Rapids. Others moved there from west-side Churchill River communities and the Brochet and Wollaston Lake area

in the 1920s and 1930s. By the late 1940s, many Indians lived at nearby Stony Lake, where they quickly depleted fish stocks and firewood. In 1951, the RC priest established a church at Black Lake, and the HBC and Indians followed. Chief Louis Ditheda wanted to see the Indian school placed at Stony Rapids, but the priest won out and it went to Black Lake. A road, built by DNR for uranium development, linked the two communities. Black Lake's population soon surpassed that of Stony Rapids, and it grew far beyond the ability of the area to support it, with ecological damage to the land, water, and trees. Although settlement life provided few jobs, the caribou-centred way of life largely disappeared. Those who still hunted and trapped did so largely for emotional reasons.<sup>45</sup>

On Reindeer Lake's east shore, the CCF established Kinoosao (Co-op Point) as a site for a filleting plant. Its proximity to the railhead at Lynn Lake, Manitoba, about fifty miles away, dictated the location of the new settlement, and Saskatchewan built a road to Lynn Lake. DNR surveyed the townsite in 1952, then leasing lots to fishermen and fish plant employees. The plant operated only in the summer, employing up to fifteen persons. By 1954, Kinoosao's population included two DNR officers, a school teacher, a storekeeper, six trapper-fishermen, and thirteen students. Attractions included the DNR headquarters, a school, a store, and a post office.<sup>46</sup> Yet most residents of the big lake lived far from the CCF's new settlement. About a dozen fishermen lived on islands in the central area of Reindeer Lake, while most area Aboriginals lived far away from Kinoosao in the Southend area. There, Pelican Narrows band Treaty Indians resided on an island reserve, and Metis occupied a village on the mainland. The CCF tried to move these Aboriginals from Southend to Kinoosao. The Roman Catholic Church and some Southend people opposed the CCF nucleation plans. The Indians wanted to move from the island, since its location made transportation and firewood access difficult. But instead of complying with the CCF plan for them to move to Kinoosao, they and some Metis wanted to exchange land with the province and move to Sucker Point, northwest of Southend. They opposed moving to Kinoosao, citing its distance from their trap lines, a shortage of fish there to feed their dogs, and a desire not to live so close to white people. Some had helped build the Kinoosao filleting plant, where they drank liquor and lost much money to white people in poker games. Roman Catholic Bishop Lajeunesse, wanting to protect the Aboriginals, raised concerns about the move to Kinoosao with T. C. Douglas. Yet the CCF wanted nucleation at Kinoosao to proceed, since it wanted to see the Aboriginals live orderly lives there. It had already spent about \$100,000 on Kinoosao's new DNR headquarters and fish plant and planned to build a school. Northern Administrator Brown thought the Church and the HBC wanted to keep "the natives in isolation and comparative ignorance . . .

contrary to our policies and beliefs. We consider education and assimilation the only ultimate solution to the native problem.” Minister Brockelbank dismissed the Bishop’s concerns about gambling, depicting gambling as part of Aboriginal culture. He wrote “the only way the native will learn not to gamble is to experience losing his wealth permanently.” He thought a “protectionist policy” prevented Aboriginal development. Although the CCF could not force Aboriginals to move to Kinoosao, its use of coercion and incentives resulted in many moving there.<sup>47</sup>

In the Saskatchewan River delta, Cumberland House, the oldest settlement in Saskatchewan, played an important role in the fur trade and river transport, also attracting Indian families to trade and work. Treaty 5 of 1875 created a reserve near the post. After Father Charlebois asked the federal government in 1892 to allow Metis to remain, Ottawa traded 640 acres of land for land elsewhere. By 1900 some Aboriginals lived there almost permanently.<sup>48</sup> As elsewhere under the CCF, DNR acted as the local government. In 1946 DNR began a four-point development plan, which included muskrat development, a sawmill, a farm, and improved education. About 500 persons lived in the area in 1947, including about twenty-five whites. The presence of schools, a hospital, and government cheques accelerated nucleation. The number of encampments and villages in the area reduced from ten to four by 1960. Cumberland House, with 453 persons, had three satellite communities: Pemmican Portage with 247 persons, Pinebluff with seventy-five persons, and Sturgeon Landing with 102 persons. Metis comprised 76.4%, Treaty Indians 16.3%, and whites 7.3% of the area population. At Pemmican Portage, about three miles from Cumberland House, over one-half of the population lived on the reserve. It included a school, a Northern Evangelical Mission, and Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. Pinebluff, a reserve about twenty-five miles west of Cumberland House, offered a one-room Indian Affairs school and a winter HBC store. Most Pinebluff people moved to Cumberland House in summer and back to Pinebluff in September when school resumed. Attractions at Sturgeon Landing, thirty-four miles north, included a one-room school, a store, and a post office. Residents traded with The Pas and Flin Flon, with some provincial administration coming from Cumberland House, and treaty matters handled from Pelican Narrows.<sup>49</sup>

The CCF preferred larger settlements to smaller ones primarily because it wanted to maximize the efficiency of its provision of services to northerners. Kinoosao, Patuanak, La Ronge, and Cumberland House all provide examples of this preference. In another case, Father A. Darche wanted to build a residential school at Dillon, about thirty water miles from Buffalo Narrows. Dillon already had a church, rectory, HBC post, school, about twenty houses, and a population of about 157 Treaty Indians and 122 Metis. Darche wanted government to build a medical facility,

but both the CCF and Ottawa opposed establishing an outpost hospital for the small population.<sup>50</sup> CCF refusal to provide services in small villages pushed Aboriginals to the larger communities. The foregoing description of nucleation in predominantly Aboriginal communities does not mention all northern settlements. Similar congregation occurred elsewhere, largely brought about by the CCF.

Nucleation brought many problems, including those caused by applying culturally inappropriate southern settlement designs. While northerners preferred to build homes in clusters, determined partly by kinship ties, urban planners wanted to place houses in neat rows along uniformly spaced streets, thereby reducing costs for surveys, services, and policing. Aboriginals resisted, while the CCF lamented the problems of squatters, stray dogs, weak local organization, juvenile delinquency, and sanitation. With nucleation, officials displaced traditional leadership. This contributed to increased social problems, including violence and alcohol abuse. Nucleation also occurred in other areas of the Canadian sub-arctic, encouraged by government services and programs. Interest in trapping and the bush diminished, and many came to prefer settlement life.<sup>51</sup>

Most northern villages housed only a few white residents. The opposite situation existed at Uranium City, Creighton, and Island Falls, where non-Aboriginals formed the majority. The fairly even mix of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals at La Ronge represented an unusual situation in northern Saskatchewan. The CCF refused to spend much money on La Ronge, leaving it with inadequate services, while it helped build the mining community of Uranium City almost overnight, providing it with an extensive infrastructure, hospital, and high school. Creighton, another mining community, also far surpassed most northern communities in development under the CCF. Private industry developed Island Falls. The disparity in development existed largely because the Uranium City and Creighton areas generated substantial tax and royalty revenues for the province, while La Ronge and Aboriginal communities drained provincial coffers. CCF spending on northern communities was often directly related to the amount the government collected there.

La Ronge had long served as a trading, mission, and educational centre. A survey of 316 acres in 1920 divided about two miles of lakeshore east of the Indian reserve. The HBC and Indian Affairs received much of the approximately 150 acres considered suitable for development. In turn, Indian Affairs allowed the Anglican residential school to locate on its land. By 1944, about twenty-four families lived in the community, while many Indians and Metis lived nearby. The Anglican mission and school, two stores, a DNR officer, and an RCMP officer provided services.<sup>52</sup>

Seeing excellent potential for tourism and various forms of resource development, the CCF

wanted to expand La Ronge. DNR consequently bought land from the HBC and Indian Affairs and laid out a townsite. A survey of part of the settlement created residential lots measuring sixty-five by 130 feet, allowing room for a garden or chickens. By 1946, the CCF provided a filleting plant, sawmill, air service, and two-way radio service. It aggressively assumed many of the former roles of the Anglican Church and the HBC and imposed its plans. The CCF consulted only minimally with local people, who disapproved of much of what the new government did. Its efforts to have the Anglican school removed proved controversial, but after the school burned, the issue seemed to disappear. The Anglicans' Rev. Fisher thought the fish plant brought negative changes, including increased drinking, and fear existed that a pool room and dance hall would follow, adding further harmful influences. People also questioned DNR's town and road layout plans. For a time, only a miserable road extended through the settlement, not following the survey plan. Community people as early as 1946 showed interest in local government, but DNR kept control. A race-based class structure grew, with many of the dominant white people viewing Aboriginals as problematic. Whites expressed fear that Aboriginals would not properly care for a hypothetical community hall, and one person even wanted to see treatment of books at a future library to prevent transmission of disease.<sup>53</sup>

Even though the CCF used La Ronge as its base within the North and DNR held responsibility for local government there, the province spent little on developing the community, except for administration purposes. It provided a new administration building to house the Northern District office, Saskatchewan Government Airways, and the radio monitoring station, and two field officer residences. A new four-room school operated by 1948.<sup>54</sup>

La Ronge had great potential as a tourism, business, and governmental centre, and many private persons showed interest in investing there. Yet the CCF put up obstacles to development, repeatedly turning away interested parties. This occurred partly because the CCF protected some existing businesses but primarily because of the CCF's failure to provide badly needed development land.<sup>55</sup> The federal government and the HBC still owned much of the land in the townsite, and the CCF's fish plant polluted an area of the lake shore, preventing development there. Further limits on development existed since the Indian Reserve lay to the west, muskeg to the north, and the lake to the south. While some in government occasionally spoke about establishing a new townsite in a more suitable location, this never occurred. Instead, DNR's surveyor Bereskin and others in government made various efforts to squeeze development into the existing limited space. Several transfers of land from Ottawa to the province took place by the early 1950s, helping ease the congestion somewhat. Land obtained included the former Anglican school site.<sup>56</sup>

Bereskin suggested the creative solution of laying out about 200 lots on Kitsakie Island, about 1,200 feet from the townsite. He visualized a bridge, causeway, or ferry link to the mainland, but the development never happened.<sup>57</sup>

DNR community planning at La Ronge also proved inadequate and haphazard, further hurting development. While it offered the Metis only half-sized leased lots, the CCF allowed a few business people to dominate much of the lakeshore. Outfitters leased prime lake front land for low-density, poor-quality development, largely shutting out cottagers. Red Boardman, a tourism operator, leased prime lakefront land, formerly set aside by DNR as public reserve for a public park and camping site. A less fortunate entrepreneur, Vic Peterson, leased sodden swamp land, where he located four modest cabins and an outhouse. Others waited for development land. By 1951, A. K. Quandt, who had left DNR, had waited about three years for approval of a business lease.<sup>58</sup>

M. A. Welsh, district sanitary officer, kindly depicted La Ronge as having “a bad case of growing pains.” A more candid description would have called it governmental neglect. The townsite lacked a safe water supply and an adequate sewage and garbage disposal system; a risk of typhoid or dysentery existed. As elsewhere in the North, Aboriginal sled dogs were a “scourge,” fending for themselves in the summer when their masters did not use them. Welsh saw DNR as an obstacle to improvements, since he understood that DNR planned not to spend more on settlements than it collected in taxes. DNR already spent much more on La Ronge than it raised there. La Ronge still lacked local government and had a low potential to generate tax revenue.<sup>59</sup>

DNR's tight control and inadequate administration of La Ronge continued for many years. By the mid 1950s, the CCF tired of its responsibilities there and decided that La Ronge should incorporate as a village. It then wanted this change to happen quickly. DNR's minister even supported a plan to threaten the local ratepayers association with an increase in the education mill rate to force its hand. A plebiscite approved incorporation, and the village began effective August 1, 1955. The change meant that villagers elected councillors, and the village took over garbage collection, taxation, assets, and liabilities. The province kept control of public reserves until 1958.<sup>60</sup>

While La Ronge grew and offered a relatively large range of services, becoming the regional centre, the CCF failed to provide substantial aid. Yet the new local government lacked the tax base to adequately develop the community. As a result, La Ronge continued without water, sewer, and other facilities. Possibly most surprisingly, this centre did not even have a hospital until 1960. At that time, La Ronge had a population of about 568, while 884 lived nearby in a Metis area and on reserves. The residents of many outlying settlements also relied on La Ronge as a

service centre.<sup>61</sup>

The situation seemed to brighten for La Ronge in the 1960s. Following a multi-year project to drain a muskeg area, DNR approved village plans to expand to the north in 1964. The land provided space for a school and housing. By 1963, DNR also offered lots for lease at a new development just south of La Ronge, known as Air Ronge. The CCF undoubtedly made many contributions to the La Ronge area by 1964. Yet it could have done much more.<sup>62</sup> Inadequate development planning and a low level of spending handicapped the village. As a result, La Ronge remained badly underdeveloped with glaring shortcomings, particularly for its Aboriginal population.

Sharply contrasting with its miserly spending at La Ronge, the CCF created a new modern town on the north shore of Lake Athabasca. Goldfields, bustling in the 1930s, had unincorporated and become a ghost town after the Box Mine closed in 1942. The federal crown corporation Eldorado began exploratory work for radioactive minerals in the area in 1946, and with the discovery of uranium, the area quickly developed. Goldfields briefly revived, but in 1952 the CCF began to build Uranium City at a central location. The CCF controlled development, aiming “to control or eliminate the establishment of company towns in the north.” The Beaverlodge Local Development Area encompassed the mining area, although DNR also had a resident administrator there. The CCF rapidly provided infrastructure, including electricity, a new four-room school, and a hospital.<sup>63</sup>

The Uranium City area boomed, employing about 1,500 persons in exploration and mining construction by early 1953. Pacific Western Airlines (PWA) flew in daily from Edmonton and three Saskatchewan Government Airways (SGA) flights per week from Prince Albert brought workers. The newcomers included many Europeans, making Uranium City an ethnic “melting pot.” It soon had many businesses, located on lots leased from the province. A 1955 report requested by the CCF cabinet projected a potential population of 8,000 and recommended the immediate construction of a twenty-five bed hospital and a water and sewer system. Both projects quickly proceeded. Area mines, including Gunnar and Eldorado, also provided housing and other facilities. With the province’s blessing, the Municipal Corporation of Uranium City and District began in 1956, looking after municipal, hospital, and education matters, operating quite independently.<sup>64</sup> Only four years after its founding, the infrastructure and facilities at Uranium City far surpassed those of La Ronge.

The CCF tried to reserve Uranium City for tax-paying residents. Aboriginal squatters had presented a problem, but by 1953 government relocated them outside the hamlet limits. Concern



resurfaced in 1956 about Aboriginals, who lived in nearby tent camps and other bush dwellings. A provincial report called for a program to control Aboriginal settlement. Its authors thought Aboriginals lacked the preparation to integrate into the community and viewed them as an economic and social threat. The province feared Indians and Metis would raise the area's low welfare costs and that "unemployables and undesirables" would become a burden.<sup>65</sup> The CCF quite successfully helped exclude Aboriginals from the area, creating a white, prosperous microcosm of the South.

Another major area of white settlement grew on the Saskatchewan side of the border near Flin Flon, Manitoba and its Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company operation. The CCF spent little on this area, instead relying on Manitoba and the mining company to provide much of the care for Saskatchewan residents there. Several settlements sprang up since many workers preferred to live on the Saskatchewan side. About 350 persons lived in the unorganized "tin and shanty town" of Tobacco Road. The CCF leased the area to the Community Development Company of Flin Flon, which provided fire, police, health, road upkeep, and other services.<sup>66</sup> In 1953-1954, the Boundary Area amalgamated with Flin Flon.<sup>67</sup> Another settlement grew nearby at Creighton. DNR surveyed lots there following "scientific community planning." It leased, rather than sold, the lots to prevent speculation and land price inflation. Over the years, the mining company paid many of the costs, including for education and a water and sewer system. Creighton incorporated as the first northern village in 1952, relieving DNR of local government responsibilities. It became a town by 1958. The population of Creighton and the Boundary Area rose to 2,287 in 1961.<sup>68</sup> A resort community at nearby Denare Beach provided recreation for workers from Flin Flon and Creighton and a home for some Aboriginals. DNR kept strict control there, resisting efforts to develop local authority.<sup>69</sup>

Throughout the North, the CCF applied its socialist ideology in choosing the details of how it forced northerners into settlements. The CCF vision saw Aboriginals living in state-owned communities, working at state-owned and co-operative industries. In socialist fashion the CCF retained state ownership of most of the land on which it placed northerners. The CCF often refused to sell land, insisting on leases instead. It also worked to take over some already titled land, transferred to private parties and the federal government before the province received control of crown lands in 1930. This policy differed greatly from that used by the CCF in the South, where private persons commonly owned land. No clear rationale existed for the northern policy, other than the CCF desire to impose state control and socialism on northerners. The policy had negative consequences since it limited northern development. Owners of homes and businesses generally

preferred to own building sites because improvements on leased lots usually had a lower value than those on titled lots. Additionally, lessees needed government consent to obtain mortgages.<sup>70</sup>

Although the CCF seemed to relax its controls by 1949, in theory allowing the sale of lots in surveyed subdivisions, in reality, restrictive lease policies continued. DNR persisted in signing leases in community after community. By 1961 the CCF adopted a policy not to sell land in new subdivisions in recreational areas. The policies led to an irate confrontation at the Denare Beach Ratepayer's Association meeting.<sup>71</sup> Inconsistent and excessively restrictive policies also deterred business investment, preventing northerners from improving communities and building an economic base. Business had to lobby for development approval, not knowing what arbitrary rules the CCF might dream up. Not surprisingly in view of the obstacles created by the CCF, DNR's Municipal Supervisor Bague described the North in 1961 as economically sick.<sup>72</sup> In some cases, DNR proved willing to make minor variations in its lease policies, while maintaining general strict control.<sup>73</sup>

As part of the nucleation process, the CCF tried to make Aboriginals pay lease fees and taxes. Even though government received tax and royalty revenues from ores, timber, fish, and fur, it did not include this income in judging whether northerners paid their "fair share." DNR's R. G. Young, seemingly in response to a CCF cabinet inquiry, studied this issue in 1953. He found that, with the inclusion of mining royalties, government income from the North stood much above expenditures, but he argued against counting mining income in the analysis. According to his estimate, the province would spend about \$600,000 on various programs in one year. Not counting mining revenue, it would collect up to \$200,000, including property taxes, sales tax, non-mining royalties, and license fees. This left a shortfall of about \$400,000. Young thought the main demand on funds came from Aboriginals, not from industrious and self-sufficient whites. He wrote that maybe cabinet should have asked whether "individual cultural groups were paying their way." In his view, Metis blew their money on liquor, lacked technical knowledge, and would experience "retrogression" resulting in a further financial drain. A lack of social stigma for not paying taxes also worked against CCF plans to have Aboriginals accept the responsibility of making payments to government. Even imprisonment for ignoring tax liabilities did not carry a stigma within the Aboriginal community.<sup>74</sup> Young's fear of increased expenditures came true when northern spending for six departments rose from \$705,113 in 1951-52 to \$1,270,105 in 1954-55. DNR spent over one-half of this amount, while Education, Health, and Welfare together expended less than did DNR.<sup>75</sup>

In order to minimize resistance to nucleation, the CCF used various tactics. Wanting

Aboriginals to move from the status of squatter to that of paying lease or permit holder, the CCF only gradually increased controls, trying not to create enough of an obstacle to prevent movement to settlements. It kept lease rates low and varied these by ability to pay. DNR began a system of basing lease charges on the classification of communities as developed, semi-developed, or undeveloped. This method designated communities which depended on fish and fur as undeveloped, keeping their lease rates low and encouraging Aboriginal movement to the settlements. Protest arose within DNR though. A. T. Davidson wrote "It is a poor policy to continue to force the white residents to pay high taxes and lease rentals just to make up for the non-payment by Metis in the same community." Progress towards having Aboriginals pay fees remained slow. By 1956 only about one-quarter of residents in some settlements paid lease or permit fees. Those living the "white man's standards" paid fees and taxes while those living the "native way" paid little.<sup>76</sup>

To facilitate property taxation, the Saskatchewan Assessment Commission assessed northern communities, starting by 1948. As with leases, the CCF tried to gradually ease Aboriginals into accepting this new responsibility, using an "introductory educational form of taxation." It raised taxes for "relatively advanced communities" to "more realistic levels" by 1954.<sup>77</sup> Further increasing the obligations of Aboriginals, the CCF introduced school taxes, and by 1955 most northern communities had educational levies based on property assessments and ability to pay. To the CCF, the principle of having Aboriginals pay seemed to matter more than the amount collected. The education tax paid only about three percent of the cost of northern education in 1956.<sup>78</sup> Aboriginals continued to resist paying property taxes late in the CCF era, limiting the success of CCF efforts to exert control and order in the new settlements. Because of the pervasive poverty, the CCF found it could do little to enforce the collection of taxes. Ile la Crosse paid only \$637.77 of the levy of \$1,765.55 in 1960, Cumberland House only \$580.29 of \$1,127.30 in 1962, and Sandy Bay only \$139.40 of \$545.40 in 1962.<sup>79</sup> As part of its effort to regulate northerners, the CCF also applied and collected various fees from northerners, including marginal businesses.

The CCF did not collect enough in local levies to fund northern needs. Yet only by omitting from their calculations the millions paid into provincial coffers through royalties and taxes on mining, forestry, fish, and fur could the CCF view the North as a welfare case. Since the CCF gave little back to the North, most communities could not meet even the most basic needs. Nucleation moved Aboriginals to villages, where they encountered severe governmental neglect.

In another effort to order and control the formerly migrant population, the CCF surveyed

northern settlements. Controller of Surveys A. I. Bereskin took over most survey work from DNR's Construction Branch. He held great independent power, deciding priorities and schedules for surveys and designing and planning communities. Development needs in the larger predominantly white communities often took priority over the surveys of Aboriginal settlements, although the CCF also made sure to survey the rapidly growing Aboriginal villages. In one case in 1947, Northern Administrator Wheaton pressed for a survey at Snake Lake for families moving there to avoid having "just that many more squatters on our hands."<sup>80</sup>

Aboriginals sometimes resisted CCF survey plans. Resistance rose in 1950 when Bereskin set out to survey a townsite at the scattered Metis and Indian settlement of Sandy Bay. He aimed to begin "a more orderly program of development." The settlement extended for more than one-half mile along the Churchill River's shore, with houses following no apparent system of placement. Most local people did not want the survey, preferring to live on unsurveyed land to paying leases and taxes. It seemed many would move to the bush before paying fees. Bereskin gave up in frustration, surveying only a small townsite, including the DNR, school, hospital, and Roman Catholic church areas and a ten-lot residential "test block."<sup>81</sup> Resistance also arose at Stony Rapids, where people resented landscape changes designed by "city planners from the south."<sup>82</sup>

Some northern communities, including Ile a la Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, and Cumberland House, had old surveys dating back to before the CCF era. In these cases, government had issued titles, but residents had not bothered with the legal paperwork when owners died or sold property. Most property owners also had fallen many years into arrears in the payment of property taxes. The destruction of survey markers and random placement of buildings further eroded the system. In these communities, the CCF aggressively worked to institute control, carrying out resurveys and restoring tax collection. Cumberland House provides one of the more dramatic examples of the CCF exerting authority in pre-existing communities. Residents there had received titles to surveyed lots from the federal government in 1911, and the HBC also sold land. By the time the CCF came to power, the survey, land registration, and taxation systems had broken down. DNR took control, filing tax liens, taking over all properties, resurveying the area, and then giving lots to the residents. By 1956, the CCF restored order there, aiding in its plans to modernize and assimilate residents.<sup>83</sup>

The CCF also extended its governance to those who did not move to communities or who still spent some time away from villages. By 1949, trappers and others could no longer build remote cabins wherever they wanted, without first securing occupation permits. DNR also sought to regulate existing buildings in the northern bush. It turned its attention to about eighteen

scattered sites, including cabins, a store, and the Evangelical Mission, along the road south of La Ronge and the east side of Montreal Lake in 1953. Control increased as the CCF era progressed.<sup>84</sup>

The CCF movement of Aboriginals to settlements and subsequent attempts to regulate them there formed part of a CCF effort to assimilate northern Aboriginals into white society. Although efforts to nucleate Aboriginals proved quite successful, CCF plans for assimilation largely failed. CCF politicians and administrators became frustrated with Aboriginals and their seeming refusal to give up their distinct ways, even once within the settlements. Doris Shackleton, Tommy Douglas' biographer, wrote "The darkest problem facing Douglas, and the one he was least able to solve, was the degradation of the Indian people of Saskatchewan."<sup>85</sup> Although other factors contributed to the degradation, in the view of the CCF, Aboriginal culture played a major role in this. Aboriginals resisted accepting the Euro-Canadian culture and giving up their own culture. The growth of two societies and a northern population explosion also blocked assimilation.

Aboriginals remained distinct and separate from their social superiors, the white government employees who operated the CCF northern colonial system. Additionally, many white persons who did not work for the government went north, where they joined a large and distinct white society. If anything, the presence of a larger number of non-Aboriginals made the line between Aboriginal and white society more pronounced. The situation with women was little different from men. Most white women in the North lived a middle class life style, in contrast to the poverty of Aboriginal women. White women commonly accompanied their husbands, who went north to work for mining companies or government. Many southern women, single and married, also worked at professions, most commonly nursing or teaching, in the North.

Two societies grew up in the North. Even while US civil rights issues headlined Saskatchewan's newscasts, discrimination openly persisted in the North. The CCF knew of this situation. Outspoken CCF MLA W. J. Berezowsky recognized the two societies in 1952. He saw "class or racial distinction and prejudice" where whites deemed themselves a "superior people." Aboriginals wanted acceptance by whites, who ignored them. Berezowsky wrote "Only a few whites who have resided in a community for a lengthy period or who are idealists, treat these people as equals on occasion."<sup>86</sup> The CCF largely ignored the blatant racism in its own back yard and did not effectively deal with the situation.

Barriers between Aboriginals and whites increased in the 1950s when mining attracted thousands of white people to the area. Whites, who often knew little about Aboriginals, considered themselves morally superior and disapproved of much Aboriginal behavior. In a blatant effort to keep Aboriginals away, Uranium City had a "one-mile exclusion zone" where Aboriginals could

not put up tents or build houses.<sup>87</sup> V. F. Valentine, DNR's anthropologist, likened the relationship between Indians and whites to a caste system, with the white man in the ruling caste. He described Metis as "outcasts," with little mobility possible out of their group. Some whites thought of Aboriginals as lazy and as having lower intelligence. Fearing lowered academic standards and contagious disease, they also did not want their children to attend school with Aboriginals.<sup>88</sup> A 1958 government report said that many people, including numerous government employees, perpetuated the myth of Metis as a "shiftless lot" unable to care for themselves.<sup>89</sup>

Most who spent time in the North can describe the two societies in the communities they knew. J. E. M. Kew, a DNR anthropologist who lived at Cumberland House in 1960, reported that the people were separated by ethnic prejudice, power, and economic position. DNR officers and store managers stood at the top of the social ladder, with teachers, missionaries, RCMP, nurses, and other whites having lesser status and authority. While they formed a small minority, white people had all ten phones in the community. Using censure, whites pressured other whites to follow the rules of social segregation. A teacher who crossed the line was transferred. Inter-marriage between whites and Aboriginals often brought increased status to the Aboriginal partner, while the white spouse risked losing status. Even though the churches and some in the CCF protested against the caste-like system, the upper class resisted and delayed change.<sup>90</sup>

Possibly the most startling tale of two societies came from the communities of Island Falls and Sandy Bay on the Churchill River. There, a hydro-electric dam generated power for the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting mine and mill at Flin Flon. About forty white employees and their families, a total of about 200 people, lived in the company town of Island Falls. They lived in luxurious company houses, including some about 1,800 square feet in size, with hardwood floors, french doors, and electric heat. Community facilities included a recreation centre, swimming pool, golf course, skating rink, and curling rink. Metis and Treaty Indians settled at nearby Sandy Bay, largely to obtain employment at the dam. About eighty Aboriginal men laboured for the company at menial and unskilled jobs. They could not use the Island Falls facilities, and the company store did not allow Aboriginal customers past the counter, allegedly because white women did not want to shop with Aboriginals. After Cree customers protested, the company set up a separate store for them. Many Sandy Bay residents lived in unmodern shacks, and, even though the power plant stood about one mile away, they lived without electricity until 1958.<sup>91</sup>

The discrimination and racism at Island Falls and Sandy Bay continued with the knowledge of the CCF. It failed to intervene. In 1957, CCF Member of Parliament A. M. Nicholson saw little

government interest in improving housing, providing electricity, or dealing with social problems.<sup>92</sup> The situation remained much the same when DNR anthropologist Walter Hlady studied Sandy Bay in the late 1950s. He thought the company set the tone of segregation except where necessary for work and to give the “impression that apartheid does not exist.” In his view, alcohol helped the Aboriginals relieve the feeling of being second-class citizens. Men, women, and teenagers spent weekends partying, spending much of their income on alcohol. Families also drank about one-half gallon of homebrewed “molly” per day. Hlady described drinking and sex as the primary recreational activities.<sup>93</sup> Robin F. Badgley of the U of S found northern discrimination “most clearly crystallized” there, with residential, recreational, educational, medical, and even religious discrimination. The power company educated white children and owned its own clinic. Island Falls also received religious services from Father Thibodeau separate from those at Sandy Bay.<sup>94</sup> Although many people pointed out northern racism, the CCF simply ignored it.

Rapid growth in the Aboriginal population also stood in the way of achieving CCF goals. This expansion made already tenuous CCF plans even less likely to succeed. The number of persons in the North more than doubled under the CCF, from roughly 8,500 in 1944 to about 18,000 in 1964. During the same period, in contrast, the southern population changed little in size. The northern population increase came from two primary sources: a high rate of natural increase among Aboriginals and the influx of white people to the area. By 1958 the northern population of about 16,500 included about 4,400 Treaty Indians, 4,600 Metis, and 7,500 whites, located in seven areas. Athabasca Region had the largest population, with about 4,500 residents, while only about fifty persons lived in the Cree Lake area. The other areas fell somewhere in between.<sup>95</sup> Population growth within the Aboriginal community occurred at least partly due to CCF interventions, including the CCF nucleation projects. The unpredicted expansion of the Aboriginal population added a new and overwhelming dimension to northern problems.

The dramatic rise in population occurred both among whites and Aboriginals. Yet the CCF approved of growth in white numbers, while expansion of the Aboriginal community caused great alarm. Most white people who came north worked in the mining industry or for government, and, since they paid taxes and did not depend on welfare, did not worry the CCF. The largest number of non-Aboriginals concentrated in the Uranium City area, where the population rose from 250 in 1946 to about 4,500 by 1959. Similarly, the Creighton mining area grew from 129 in 1921 to 2,576 in 1961. Power generation at Island Falls added several hundred more white people to the North. In contrast, the population increase in the Aboriginal community distressed the CCF. Yet the CCF contributed to the population expansion with its nucleation and other interventionist policies.

Population growth resulted from the decreased infant mortality and increased life expectancy made possible by the improved health services Aboriginals received in villages. Various government payments also acted as incentives to have children, helping ensure that the pre-existing high birth rate would not fall even when more infants survived childhood. Infant mortality fell from an average of 109 per 1,000 in the 1952-1956 period to sixty-two per 1,000 in the 1957-1961 period. Since the Indian infant death rate still stood at about four times that for non-Indians, population growth could accelerate more as infant mortality fell further.<sup>96</sup>

The rate of natural increase in the North rose from 24.6 per 1,000 population in 1952 to 38.3 per 1,000 in 1961, more than double the rate in the South. Northern Saskatchewan's birth rate of forty-six per 1,000 population in 1961 stood only a little behind that of Guatemala, which at forty-nine per 1,000 had the highest rate shown in a United Nations survey. West side communities showed a 52.5% increase in the Indian and Metis population from 1951 to 1961, or an average annual increase of 5.3%. This raised the Aboriginal population there from 2,433 to 3,694. Growth accelerated further, with the highest rates of natural increase occurring from 1959 to 1965.<sup>97</sup>

While improvements in health care played a large role in the growth of the Aboriginal population, stimulus to have large families came from family allowance and welfare programs. Cheques increased with family size, and even small payments became important as the CCF shifted the society to a cash basis.<sup>98</sup> The Catholic church, the principal northern church, also likely added to the population increase by prohibiting birth control. Government and medical practitioners, although alarmed about the high birth rate, did not aggressively push birth control until the late 1960s. Additionally, a relative lack of stigma among Aboriginals about illegitimacy added to population growth. Many unmarried women gave birth. The CCF saw a crisis in illegitimacy, and its Northern Advisory Committee spoke of "twisted domestic relationships," "drinking, loose-living and gambling," and of men fathering children by several women. In one year, eleven unmarried "girls," aged fourteen to twenty-five, expected children in one settlement. Indian births in 1958 included 27.4% classed as illegitimate, compared to 3.1% for the rest of the population.<sup>99</sup>

Population growth greatly contributed to the worsening economic situation in Aboriginal communities. Pete Tompkins, a DNR employee, wrote "The Neetows are breeding like mink and the population is mounting by leaps and bounds and as a result the fishing trapping etc are over crowded. . . . no one seems to know the remedy."<sup>100</sup> Along with the CCF failure to help Aboriginals move into new occupations, the population increase pushed northerners into welfare dependency. Some came to fear the growing population. G. Kinneard of Public Health, saw the



growing Aboriginal population as a “serious threat to peace.”<sup>101</sup>

Two decades of CCF control accelerated the change from life in the bush to village residence for northern Aboriginals. The CCF worked aggressively to make this happen. Only in the confined space of settlements could it effectively modernize and assimilate Aboriginals and teach them the principles of socialism. Its pursuit of these goals did not allow the CCF to tolerate Aboriginals continuing to live unregulated lives on the land. The CCF added new settlements and expanded existing ones to house the formerly mobile population. The CCF then gradually introduced the responsibilities of the Euro-Canadian lifestyle to Aboriginals.

The CCF aimed for complete assimilation of northern Aboriginals, wanting to eliminate distinctions within the Aboriginal group and between Aboriginals and whites. Yet, even though Aboriginals moved to settlements, discrimination and racism grew, adding to the existence of a society deeply split by race and class. This rift worked against assimilation. An explosion of the northern Aboriginal population also contributed to the failure of CCF plans for assimilating Aboriginals. Instead of becoming fewer and less distinct, Aboriginals grew in number and increasingly became a separate force. Contrary to CCF hopes, northern Aboriginals would not become modern, assimilated socialists in one generation.

While vital to CCF plans, nucleation formed only one part of the new government’s strategy to bring modernization, assimilation, and socialism to the North. In order to reach these goals, the North also needed a new and adequate infrastructure. Since it served as both the local and provincial government, the CCF held responsibility for providing much of this. Exploring the CCF record in the provision of infrastructure can help understand the CCF and its plans for the North.

## **Chapter Four**

### **ENTIRELY OUT OF THE QUESTION**

CCF plans for the North made providing a modern infrastructure system urgent and imperative. Without an updated infrastructure, the CCF could not adequately apply its policies, modernization, assimilation, and socialization would not take place, and northern wealth would remain beyond the reach of government and industry. The Aboriginal movement to settlements and the growing northern population added further demand for numerous services. The provision of a northern infrastructure fell to the CCF. It held responsibility for local, regional, and provincial governance in the North. It also discouraged private investment and preferred government enterprise, limiting private infrastructure development. Yet while wanting to remake the North, the CCF ironically refused to devote the necessary resources for this to succeed. The northern infrastructure remained severely limited when the CCF left office after twenty years. A CCF lack of spending in this area inevitably contributed to underdevelopment and poverty and the failure to realize the potential of the North and its people. With the exception of several white communities, the lack of an adequate infrastructure affected practically all aspects of northern life, making life unnecessarily difficult for Aboriginals and whites.

The CCF socialist orientation influenced its approach to building northern infrastructure. Because of ideological opposition to private development, the CCF often refused to provide private industry with the support facilities needed for large-scale, high quality development in tourism, forestry, and mining. The CCF frequently opposed the entry of private capital. Industry also did not trust the CCF, preferring to operate in more favourable political climates. Exceptions included the federally-promoted uranium development in the Lake Athabasca area where a number of private companies thrived along with the federal crown corporation, Eldorado. In most areas of the North though, private enterprise could not afford to operate because of the lack of infrastructure.

The CCF colonial mentality also affected northern infrastructure development, both within the communities to which Aboriginals moved and elsewhere. While the CCF claimed to have the interests of northerners at heart, it refused to spend the money necessary to allow them to live in

decent conditions. The CCF decision to entrust DNR with most infrastructure development helped create a colonial situation and limited development. The CCF gave DNR only meagre resources to work with, while saddling it with the task of providing roads, docks, safe water, community and recreational facilities, electricity, and communications.

Northern communications routes traditionally ran largely east and west, following the water routes. This situation continued in 1944, when four main water trade routes existed. One, from Black Lake to Fort McMurray, Alberta, traversed Lake Athabasca and the rivers at each end. Another ran from Lac la Loche to Green Lake, via Buffalo Narrows, Beauval, and the Beaver River. A third route allowed travel from Stanley Mission to Lac la Ronge and then to Montreal Lake. Finally, a fourth led from Reindeer Lake to the Churchill, then down the Sturgeon Weir to the Saskatchewan and on to The Pas, Manitoba. All four routes connected to road or rail systems, although two did so outside the province. People also used the water as winter highways, when the frozen surface carried dog teams and sleds and much heavier caterpillar trains laden with goods.

Northern Saskatchewan presented a picture of underdevelopment in 1944. No all-season roads penetrated the region, giving the water routes ongoing importance. As a result, many northerners dealt more with centres in Manitoba and Alberta than with those in southern Saskatchewan. Unlike its neighboring provinces, northern Saskatchewan also had no railroads in 1944. Without rail transportation, economical extraction of ores and forest resources could not take place. Airplanes had revolutionized northern transportation by 1944. Yet air transportation suffered from serious limitations, since residents and industry could not afford to use airplanes as a substitute for roads and railways. Air travel did help government administer the North and proved invaluable in cases of medical emergency. The North had a limited telegraph system on the west side prior to 1944, but most areas had no access to telegraph, radio, or telephone communication. Many northerners had never seen an electric light. While southerners expected and received access to the provincial electrical grid, power lines did not reach the North. For drinking water, northerners relied on water scooped from lakes and rivers. This system worked well prior to nucleation in settlements and accompanying pollution of the water supply. In the pre-settlement days, northerners did not need sewage or garbage disposal facilities and these did not exist in most areas, even after villages developed. Northern communities had no form of representative or responsible local government. The justice system also remained rudimentary in 1944. Representatives of southern justice usually flew in from outside when situations became urgent. The CCF saw much room for improvement of the northern infrastructure when it took

power. In order to modernize the North and create a viable economy there, the CCF planned to devote large resources to building a new infrastructure.

In its first years in office, it appeared that the CCF would open up the North to extract minerals and timber. J. T. Douglas, the first CCF Minister of Highways, wanted to build roads to La Ronge, Ile a la Crosse, and Flin Flon. In 1947 the CCF claimed to have under development a "long-range plan" to provide access to all northern areas with development potential.<sup>1</sup> Yet, faced with high costs, CCF interest in northern resource development soon waned. The CCF then contented itself with easy royalty pickings from several profitable mining areas which relied on Manitoba and Alberta infrastructure. Soon building northern roads held little priority for the CCF. When J. T. Douglas retired in 1960, road construction remained largely stalled. Not a single road crossed the Churchill River, while many resource-rich northern areas had no road within hundreds of miles. Ironically, while the CCF refused to build the necessary northern road system, Saskatchewan constructed more miles of roads in the South than did any other province.

Northern Saskatchewan missed out on much development by not having a more extensive road system. Some, including DNR Deputy Minister J. W. Churchman, failed to recognize the importance of road access for mining exploration. Unambitiously, he seemed content to rely on water, rail, and air connections to Manitoba and Alberta.<sup>2</sup> In 1956, Northern Administrator C. S. Brown realistically described inaccessibility as "a major and obvious deterrent to resource utilization and industrial development in northern Saskatchewan."<sup>3</sup> Economic development of ore bodies and of forestry resources required access, and most areas did not have the option of dealing with the road and rail systems found in adjoining provinces. Mining exploration and logging made little sense hundreds of miles from roads, since most companies could not afford to build the needed access.

Under the CCF, benefits from the two main northern mining developments flowed out of the province. The lack of a road to the Lake Athabasca area meant that supplies for Uranium City came primarily from Alberta, carried by barge from Waterways, Alberta. While Saskatchewan Government Airways provided scheduled air service from Prince Albert to Stony Rapids and Uranium City, Uranium City's main air link joined it to Edmonton. Pacific Western flights carried uranium, supplies, workers, and money. Stony Rapids, a regional government centre, and other communities in the Athabasca area also obtained most of their supplies from Alberta. Farther south on the west side, La Loche's Aborigines walked to the railhead at Waterways, Alberta.

In a similar situation on the east side, the Creighton and Beaver Lake area relied on close ties to Manitoba, with Creighton just across the border from Flin Flon and its mine. Manitoba

benefitted greatly from the mine, even though, for a time, nearly ninety percent of the ore processed came from Saskatchewan. Electricity to drive the mill also came from Saskatchewan, from Island Falls on the Churchill River.<sup>4</sup> Only Manitoba provided road and rail access to the area, ensuring that most supplies came from Manitoba. Manitoba's roads and railways carried Reindeer Lake, Beaver Lake, and Cumberland House fish to market. Residents from numerous communities travelled to Flin Flon or The Pas, Manitoba for secondary education, shopping, medical care, and entertainment.

One of the CCF's main road building achievements was the completion of the road to La Ronge, already begun before WW II. La Ronge, which formerly had access only by winter road, became the first major northern community to receive an all-weather road. The army built the first bridge over the Montreal River at La Ronge in 1944-1945 as a training exercise. Even after the road saw completion in 1947, it still could take about eleven hours to cover the 185 rough miles to Prince Albert. Washouts frequently stopped travel in the spring.<sup>5</sup> A winter road along the east side of Bittern Lake to Montreal Lake opened in 1947-1948, shortening the distance from Prince Albert to La Ronge, but the CCF never developed this route into an all-weather road. The indirect route through Waskesiu remained the only reliable route to La Ronge during the CCF era.<sup>6</sup>

The CCF tried repeatedly to secure federal funding for roads--if not have Ottawa assume complete responsibility for road-building projects. In 1952, for example, J. H. Brockelbank approached Ottawa for help with two roads. A proposed highway from Beauval to La Loche would serve over 2,600 people and open up fishing, lumber production, tourism, and mining exploration. If built, a road north of La Ronge would initially reach Nemeiben Lake and eventually access the mineral and pulp potential of the Churchill Valley. Brockelbank also thought roads would help the government assimilate Aborigines. After Ottawa denied the request, because it considered the resources unproven, the CCF gave the projects little priority, working only slowly on the roads.<sup>7</sup>

The CCF also refused to devote much money for local mine access roads, generally only offering to pay up to one-third of the cost.<sup>8</sup> Saskatchewan, Ottawa, and Nisto Mines shared the cost of building the first mining road in 1950.<sup>9</sup> The Uranium City area, isolated from the outside, also needed local roads. Ottawa, Saskatchewan, and the mines shared the approximate \$150,000 cost of building a fifteen-mile access from Black Bay to Eldorado and other mines. Yet Gunnar Mine remained isolated in 1960 for lack of a nine-mile road. Ottawa insisted the mine pay one-third of the cost. The mine refused, and Saskatchewan would not pay the entire cost.<sup>10</sup>

While the CCF spoke of modernizing and developing the North, its actions contradicted its words. Frustration and failure usually resulted when northerners petitioned the CCF to build

roads. Buffalo Narrows residents approached the CCF in 1951 for the extension of Highway #4 from Ile a la Crosse to Buffalo Narrows. Winter travel over unsafe ice, which resulted in lost lives, gave urgency to the request. J. H. Brockelbank wrote in response "we must remember that there are limits to the amount of money that can be spent for roads." Overlooking the large royalties government collected, he claimed they did not collect much tax revenue in the North and held out little hope for quick construction.<sup>11</sup> Work finally began on the road in 1954-1955, and with impatient ratepayers pushing, completion of the 167-mile-long road from Meadow Lake took place in 1956. Yet construction did not include bridges over the Beaver River or across Keizies channel near Buffalo Narrows. A new bridge across the Beaver River ended ferry service there in 1962, but the CCF refused to spend the money to build a bridge at Keizies channel.<sup>12</sup>

The CCF also proved unresponsive to the needs of the rapidly growing Dene population at La Loche. While La Loche residents petitioned for a road as early as 1950, Churchman, DNR's assistant deputy minister, considered this "entirely out of the question." He also questioned the validity of the petition, since all signatures appeared in the same handwriting. Someone likely signed for those who did not know how to sign their name, a common practice at the time. Faced with CCF inaction, local people took the initiative and began building a road to Buffalo Narrows. They quit after clearing several miles, overwhelmed by the enormity of the task of building a road by hand. C. S. Brown, DNR's Northern Administrator, repeatedly tried to obtain money to "grub stake" the local crew, but his superiors refused to help. Eventually, the CCF built a winter road by 1960, which helped reduce the cost of goods. The road remained unfinished when the CCF left office in 1964.<sup>13</sup>

Faced with a lack of CCF interest in opening up the North, local people tried to build a road to Lake Athabasca. That region dealt mainly with Alberta, and the lack of a road handicapped development in a large area south of Lake Athabasca. J. F. Midgett, a fish trucker, built a trail to the Clearwater River by 1954.<sup>14</sup> A private company then used Chipewyan Indians to help blaze a route. Their winter road to Uranium City first saw use in 1955, but it proved disappointing since it could operate only for a short time in the winter. In 1957, the Buffalo Narrows Ratepayers Association asked the CCF to study building an all-weather road to Uranium City, for community, tourism, and resource access.<sup>15</sup> The CCF refused to build a west side road to the far North.

Appeals from industry to open up the North also had little effect on the CCF. In 1957, at a conference on northern development sponsored by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, speaker after speaker lamented the lack of access to northern Saskatchewan. Alvin Hamilton, the new federal Conservative Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, told the conference

that he thought development of resources should come first. He disagreed with the emphasis of the CCF, which he thought preferred to spend money on welfare programs and other services.<sup>16</sup>

Refusing to support the local efforts to build a west side road to Lake Athabasca, the CCF proposed a more expensive new route to Uranium City. The road would pass near Foster Lake, Cree Lake, and Stony Rapids, where it would cross the Fond du Lac River and then follow the north shore of Lake Athabasca to Uranium City. Although this route encountered more difficult and costly road building conditions, the CCF preferred this route over the west side route because it would not dead-end at the south shore of Lake Athabasca. It could also access minerals, pulp, fur, fish, and game in a large area.<sup>17</sup> Yet, the CCF refused to pay for this road. It built only about twenty-five of the 505 miles from La Ronge to Uranium City by 1959. Completion of the road looked doubtful by 1960, due to its high estimated cost of \$21,850,000. The 140-mile section from Stony Rapids to Uranium City alone would cost an estimated \$6,720,000.

Demonstrating its lack of commitment to northern development, the CCF then refused to complete the road unless Ottawa increased its contribution over that agreed to in the recently signed Roads to Resources agreement. The Roads to Resources program, which also applied to other provinces, formed part of Ottawa's renewed interest in northern development under the Diefenbaker government. DNR Minister Kuziak took credit for the program, claiming he suggested it to Ottawa. Saskatchewan's agreement with Ottawa had a maximum value of \$15 million, with each party providing one-half of this. Bickering ensued between the two governments when Ottawa counted the value of the Diefenbaker Bridge over the North Saskatchewan River at Prince Albert as part of the agreement. This removed up to \$2.5 million, and other road projects also used money from the agreement. It seemed that about 400 miles of the Uranium City road would remain unbuilt. The CCF blamed Ottawa. Kuziak fumed: "The Federal Government talked much about their Vision in 1957 and 1958, but now this has faded out."<sup>18</sup> Yet the CCF also refused to commit more money.

With neither government willing to spend the required cash, the CCF wanted to move the route farther east to access Reindeer Lake. The agreement seemed to have enough money left to reach Southend, Reindeer Lake. The CCF thought a road to Southend preferable to having the road end somewhere short of Cree Lake, going nowhere. While Ottawa at first agreed to the change of route, it then reversed its stand, fearing delay of the road to Uranium City.<sup>19</sup> Saskatchewan distrusted Ottawa's vague suggestion that the needed money would appear, and the Saskatchewan cabinet authorized changing the route. Construction began. By March of 1962, the road to Uranium City cost \$2,133,000, including the \$313,000 bridge over the Churchill. It would cost

about another three million dollars just to reach Southend, about eighty miles away.<sup>20</sup> In all the confusion, the CCF lost sight of its initial goal: to build a road to Lake Athabasca. The rocky and wet route followed north of La Ronge had much higher road building costs than did the much gentler terrain north of La Loche. In the end, the CCF refused to build either road to the far North.

The decision to build the road to Southend also made the CCF's recent development of a community and filleting plant at Kinoosao on the other side of Reindeer Lake look shortsighted. The CCF located Kinoosao there because of its proximity to the railhead at Lynn Lake, Manitoba. Instead of spending money building roads at home, the CCF paid much of the cost of building and maintaining the sixty-mile road to Lynn Lake, fifty-eight miles of which fell within Manitoba.<sup>21</sup>

The Roads to Resources agreement originally included the Hanson Lake (Smeaton to Flin Flon), La Ronge to Uranium City, and Otonabee (Hudson Bay to The Pas) roads. Additions, without adding any new money, included the Diefenbaker bridge, the road from Squaw Rapids to Cumberland House, and the access from the Hanson Lake Road to Island Falls. To the end of 1963, expenditures under the program reached about \$10,672,700.<sup>22</sup> The program never did include enough money to build all these roads, and neither the CCF nor Ottawa provided the needed money. Delays in building the vital Hanson Lake Road to the Creighton area also demonstrated the CCF lack of commitment to northern development. Soon after coming to office, the CCF began to build this road, while it looked to the federal government for help. Ottawa refused aid, and work stalled by 1948, even though only 100 of the road's 230 miles remained unbuilt. Little happened until 1958, when Ottawa included the road in the Road to Resources Agreement. The road crossed many streams. The Sturgeon Weir River bridge, with fourteen spans, became the largest bridge built by DNR. Bob Gooding Jr., the son of DNR's construction boss, taught himself to scuba dive to work under water on the bridge supports. The Hanson Lake road opened in 1962, providing access to Creighton, Flin Flon, Deschambault, Pelican Narrows, and facilitating tourism, forestry, and mining. But the long construction delay by the CCF limited development in a large area for most of the CCF era.<sup>23</sup>

Residents of other east side communities desperately wanted road access to the outside. The CCF seemed not to care. Lacking a road to Saskatchewan, Cumberland House residents dealt with The Pas, Manitoba, ninety miles away by water or forty-five miles by winter road. Various initiatives over the years teased residents with promises of a road. In 1952-1953, H. R. Knutson wanted \$600 to build a caterpillar road which would connect with a Manitoba road twenty-five miles away. DNR Minister Brockelbank seemed to like the idea, but thought Knutson might cut his price. Nothing happened. The federal Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA),



which explored agricultural potential in the area, bulldozed a winter road east towards The Pas in 1953-1954 and also worked on a road to the west to the Sipanok Channel. A winter road resulted. Pressure for a proper road increased in the winter of 1954 when the Carrot River - The Pas Agricultural Development Route Association organized a cavalcade and traveled the winter road. The winter road already helped shift trade patterns from The Pas to Nipawin and Prince Albert. Faced with rising pressure from local residents, the CCF finally selected a tentative route for an all-weather road by 1962, estimated to cost from \$675,000 to \$1,120,000. Yet this did not include a bridge over the Saskatchewan River at Cumberland House. Crossing the river in winter became increasingly dangerous after the CCF built the Squaw Rapids dam, since water releases created unsafe ice conditions. One woman drowned when a vehicle broke through the ice, an RCMP bombardier and a DNR bulldozer fell through, and large trucks could not cross the river. At the time of the CCF defeat in 1964, the CCF had not even finished building the dirt road. A bridge remained an impossible dream given the lack of CCF spending in the North.<sup>24</sup>

The Cree, Metis, and white residents of Sandy Bay and Island Falls also yearned for a road link to the outside. The most practical route led south to Pelican Narrows and then on to the Hanson Lake Road. Although work began on a location survey by 1961, the road held a low priority for the CCF. In 1964, the Island Falls-Sandy Bay Road Association, whose letterhead read "Open the North with Roads," pushed the CCF and Ottawa to build the road. They feared the Road to Resources fund would not have enough for their road. On the other hand, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Mines exerted pressure not to divert attention or money from completing the road to Reindeer Lake. These communities did not receive a road under the CCF.<sup>25</sup>

The CCF proved miserly in building access roads from main roads as well, looking to others for help. In 1961 it appeared Ausland's Mink Ranch would pay one-half the cost of a road to Deep River from the Buffalo Narrows Road.<sup>26</sup> The same year, Indian Affairs agreed to share the cost of a road and bridge across the Beaver River to improve access to the Beauval residential school.<sup>27</sup> DNR built only about 2,500 miles of access and fire roads in a ten-year period to 1957.<sup>28</sup>

The CCF insisted that DNR build most northern roads. Motivation for using government crews came from a desire to save money and also from a CCF preference for public over private enterprise. An ongoing dispute with Ottawa resulted, with the federal government pushing Saskatchewan to tender northern road construction to private companies.<sup>29</sup> Saskatchewan sometimes relented. Cabinet also decided in February of 1964 that the Department of Highways should take over responsibility for all northern roads, which meant a diminished responsibility for DNR.<sup>30</sup>

Although northerners often asked for roads, their construction also met opposition since roads proved a mixed blessing. Some traders thought roads would bring competition and loss of business, and churches feared roads would carry in more whites, drinking, and trouble.<sup>31</sup> However, the CCF did not share this desire to protect traders and Aboriginals from outside forces. Instead, the CCF wanted to put private traders out of business and assimilate Aboriginals. The lack of roads resulted from the CCF refusal to spend the required money.

At the end of the CCF era in 1964, no road extended to the far North. Most communities lacked ground access, and resource development often faltered for want of roads. The low level of CCF spending explains the paucity of roads and other infrastructure. The CCF's road policy contradicted its stated commitment to developing and diversifying the northern economy. Instead, CCF penny-pinching ensured that northern underdevelopment would continue.

Most Aboriginal northerners, even those who lived in communities with road access, did not own a motor vehicle. They relied heavily on public transportation. The CCF partially met this need by providing bus transportation and freight service through its crown corporation Saskatchewan Transportation Company (STC). It carried freight to and from La Ronge by 1947 and began passenger service by 1948. Service increased from once a week to four times weekly by 1953.<sup>32</sup> STC services remained limited in the North, partly due to the lack of roads.

Many northerners relied heavily on taxis for trips within communities and to travel longer distances. Some even took taxis to their trap lines. Seeing unregulated business, the CCF introduced regulations to govern taxis at Uranium City in 1952.<sup>33</sup> DNR soon extended licensing of cabs to other settlements. Northern taxis became known as liquor haulers, and stories circulated about liquor-laden taxis arriving in Aboriginal communities at the same time as welfare and fur cheques. In 1957 the Village of La Ronge and DNR both worked to put one notorious taxi operator out of business. Northern Administrator C. S. Brown described him as "a thorn in everyone's side" who "contributed more to the general demoralization of the younger native people in La Ronge than any other person."<sup>34</sup> In spite of crackdowns, taxis continued to carry liquor to Aboriginal communities.

Along with its failure to build badly needed roads, the CCF built no railroads in the North. This deficiency greatly limited mining and forestry development since these industries often needed railways for economical operation. Industry repeatedly asked for railways. The CPR and CNR showed some interest in building rail lines, but the CCF did not offer help. T. C. Douglas, unlike John A. Macdonald, did not give railways money to open new frontiers. A proposed pulp mill in 1957 called for extension of the CNR line north from Paddockwood. The project did not

proceed. In 1958, the CCF cabinet, not willing to spend the money itself, considered asking the federal government to build a railway to Uranium City and on to Great Slave Lake.<sup>35</sup> Railway construction never went beyond the talking stage. Lines in northern Manitoba and Alberta still took business from Saskatchewan, as transportation patterns continued to run east and west out of the province.

With few alternatives present, the traditional water routes continued to carry people and goods in vessels of various types, from canoes to barges. Water transportation cost the CCF virtually nothing, other than for some docks and a few barges. Not wanting to spend money itself, the CCF pressed Ottawa to assume many of the costs of water transportation. This made some sense since the federal government had a limited responsibility for inland waterways. Yet both governments refused to spend much to improve the safety and functionality of northern water transportation.

DNR bought a used barge from the War Assets Corporation and began to move supplies and equipment between Cumberland House and The Pas in 1947. The service did not last long. The barge again saw use in 1951, but by 1954 it sat unused, stuck in a mud bank.<sup>36</sup> Booth Fisheries of The Pas helped provide service to Cumberland House, hauling freight, mail, and passengers to and from The Pas, by water in summer and by bombardier in winter.<sup>37</sup> On the west side, DNR provided scheduled barge service between Beauval, Fort Black, Ile a la Crosse and Buffalo Narrows, and non-scheduled service to Dillon, Patuanak, and Clear Lake by 1949.<sup>38</sup>

On a much larger scale, Northern Transportation Services, a federal crown corporation, used barges to carry goods from the railhead at Waterways, Alberta along the Athabaska River and across Lake Athabaska to Uranium City, Camsell Portage, Fond du Lac, and Stony Rapids. Freight volume grew as mining increased. In 1955 for example, it transported 470,000 gallons of gasoline to Imperial Oil in Uranium City. The federal Department of Transport placed markers, buoys, and lights as navigation aids, and the federal Department of Public Works dredged the river channel to maintain sufficient water depth for the barges. The large lake often proved hazardous, as when eight men died in a tugboat sinking in 1956. But barges could not make up for the lack of road or rail access, since the long winter severely limited the shipping season. One boat with eight barges, loaded with material for Gunnar and Eldorado, froze into the ice in 1956.<sup>39</sup> Lac la Ronge also used water transportation. Although the lake hid many dangerous reefs, about 150 commercial boats and two barges operated there in 1957. Because of a lack of roads, vessels carried materials and supplies to mineral exploration sites on the Churchill.<sup>40</sup>

In many cases, it appeared unclear whether the federal government or the province had

responsibility for northern docks and wharves. Not wanting to spend money on the North, the CCF tried to have Ottawa build these. Bickering and delays resulted. Only after Ottawa refused to help did the CCF resign itself to building a new dock at the Snake Lake filleting plant.<sup>41</sup> The CCF also delayed building wharves at Ile a la Crosse and La Ronge, hoping that the federal government would provide the facilities. In the meantime, safety seemed compromised and local impatience grew.<sup>42</sup> Experience taught Saskatchewan that Ottawa would more likely refuse to build a wharf if Saskatchewan chose the site. In order to avoid refusal at Kinoosao, the CCF let Ottawa pick the exact spot for the filleting plant. The strategy worked, and the federal Department of Public Works built a wharf.<sup>43</sup> Ottawa also built wharves at Buffalo Narrows, Stony Rapids, and Dore Lake, while Saskatchewan built these at La Ronge, Snake Lake, Wollaston Lake, and Beaver Lake by 1955.<sup>44</sup> The two governments continued to pass responsibility back and forth, with neither wanting to spend money. The paltry spending on water transportation provided a cheap alternative to building roads and railways for the CCF. Yet, water transport could not fully modernize or develop the North.

Aircraft also provided a cheaper alternative for the CCF to building roads and railways. Establishing and operating an air service cost far less than constructing and maintaining an adequate road network. The CCF's total investment in planes and airstrips would not have built one major northern road. Unfortunately, air travel had many limitations. Airplanes could not meet many of the everyday transportation needs of northern residents, who could not afford to hire a plane every time they needed or wanted to go somewhere. For its part, industry could not feasibly pay high air transport rates to move most mineral and forest products. Consequently, the growing use of aircraft did not end northern underdevelopment.

Ironically though, the CCF used air travel to exert control and administer the colonial North. At first, the CCF relied on DNR to meet its air transportation needs. DNR had ten planes by 1947, mainly World War II craft bought from the Dominion War Assets Corporation. Floyd Glass, the Northern Superintendent, also piloted planes and headed the Aircraft Division, which had its offices, hangar, and repair facilities at Prince Albert. DNR planes carried civil servants from various departments, provided medical transportation, flew Fish Board fish, and helped with fire protection. Pilots also worked as DNR field officers. A new crown corporation, Saskatchewan Government Airways (SGA), took over responsibility for air service from DNR in 1947. This company provided an expanding commercial air service in the northern air space. The CCF eliminated much competition by buying M. & C. Aviation Co. of Prince Albert and its subsidiary, Aircraft Skiis Ltd.<sup>45</sup>

By 1954, SGA had eleven pilots and about twenty aircraft, which flew charters and provided scheduled service on five routes. SGA operated from bases at Prince Albert, La Ronge, Uranium City, Beaver Lake, and Stony Rapids. A modest expansion and up-dating of the SGA fleet and services continued, and by the end of 1958 the investment in SGA totalled \$675,000. It had earned a surplus of \$175,000. SGA changed its name to Saskair in 1962. By 1964, it flew on four routes, which terminated at Uranium City, Buffalo Narrows, Beaver Lake, and Wollaston Lake.<sup>46</sup>

In order to create a monopoly, the CCF opposed private aircraft companies operating in northern Saskatchewan. Initially, the federal Air Transport Board and Ottawa seemed to support the monopoly. However, over SGA's objections, the board approved an application by Waite Fisheries to operate a commercial air service on the west side in 1949. SGA also opposed a charter license for Athabasca Airways, applied for by Floyd Glass and Russell Karels. The pair claimed SGA did not provide adequate service. Glass, SGA's former head, considered it "time that people realized that the monopolistic government enterprises were not healthy for the development of the province." Athabasca Airways began operating in 1955, and La Ronge Aviation Services started in 1960. SGA also lost its battle to eliminate competition when PWA received the route from Prince Albert to Saskatoon and Regina. With Ottawa's refusal to support the SGA monopoly, options for northern flying expanded. By the late 1950s, PWA operated scheduled flights to Uranium City, five or six companies provided charter services, and some mining companies operated their own airplanes.<sup>47</sup> Ottawa had frustrated CCF plans for a state-owned air monopoly in the North.

Most northern planes landed on water or ice, using floats or skis, but larger planes and some small planes landed on wheels using airstrips. DNR built many northern strips. A cheap gravel surface runway opened at La Ronge in 1947. The province also provided landing facilities at Stony Rapids, Snake Lake, La Ronge, Cumberland House, Ile a la Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, La Loche, and Cree Lake. Private interests built other airstrips and Ottawa built one at Beaverlodge.<sup>48</sup> Not all communities received landing strips under the CCF. Some who did not found themselves cut off from the outside during freeze-up and break-up when planes could not land on water bodies.

The CCF recognized the need for rapid voice communication in the North. It took some responsibility for meeting this need by giving DNR responsibility for creating a two-way radio monopoly. While the service performed many useful tasks, the CCF devoted only small resources to it and did not keep up with technological advances. Neglect by the CCF left the North without a modern communication system in 1964, adding to the syndrome of underdevelopment.

The two-way radio system provided the primary method of northern communication and helped the CCF administer its colonial system. It set up its first base station at Emma Lake, which it later moved to Prince Albert. DNR repeatedly expanded the pre-existing system of about sixty radios, and airplanes, bombardiers, and government vehicles received radios. The public could send radiograms, for a fee, and DNR rented radios to private interests. In 1955, DNR experimented with new light-weight walkie-talkies, which weighed only a little more than twelve pounds. By 1958, DNR used permanent operators at eight key stations: La Ronge, Foster Lake, Stony Rapids, Uranium City, Buffalo Narrows, Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, and Hudson Bay. DNR officers' wives often operated the radios in remote settlements. These women normally received five dollars per month for this in 1955, seen by many as a ridiculously small amount. The radio service's inadequacies included frequent breakdowns, a lack of privacy for personal and medical matters, and a lack of full-time emergency service. In addition, white people controlled communications, since a shortage of radios and high rental rates prevented most Aboriginals from having a radio.<sup>49</sup>

Most Saskatchewan residents took telephones for granted during the CCF era. Saskatchewan Government Telephones (SGT), a crown corporation, received a monopoly over telephone service in the South beginning in 1947 and quickly upgraded the telephone system there. In contrast, the continuing absence of telephones in most northern communities added to the region's underdevelopment. The CCF ignored La Ronge residents who began to demand telephone service by 1953. Even Manitoba showed more interest in providing telephone service in northern Saskatchewan than did the CCF. Manitoba Telephone Company offered to link Flin Flon and Denare Beach in 1955. La Ronge, Uranium City, and Buffalo Narrows eventually received local telephone service by the early 1960s. DNR also set up limited local service in some other communities using obsolete telephones from southern rural systems.<sup>50</sup> Most northern communities, including fairly large communities like Cumberland House and La Loche, still did not have telephone service in 1964. Although it held a provincial monopoly on telephone service, the CCF failed to spend the money needed to build a northern telephone system.

The CCF also failed to provide electrical service to most northerners, even though it created a monopoly over power distribution in Saskatchewan. The lack of an adequate northern electrical generation and distribution system greatly hampered development within communities and for industry. Saskatchewan Power Corporation (SPC) began operating in about 1929, but remained small until the election of the CCF. Joe Phelps oversaw the early modernization of the power system in the South and the building of a power grid there. Southern Saskatchewan enjoyed a modern power system by the mid 1950s.<sup>51</sup> Yet the CCF plan excluded the North. Phelps, with

responsibility for both SPC and the North, did not bring the two together. Power lines still did not reach most northern communities in 1964 and most Aboriginals did not have access to electricity.

Few northerners used electricity in 1944, but government, mining, business, and non-Aboriginals soon considered it essential. The hum of gas or diesel powered generators producing electricity for government operations and white residents formed part of the colonial scene in northern communities. Bright light shone from the windows of government houses, while Aboriginal homes gave off the flicker of candles, gas lanterns, or wood burning stoves. The CCF considered it essential that its employees have electricity. DNR sent a generating plant to Buffalo Narrows in 1954, hoping to calm the wife of the DNR officer, who had become "extremely nervous and neurotic" after a neighbour who had supplied electricity moved away.<sup>52</sup> Each government department, including DNR, Education, and Health, often had its own plant. The four outpost hospitals received "full-time electric power" by 1958.<sup>53</sup>

Several communities received more advanced electrical supplies, although only after long delays. Denare Beach residents petitioned government for electricity in 1953, but did not obtain this until about 1958, when they received a link to the Island Falls dam.<sup>54</sup> SPC procrastinated in providing power to La Ronge, even though cabinet in 1951 recommended SPC investigate providing electricity to the rapidly growing centre. SPC and DNR eventually helped provide a diesel generating system at the fish plant for limited community use. Yet government refused to operate the generators. Instead, a local man, Carl Louis, leased and operated the system. In 1956, when La Ronge became a village, DNR turned over the distribution system to the village. SPC finally took increased responsibility in 1958, when it bought the assets.<sup>55</sup> In 1955, the Buffalo Narrows annual ratepayers association meeting passed a resolution asking for a generation unit. In an uncharacteristically quick response, SPC installed power lines and street lights in 1956. Waite Fisheries generated and sold the electricity for the system.<sup>56</sup> Buffalo Narrows finally received a power line from the outside in the early 1960s.

Co-operatives played a role in providing electricity in some areas. At Stony Rapids, a twelve-member co-operative operated the distribution and diesel generating system built by SPC. Buying diesel fuel endangered the co-op's survival in 1957. It could not pay for about 8,000 gallons of fuel which it needed to order and have delivered by barge before freeze-up. Still struggling, the co-operative had a deficit of \$2,455.93 for 1960, which almost doubled by the end of September of 1961.<sup>57</sup> Cumberland House also experienced problems with its co-operative generation system in 1964. The DNR officer described its three generators as "a pile of junk." Only one would operate, while the co-op lacked the funds to rent a new generator from SPC.<sup>58</sup> In

1961, the power co-operative at Sandy Bay obtained its power from the Island Falls generating dam, but the agreement gave it only up to 50 KVA of power. Most residents used little power.<sup>59</sup> Power co-ops also supplied energy to some homes at Ile a la Crosse, Denare Beach, and Pelican Narrows in the late 1950s. Many of the poorer people still lacked access to electricity, even where the co-ops operated.

Exceptions to the lack of electrical power in northern settlements existed in the predominantly white communities. Industry and residents there found ways to obtain electricity, which they considered an essential service. Uranium City's electricity came from hydro dams at nearby Wellington Lake and Waterloo Power Stations and from diesel generation.<sup>60</sup> Creighton received modern power lines from the Northern Power Company in 1948.<sup>61</sup> Island Falls obtained abundant power from its dam. Although the CCF often failed to provide electricity for industry, it knew that industry needed this service. In 1957, David Cass Beggs, SPC's general manager, viewed SPC's main problem in the North as providing power for mining and other industry.<sup>62</sup>

Ironically, while a lack of electrical service formed part of the syndrome of northern underdevelopment, hydro-electric dams generated electricity for export from the region. These caused serious damage to the northern environment, local economy, and lifestyles. Outsiders imposed the dams for the benefit of distant companies and people, adding another facet to northern colonialism. Aboriginal people affected by the projects claim that government and industry did not consult with them prior to constructing the dams, and some question whether government had the right to proceed without the consent of northerners.<sup>63</sup> While some claim that the treaties did not surrender water rights, but the land alone, the federal and provincial government acted as if they had the right to do as they wished with the water as well as with the land.

Churchill River Power Company, a subsidiary of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, built the first major northern dam at Island Falls on the Churchill River to supply power to the mine and mill at Flin Flon. While the CCF had nothing to do with the original construction of the dam, the structure profoundly influenced the economy and society in that part of the North throughout the CCF era. The official version of events says hearings took place in 1928. The company then built the dam, which began operating in 1930. Saskatchewan issued a fifty-year license. Virtually no Treaty Indians had settled in the Island Falls area prior to construction of the dam. Chief Cornelius Ballentyne unsuccessfully tried to establish a reserve there, and interest in this faded after he died. With construction of the dam, Indians came seeking jobs, moving from the Pelican Narrows area to the new village of Sandy Bay near the dam site.<sup>64</sup> Another version of the story, based on Aboriginal oral history, claims establishment of the reserve went ahead before



the mining firm wanted to build the dam. Once the company spotted the prime Island Falls hydro site, Ottawa, which controlled crown lands until 1930, took the reserve from the Indians. Government then claimed that the reserve never existed there but that it instead was located at Sturgeon Weir Indian Reserve, over 100 miles to the south-east. While hearings took place, they did not adequately include Aboriginal input.<sup>65</sup>

In either case, the dam disrupted life on the no longer free-flowing Churchill. It flooded Aboriginal houses upstream, lowered the downstream water level, reduced water quality, hurt animal and bird populations, and eliminated the prized black sturgeon, leaving only the regular lake sturgeon. Flooded trees caught fishing nets and lines, and many persons died when winter water releases from the dam made the ice unsafe for travel. The dam also brought liquor and social problems from outside. A pimp and two female prostitutes operated on a nearby island for a time, until an RCMP investigation caused them to flee.<sup>66</sup>

In 1942-1943, the Churchill River Power Company built a storage dam at Whitesands Rapids on the Reindeer River to help stabilize the water supply for Island Falls. This second dam raised the level of Reindeer Lake by up to ten feet, and resulted in the near disappearance of muskrat, beaver, and mink, destruction of spawning grounds, reduced fish harvests, and other difficulties. Local people received no compensation.<sup>67</sup>

These two dams continued operating throughout the CCF era. They still disrupted the lives of Aboriginals and removed wealth from the area. While nearby communities lacked electrical power, the operation produced over \$270 million in electricity by 1971. Saskatchewan received more than three million dollars in water and land rental. From 1930 to 1971, revenues to the province gradually increased, roughly equal to the rate of inflation.<sup>68</sup>

The CCF built a dam of its own at Squaw Rapids, upstream from Cumberland House, damming the mighty Saskatchewan. SPC completed the project in 1962. The CCF had not involved Cumberland House people in planning for the dam and seemed quite unconcerned about negative downstream effects. While the CCF forecast benefits for the Cumberland area, including flood control and agricultural development, local people soon viewed the dam as a major disaster. Varying water levels hurt fish, waterfowl, fur-bearers, and big game animals. The dam also made the river ice, the main winter highway, unsafe for travel.<sup>69</sup>

Dams comprised another aspect of northern colonial underdevelopment during the time of the CCF. Outside governments imposed the large, permanent structures with virtually no local consultation. While they provided some employment to residents, their development and operation largely ignored northern needs. The most substantial benefits from dams went outside the region,

leaving northerners a legacy of social problems and underdevelopment. Governments also gave minimal consideration to environmental effects, destroying priceless river environments.

Northern settlements also needed safe drinking water and sanitation services. Predictably, the pattern of underdevelopment and CCF neglect also applied to these areas of infrastructure. While the CCF encouraged Aboriginals to move into settlements, it added to the dismal conditions there by spending virtually nothing to provide water or sewage and garbage disposal services. In contrast, the CCF in 1955 wanted Uranium City to have a proper water and sewer system, estimated to cost possibly one-half million dollars.<sup>70</sup> By 1964, only the white settlements of Island Falls, Creighton, and Uranium City had community sewer and water services. The CCF also ensured that many of its employees in remote settlements had these benefits. Following a double standard, it considered water and sewer systems essential for non-Aboriginals, while lamenting that Aboriginals did not know the sanitary ways of the white man. The CCF refused responsibility for providing these services to Aboriginals. Since this poverty-stricken group could not afford to build these systems, health risks grew.

The CCF frequently blamed Aboriginals and their lifestyle for sanitation problems. The former nomads transferred sanitation standards from the bush to the village, not appreciating the hazards involved. Methods which worked on the land did not work in permanent settlements, and excrement from people and hundreds of sled dogs lay around communities. White people often had the only outhouses. Rain rinsed the villages, and runoff washed into the nearby lakes or rivers on which communities invariably sat. Fish plants contributed to the pollution by dumping offal into the water. Residents then took their drinking water from the polluted water bodies. In a typical situation, a "horrible mess," existed at Wollaston Lake in 1950. Tourist fishing parties left "thoroughly disgusted." In 1953, the Wollaston SGT post manager described the Aboriginal camp as a "disease ridden, filthy place." The situation there continued much as before in 1960, when a report said the Indian people "merely wander back into the bush."<sup>71</sup> Surface runoff and the fish plant continued to pollute the water supply. Similar stories came from other communities.

CCF officials placed hope for improved sanitation on educating the Aboriginal people in constructing toilets and obtaining safe water. One sanitary officer viewed educating Aboriginals as a "difficult and long term project."<sup>72</sup> Yet the CCF spent little on education programs. Education also had its limitations. Cumberland House, where war veterans exerted a positive influence and many residents had outhouses, still had unsafe water. A. K. Quandt described the water supply there as "very bad" in 1946. It seemed responsible for health problems.<sup>73</sup> The CCF ignored the warning and did not provide safe water. The village continued to lack a good water supply in 1951,

when RCMP Constable Crawford organized the boy scouts to help dig a public well. When heavy rain caved in the unfinished well, the project ended.<sup>74</sup> While education helped, only money could provide proper wells and sewage disposal systems. Blaming Aboriginals and their lack of knowledge relieved the CCF of the need spend this money. Government gave neither DNR nor Public Health the authority or resources to provide the needed facilities.

Even the larger settlement of La Ronge lacked a sewage system. Human waste concentrated in dirt pits under outhouses and people dumped household water on the ground. Much litter and garbage lay around since La Ronge had no lanes to hide garbage and garbage cans, and it had no garbage collection system. In 1951 Public Health judged only two of the seven wells there as safe. Many used lake water, polluted by the fish plant and runoff. Fear of typhoid and other water-borne diseases caused concern. Typhoid, caused by polluted lake water, apparently killed some persons at Goldfields earlier. As a positive note, Public Health found few flies at the dilapidated fish plant "sprayed inside and out with DDT." In 1952 G. Kinneard of Public Health thought it unlikely much would change until La Ronge incorporated.<sup>75</sup> Even though it held responsibility as the municipal government, the CCF refused to spend the money required to improve sanitation. Obviously, northern underdevelopment caused little concern for the CCF.

Incorporation of La Ronge in 1956 did not end sanitation problems in that area. In 1960 R. F. Badgley of the U of S concluded "it is impossible to change the ways of the Indians." Aboriginals had reacted with animosity when Dr. Cook of La Ronge tried to clean up the local reserve. After Cook threatened to withdraw medical care, garbage burned for four days and "38 trucks of garbage were removed from the reserve." Some claimed the doctor discriminated against the Indians, as he had not dealt with open sewers at the hotel and pool room. Badgley also said children wore the same clothing, unwashed, "from fall to spring."<sup>76</sup> Sanitation problems also continued elsewhere. At Wollaston and Snake Lake, white residents had privies, while Indians did not. Fish plants still endangered water quality at Wollaston, Deschambault, and Snake Lake.<sup>77</sup>

The CCF, aware of the atrocious sanitation situation, did not even want to spend the relatively small amount of money required to monitor the situation. Instead, it made a few efforts to have Ottawa contribute money for inspections. A National Health Grant, which paid for a sanitary officer's salary and travel costs, finally provided hope for modest improvement by 1962. The officer's duties included extending sanitary inspections to as many settlements as possible.<sup>78</sup> While health inspections of northern communities increased, the CCF failed to provide the needed infrastructure systems in any Aboriginal communities. It demonstrated little commitment to improving water, sewer, and sanitation there throughout its mandate.

In addition to needing physical infrastructure, northern communities required other systems, including those for local government and law and order. With few exceptions, the CCF kept control over local government, and local people had little say over what happened to their communities. DNR, the CCF's colonial arm, handled municipal matters, including property taxation and public works. Most local government remained rudimentary and very limited in power under the CCF. Exceptions developed at Uranium City, where a municipal corporation cared for the local needs of its largely white population. La Ronge and Creighton, with many white residents, also incorporated.

The CCF possessed little interest in establishing truly responsible local government outside white areas for several reasons. The CCF viewed the northern resource base as inadequate to support local government. This reason only made sense by ignoring the large tax and royalty revenues paid by the mining and other industries, but the CCF looked at the Aboriginal communities separately and saw that they produced little revenue. Local government did not receive a direct cut of the resource revenue. Secondly, the CCF did not consider Aboriginals ready to handle even limited self-government and did not trust them to make decisions.

The CCF used DNR to control northern local government. Assistant Deputy Minister J. W. Churchman in 1949 wanted DNR to present ideas to the rudimentary local councils and ratepayers associations "in such a way as to let the people think it came from them." Similarly, DNR's Jim Brady, while wanting to maintain a non-dictatorial appearance, did not want DNR to recognize local councils elected without DNR supervision.<sup>79</sup> The CCF worked to maintain strict colonial control.

DNR helped develop some local councils and ratepayers associations, although it kept all real authority. Cumberland House had no elected local government until residents in 1948 chose a council of three members. The council could not act alone but needed to wait for DNR to approve its recommendations. Yet, DNR refused to act on resolutions because it disapproved of the political leanings of members. DNR's Quandt reported to Churchman, the assistant deputy minister: "we deemed it a necessary lesson to show these people that if they want to follow reactionary leadership and not help the small progressive nucleus of their own kind in the Cumberland community, that we follow a very niggardly policy as far as special works is concerned for some time. Already it is giving results." The reference to "reactionary leadership" likely referred to the Liberal affiliation of council members, and the "lesson" DNR wanted to teach was that the local people should not elect representatives who did not support CCF "development plans" for the area. Teaching the lesson proved ineffective though, as at least one of the initial

council members, Pierre Carriere, remained a thorn in the side of the CCF for the rest of its era.<sup>80</sup>

DNR appointed a supervisor of Northern Municipal Services in 1951, a position held by W. J. Bague. He worked to develop ratepayers associations, authorized by the Northern Administration Act. Contradicting its desire to keep control, DNR spoke of "autonomous municipal administration" as the goal for all northern communities. Even though it had difficulty generating local interest, DNR established a ratepayers group at La Ronge in 1951. DNR also helped create ratepayers associations at Denare Beach, Ile a la Crosse, and in a few other communities. The associations generally had three-man councils, with no authority, and could only make recommendations to DNR.<sup>81</sup> Their level of activity depended largely on how much stimulation DNR applied.

Ratepayers associations had so little function that it sometimes made little difference when they became inactive. The DNR-sponsored association became quite dormant at Cumberland House by 1961, seemingly due to the lack of interest of the former conservation officer. Yet, the community found other avenues for limited self government, which included the Legion, the ladies organization, the recreational club, and the school committee. A community council, unfunded by the CCF, also formed, although the CCF did not allow it to advise DNR on spending, since only a ratepayers association could do that. The Center for Community Studies seemed to have stimulated community support for the creation of the new council, and unlike many of the white-dominated ratepayers associations, the nine-member elected council included only four whites. Even though the CCF would not give the council equal status to its own ratepayers association, the council took over various local government functions, including a community clean-up, dog control, and recreation projects. The white members later left the council. Yet the Aboriginal members continued until the establishment of a local community association form of government after the CCF left office.<sup>82</sup>

Under the CCF, only a few northern communities moved to a system of municipal government. Three settlements, Uranium City, La Ronge, and Creighton, did so by 1964. DNR's half-hearted efforts to organize local governments elsewhere brought poor results, and by 1962 only six ratepayers associations existed: at Denare Beach, Ile a la Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, Beauval, Cumberland House, and Sandy Bay. Most communities lacked even an advisory body. The concentration on ratepayers associations also disenfranchised those who did not pay property taxes since they represented those who paid property taxes. The associations excluded large numbers of non-tax paying Aboriginals, leaving white people often holding the most influence.

In the twilight years of the CCF government, the Center for Community Studies called for

a more responsible system of local government than the ineffective, powerless ratepayers associations. It recommended the creation of councils with greater responsibility, elected by all residents and not just by ratepayers. Government should also advise the councils, not the other way around. Shortly before it lost office, but too late to act, the CCF appeared willing to amend the Northern Administration Act, end ratepayers associations, and allow the establishment of Northern Community Areas administered by Local Community Authorities.<sup>83</sup>

Northerners also had little control over the northern justice system, since the CCF maintained control from the South. Courts and treatment facilities too remained based in the South. The CCF did little to deal with northern justice issues and seemed not to take northern concerns seriously. White northerners frequently wanted increased policing and a harsher justice system. They blamed “soft” justice for many Aboriginal social problems. Even outrage from the white community, when Aboriginal crime affected non-Aboriginals, had little effect on spurring the CCF to action.

The North received only spotty policing in 1944, with RCMP occasionally patrolling by dog sled and canoe. Joe Phelps saw little need for change, blaming northern crime on southerners, the “bootlegger and white man chiseler.” DNR and the RCMP co-operated to keep law and order, and although DNR initially had only one airplane, Phelps claimed it quieted down the North, since people never knew when the government would arrive.<sup>84</sup>

The CCF relied on appointed justices of the peace (JP) to handle most northern cases, which commonly involved summary convictions. Usually a white person, possibly the school teacher, minister, or a local businessman, acted as JP. Positions often stood vacant, due to resignations and delays in appointing replacements by the attorney general. In 1957 Ile a la Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, Beauval, and Stony Rapids all awaited the appointment of new JPs. In the meantime, the vacancies made work difficult for DNR and the RCMP.<sup>85</sup> Visiting magistrates from the South handled the next level of cases. Cumberland House residents suspected the RCMP constable influenced the magistrate in advance, but they seemed to accept this, with a “general ignorance of civil rights and judicial process.”<sup>86</sup> The North had no magistrate based there during the CCF era.

White people often wanted increased law and order services. Their concerns frequently involved drunk Aboriginals, delinquent children, and wild sled dogs. The CCF contracted policing to the RCMP, an arrangement which helped the CCF ignore appeals from citizens. Buffalo Narrows provides an example of northern policing problems. After receiving a “permanent” RCMP constable by 1952, the village became “much more orderly.”<sup>87</sup> He left by 1954, and RCMP

policed Buffalo Narrows from Ile a la Crosse. The Buffalo Narrows ratepayers association and C. S. Brown of DNR complained, and the RCMP agreed to again station an officer there.<sup>88</sup> In 1957, again without an RCMP officer, terror reigned among whites at Buffalo Narrows, following the rape of the public health nurse and the possible attempted rape of a DNR officer's wife. Reports said that drunks roamed unmolested by the RCMP, visitors found themselves bothered by the local people, and break-ins and thefts occurred almost nightly. When the RCMP officer did fly in, he had to borrow a car or truck when he wanted to go somewhere. C. S. Brown described Buffalo Narrows as "the most lawless and immoral community in the Northern Administration District." Brown, many citizens, and the ratepayers association all called for improvements to the justice system. Vigilante action, including lynching, appeared possible. Concerns also arose about the judicial system. Brown opposed having the magistrate from Meadow Lake, whose work he described as "rather disturbing," preside over court cases in the Buffalo Narrows region. Alleged instances of miscarriages of justice also concerned people, as did reversals of some harsher sentences by the attorney general's department. White residents wanted at least two mounties stationed there. They also wanted a local jail, which would end the custom of well-traveled prisoners flying back from luxurious holidays in southern cells and receiving a hero's welcome from other Aboriginals. Whites wanted exemplary local humiliation of offenders and "sexual monstrosities" put away in a mental institution. DNR's minister, A. G. Kuziak, also called on the attorney general to reform northern justice. Although Buffalo Narrows again received a "permanent" RCMP officer in 1958, problems with law and order continued.<sup>89</sup>

The CCF also failed to deal adequately with justice issues at Sandy Bay. There, "The Council of Good Order," which included the priest, the Island Falls nurse, the Sandy Bay nurse, three Sandy Bay teachers, the DNR officer, and the MLA, signed a petition in 1955, complaining about the policing situation. The RCMP officer lived a short distance away at the comfortable community of Island Falls, rather than at Sandy Bay with its problems of public drunkenness, contraband liquor, home brew, child abuse, accidents, and misery. The white people claimed Aboriginals lacked respect for "anybody and anything" and were "worse than animals." The deputy attorney general J. L. Salterio refused to intervene with the RCMP, beyond making the RCMP in Regina aware of the concerns.<sup>90</sup>

People at Denare Beach also repeatedly begged for improved policing, while the CCF continued to deny responsibility for this. In 1953, the RCMP from Flin Flon patrolled the resort area and year-round community only about once a week during the busy summer resort season and refused to create a summer detachment. Policing problems continued in 1957, when the vacation

area had up to 5,000 people, but the RCMP had only one car and two constables available for work outside Flin Flon. The Manitoba detachment considered the work in Saskatchewan “complimentary, and not obligatory.” Saskatchewan’s attorney general appeared unable or unwilling to better the situation.<sup>91</sup>

While white people complained loudly when Aboriginal crime affected them, CCF neglect of justice issues particularly affected the Aboriginal community. When Aboriginal men threatened the safety of white women at Buffalo Narrows, an uproar resulted; yet female Aboriginals had long suffered sexual assaults from both Aboriginals and whites. At La Ronge, sexual contact between visitors and local girls or women, sometimes with consent and sometimes without, caused concern. On one occasion, local persons, including Quandt and Brady, reportedly forced the RCMP to tell some men to leave La Ronge, “over the issue of pregnant native girls.” A group of girls also formed a “bubble-gum gang” for protection against rape by white visitors.<sup>92</sup> Buffalo Narrows teenage girls in 1957 felt unsafe “to even go to a show, a jiving class, or Church,” for fear of attack from “sexual maniacs.”<sup>93</sup> Many members of the white community did not make an issue of crime until it affected them.

Disproportionate numbers of northern Aboriginals spent time in jail, serving longer sentences in the South. By about 1957, sixty percent of northern males aged sixteen to thirty had served time in prison 1.75 times. Aboriginals comprised about one-quarter of men and one-fifth of women in provincial correctional facilities in 1963. Non-aboriginal northerners frequently called for the establishment of northern jails and for prisoners to perform local work, since white people thought that jail time outside had no stigma for Aboriginals. The RCMP rejected the idea as it could fly prisoners out more cheaply.<sup>94</sup>

Delinquency was common, although it went largely unreported except by white persons. Professor and Mrs. Hill, Department of Social Welfare group workers at Buffalo Narrows in 1957, saw youth’s problems as “boredom and lack of stimulation.”<sup>95</sup> Whites in many communities wanted curfews to curb Aboriginal youths, but controls rarely resulted. Buffalo Narrows did institute a 9:00 p.m. curfew in the late 1950s, complete with an enforcer. The system ended when the judge would not support it.<sup>96</sup>

Under the CCF colonial system, white people from the South enforced most laws in the North. By 1960, the RCMP involved some Aboriginal northerners in policing through a special constable program. In one situation, a local Metis man at Cumberland House worked as a special constable. He acted as an interpreter, guide, and assistant to the constable, managing to hold the confidence of both the people and the constable.<sup>97</sup> While the special constable program seemed



a positive development, the CCF still refused to devote major resources to issues of law and order in the North.

Underdevelopment, caused by CCF neglect, also characterized other aspects of the northern colonial world. The CCF did not extend the southern natural gas distribution system to the North, not even to the larger, easily accessible communities near the South. Although DNR acted as the local government for most northern communities, the CCF provided virtually no equipment specifically to fight local fires. The Northern Administration Act allowed for the appointment of DNR field officers as deputy fire commissioners, allowing them to act in emergencies, although not compelling them to do so.<sup>98</sup> The communities with larger white populations, including Creighton, Uranium City, and La Ronge, established some fire fighting services. La Ronge relied on a rudimentary voluntary brigade by 1952, but the CCF refused to spend much money even after the fire commissioner's office recommended buying equipment to fight local fires. By the 1960s, fire protection there remained inadequate for the scattered village, reserve, and surrounding area's population.<sup>99</sup>

Although the CCF introduced a cash economy to the North, most communities had no bank or credit union, forcing residents to deal with local merchants to cash cheques and obtain limited credit. Even La Ronge only received its first bank, the Bank of Montreal, in about 1956. A few CCF-directed credit unions briefly operated, including one at Cumberland House by the early 1950s. Buffalo Narrows received a credit union by the late 1950s, although it dissolved in the 1960s.<sup>100</sup>

Postal service fell largely outside CCF control. The formerly sporadic mail service improved from 1944 to 1964, likely partly because northerners sent many petitions to the Postmaster General asking for improvements. SGA, which had the mail contract, carried the mail on its airplanes. Some communities received post offices, although stores still handled the mail in smaller villages. Complaints about the service continued since northerners suspected that storekeepers tampered with the mail. People suspected the stores of returning parcels from outside mail order companies, such as Eatons, to reduce competition and of intercepting cheques to apply them to accounts owing.<sup>101</sup> In spite of upgrades, much of the northern postal service remained far below southern standards.

Northern mass media also remained underdeveloped from 1944 to 1964. Minimal access to newspaper and radio service and the absence of television added to the feeling of isolation many southerners felt when they went to the North. Most local newspaper enterprises did not last long, and no newspaper brought together the concerns of northerners. No radio or television station

broadcast from within the area, and radio signals from the South varied greatly in strength, with US signals among the strongest late at night. One Cumberland House Metis woman remembers listening to Wolfman Jack from a faraway US station.<sup>102</sup>

The CCF did broadcast one radio program from the South to the North. Beginning in the 1940s, Prince Albert's CKBI broadcast "Northern News," a program produced by DNR and paid for by DNR and crown corporations. Northerners eagerly awaited the program, which included personal messages besides the information and propaganda about the Fur Marketing Service and other CCF programs.<sup>103</sup> This broadcast gave the CCF control over much of the dissemination of information in the North. Opposing points of view lacked a forum of equal power.

The CCF appointed DNR as the municipal government for most northern communities, but gave it only paltry resources to provide recreation facilities. Aboriginal communities consequently received few facilities, although white people organized to provide limited facilities in a few villages. Father Lavasseur took the initiative at Buffalo Narrows by 1958 and organized the Buffalo Narrows Advancement Club. The group dismantled and moved two Mid-Canada Radar Line buildings from the Fort Black radar base and rebuilt these into an indoor skating and curling rink.<sup>104</sup> The CCF made a minimal effort to address the lack of recreation facilities by the early 1960s. It gave DNR a \$5,000 budget to give matching grants to help communities build facilities, including rinks and community halls. Since the North had dozens of communities, the budget did not go far. DNR then reallocated even part of this meager budget and could not give the Denare Beach Community Club \$500 without overspending.<sup>105</sup> In an unusually generous act, the CCF passed an order-in-council in 1961 approving \$500 to help the Pemmican Portage Sports Club build a hockey rink.<sup>106</sup> Glaring contrasts existed between Aboriginal and white settlements. Many Aboriginal communities did not even have a large room or gymnasium, attached to the local school or elsewhere, to accommodate local functions.

The northern infrastructure system established and maintained by the CCF bore many colonial characteristics. Most white people received a much higher standard of services than did Aboriginal people. Aboriginals lived in poverty in dismal settlements. In the area of infrastructure, as in health and welfare, the CCF blamed northern Aboriginals for their poverty. At the same time, government removed millions of dollars from the North in various royalties and taxes. In most instances, the CCF did not apply policies with a socialist bent when it came to spending money on the welfare of northerners, including infrastructure. Yet, the socialist principles of the CCF strongly influenced its plans and projects to restructure the northern economy.

**Part Three**

**THE SEGREGATED ECONOMY**

## **Chapter Five**

### **NEVER BEFORE HAVE WE BEEN SO POOR**

One of the CCF's major goals was diversification of the provincial economy. The agricultural disaster suffered by Saskatchewan during the Great Depression and the realization that Saskatchewan had almost totally missed out on industrial development motivated efforts to expand the range of economic activity. Diversification offered hope for economic stability and prosperity. The restructured Department of Natural Resources and Industrial Development, led by Joe Phelps, provided the organizational base for working towards this goal. Taking control of and modifying the northern economy formed a key part of the CCF diversification plan. The CCF accepted the stereotypical view of the North as a storehouse of great riches. While the North did hold treasures, it did not freely give them up. Only a great investment of effort and money could wrest these from the rugged environment. The CCF divided northern resources into two groups: those it thought suited for Aboriginals and those it considered beyond the scope of Aboriginals' interest and ability. It largely reserved trapping, fishing, and peasant farming for Aboriginals, while it thought white people should handle most mining, forestry, and tourism.

The CCF applied socialist ideals to all major areas of the northern economy. It believed resources belonged to the people of Saskatchewan and not just to entrepreneurs who removed the wealth. True to this belief, it imposed state control over the extraction of all northern resources, with the exception of mining, which it viewed as beyond its abilities to manage at the time. Crown corporations, marketing boards, and co-operatives structured Aboriginal trapping and fishing and a socialist model shaped northern farming. In the non-Aboriginal economy, the CCF took over most of the forest resource and applied socialist principles there. It contented itself with raising royalties and taxes for mining, reserving the right to take over the industry later.

Policies established by the CCF suffered from glaring contradictions which it did not address and which remain difficult to explain. An obvious contradiction appeared between the often stated desire of the CCF to assimilate Aboriginals into white society and the CCF segregation of Aboriginals into the more traditional sectors of the northern economy. On the one hand, the assimilation policy implemented by the CCF required and encouraged Aboriginals to give up a

nomadic lifestyle, live in a cash economy, learn English, and become literate. Yet, on the other hand, economic segregation and the CCF failure to help Aboriginal northerners move into industrial occupations, including mining and forestry, guaranteed that complete assimilation would not happen. The CCF economic policies also ensured that Aboriginals would not leave their communities in large numbers since they did not learn the occupational skills to survive outside the region. It remains unclear whether the CCF viewed the segregated economy as only a step towards eventual complete assimilation or whether it regarded this structure as its ultimate economic plan for northern Aboriginals.

Promotion of Aboriginal trapping by the CCF also contradicted its plan to move people from the bush into settlements. Traditionally, trappers and their families spent prolonged periods of several months living on remote trap lines. This obviously could not continue if the CCF wanted to assimilate Aboriginals in settlements. The CCF partially resolved this dilemma by changing how people trapped. It looked on trapping as a man's activity and condoned male absence from the settlement as long as women and children remained there. Instead of allowing trappers to trap wherever they wanted, the CCF also assigned trapping areas to groups of men. In some cases, these areas were near the village, allowing trappers to frequently return to their homes. When the trap lines stood farther away, the pull of the village often meant that little trapping took place.

Northern economic policies established by the CCF also contradicted those it followed in the South. Socialist ideology guided the CCF's economic plans for the North much more than elsewhere. The party imposed state ownership and control over furs, fish, timber, and retail sales, and applied socialist forms of organization to vital parts of the northern economy. At the same time, it used its power to limit the role of private capital in the northern economy. In contrast, the CCF quickly abandoned most of its state interventions in the southern economy, continuing state ownership mainly in utility monopolies. The CCF's northern actions demonstrate that the CCF did not abandon its socialist ideology, and that, given the opportunity, it preferred and did not hesitate to apply socialist solutions.

CCF politicians and planners visualized northern Aboriginals efficiently and contentedly harvesting renewable fur, fish, and game resources. Using compulsion, the CCF largely reserved these resources for Aboriginals, expelling many non-Aboriginals from participating in their extraction. The structure imposed by the CCF to gather furs and fish used crown corporations, marketing boards, and co-operatives to provide organizational and marketing services. Southern planners, however, grossly misjudged the capacity of these resources to support Aboriginals. The

forced reliance on fur and fish consequently soon formed a structural part of northern poverty and underdevelopment. The CCF watched this situation worsen, without dealing with the situation.

The CCF saw two types of problems in fur, fish, and forestry: those caused by resource mismanagement and those created by capitalist abuses. It developed an integrated program to solve both issues, using "sustained yield management" and socialist ideology to address the situation. The CCF successfully applied conservation principles to ensure a sustainable supply of furs, fish, and game. Its desire to replace capitalism with socialism proved more difficult to satisfy. Yet the CCF's ideology influenced resource policies more than did conservation considerations.

Of all CCF actions, its intervention in the fur industry raised the most northern opposition. Phelps and his colleagues justified their intervention partly by pointing to depletion of fur-bearing animals. The CCF correctly saw low fur stocks. Allan Quandt of DNR, in an accurate description, blamed resource depletion on "mankind bent on personal power and material wealth being gained."<sup>1</sup> Prior to 1944, non-Aboriginals, many of whom only spent winters in the North and lacked a long-term commitment to the region, increasingly dominated trapping. White trappers often responded to the strong demand for furs by taking as many fur-bearing animals as possible. Depletion of fur stocks resulted. Beaver particularly declined in number, becoming rare in many areas of the North by 1944. The CCF was interested in restoring fur stocks and held no ideological opposition to harvesting fur resources. It sought a balance between overuse and underuse, considering underutilization as wasteful as overutilization.<sup>2</sup> DNR proved quite skilled at managing fur and fish resources, with its actions ensuring adequate stocks in most cases. The game commissioner, a position held by E. L. Paynter for much of the CCF era, and the Game Branch controlled many aspects of the fur industry.<sup>3</sup> While the fur situation clearly justified the introduction of conservation controls, the CCF could have addressed the conservation issues without imposing socialist solutions.

Until 1944, the Hudson's Bay Company and other private fur traders bought and marketed the furs brought to them by trappers. Traders only stayed in business by making a profit from their operations. Long experience taught them how much they could pay for furs and how to successfully operate the crucial credit system on which trappers depended. Most northerners did not deal much with cash, but relied on traders to provide them with needed goods throughout the year. Trappers then repaid their debts with furs. Traders held great influence in the northern society, acting as economic advisors, bankers, and welfare agencies.

Influenced by its socialist beliefs and its desire to modernize the North, the CCF found the old northern system of control by capitalist traders unacceptable. It decreed that the system could

not continue. The CCF thought traders imposed their will on dependent Aboriginals and did not see the fur trade as a mutually-beneficial agreement between Aboriginals and traders. The CCF characterized the HBC as a great villain. T. C. Douglas justified creating the CCF's compulsory Fur Marketing Service, which became the dominant force in fur handling, by saying "There was only one thing to do to save them from the exploitation by the Hudson's Bay Company." George Cadbury, the top CCF planner, thought the HBC kept trappers in near permanent debt.<sup>4</sup> The CCF did not seem to realize that the HBC had already lost its overwhelming, dominant position in the fur trade and that many other traders competed with it. The company handled about forty-five percent of the wild fur exports of about \$2,300,000 from Saskatchewan in 1943-1944, while within the larger Canadian scene, it only handled twenty-three percent of furs. Phelps thought the HBC still had a near monopoly.<sup>5</sup> The CCF also wanted to put small traders out of business. This attack caused uncertainty and losses for merchants, who could not buy furs while the CCF revamped policies.<sup>6</sup>

Joe Phelps likely was the CCF's greatest foe of the HBC. Myth and misinformation provided the basis for much of his crusade. He had already judged the HBC before he set out to gather evidence against the company for an address to the legislature, a speech which would "expose" HBC exploitation of the Aboriginals. Phelps asked RCMP Corporal C. E. Wenzel for details about unfair HBC dealings. The best Wenzel offered was rumours that both the HBC and a private trader charged five squirrel pelts for one box of matches and that the HBC gave special beaver licenses only to those who sold their furs to the HBC. He referred Phelps to six other possible informants. Phelps wrote to these six saying "the people have been exploited very much in their trading, both by free traders and the Hudson's Bay Company." One of the six, himself a free trader at Stanley, claimed that unfair trading practices did not exist when more than one trader operated in an area, as at Stanley. Another respondent, Albert VanderKracht of Lac la Ronge, observed to no one's surprise that northern prices exceeded southern prices. He also complained about the large supply of vanilla extract stocked by a free trader for people who "do not go in for cakes much," implying that the trader sold the vanilla as a substitute for alcohol. Thus armed, Phelps raised the issue in the legislature in 1945. Following his characteristic style, he relied largely on rhetoric, even wanting to "challenge the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company charter issued by King Charles II in 1670." Phelps also claimed that the HBC and the CPR did not "rightfully own" land granted them.<sup>7</sup>

The CCF's Mineral Taxation Act successfully coerced the HBC into surrendering most of its mineral rights, but Phelps lacked legal grounds for a further challenge to the old firm. The

company skilfully handled Phelps, whom it seemed not to respect, by co-operating and promoting conservation. The CCF worked to assume HBC functions, including fur buying, retailing, social services, and leadership, trying to replace the old capitalist paternalistic model with its new socialist paternalistic model. Once Phelps and some radicals left and the CCF socialist fervour eased, the CCF and HBC relationship improved. The CCF then reduced its efforts to open government-owned northern stores and asked the HBC if it would sell its stores. The HBC kept its stores.<sup>8</sup>

Some CCF radicals continued to complain about the HBC. In 1960 the Lac La Ronge CCF Club claimed the HBC charged an Aboriginal customer 280 muskrat pelts, which sold for \$1120, for a used ten horsepower motor. The motor soon broke down.<sup>9</sup> Rumours, which said that the HBC illegally took Aboriginals' cheques from its post offices to repay debts, also persisted.

Many Aboriginals did not share the CCF view of the HBC. Instead, they saw the valuable services the HBC had long provided them. In many cases, while government projects came and went, the HBC provided a stable and reliable economic and welfare institution. Northerners especially depended on the credit system offered by the HBC and other traders, which let them obtain goods and pay for them later with their fur harvest. Conversely, the CCF viewed the credit system as one of the primary northern evils because they thought it allowed traders to pay low prices for furs, sell goods at high prices, and paternalistically treat Aboriginals as children. The CCF also wanted northerners to use a cash system to facilitate their paying licence and lease fees, royalties, and taxes. Phelps considered it "absolutely necessary" to end northerners' reliance on credit, and swift action followed. The CCF succeeded in breaking the old system by making the marketing of some furs compulsory through the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service.<sup>10</sup> This move caused trappers to lose most of their credit, since traders could no longer buy the furs to repay debts. While the shift to cash appeared inevitable, the CCF prematurely forced this transition in an extremely destructive fashion.

Although the credit system allowed traders to exercise paternalistic control over Aboriginals, it operated harmoniously, and northerners wanted to see it continue. At Ile a la Crosse, families were either a "Hudson's Bay family" or a "Marion family." Because the free trader, Marion, protected and cared for them, the Metis called him "boss." Most did not complain about his prices for fear of hurting the paternalistic relationship.<sup>11</sup> Traders ensured that trappers bought essentials, since they knew the trapping ability and likely income of each customer and doled out goods accordingly. A trader who extended too much credit for luxury items or vanilla would not stay in business, since the trappers' income likely would not pay for it. The system also



spread buying power throughout the year. Some with large families received as much as \$200 per month in credit, while those with few dependents received less. Men also gained prestige from their credit limit, which reflected their ability as trappers and hunters. The HBC cared for its customers, even giving out free food at Christmas. One person recalls that the HBC “promised to look after us, just like a pension . . . they treated all the old people the same way.”<sup>12</sup> The sometimes inflated prices helped pay bad debts and carry customers through hard times, with trappers, not southern taxpayers, paying the cost. This system effectively encouraged work and helped moderate drunkenness and crime. Hugh Mackay Ross, a long-time HBC employee, said his company “understood how they felt about tomorrow. It might never come.” Ross also described Phelps as “a rabid socialist” who thought the HBC wanted to keep Aboriginals “enthralled in debt.”<sup>13</sup>

To facilitate conservation and equalize opportunity for Aboriginals and whites in trapping, Saskatchewan and the federal government signed the first Northern Fur Conservation Area Agreement. The ten-year agreement took effect on July 18, 1946 and applied to the area north of the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel. This allowed the CCF to establish a northern Fur Conservation Block there, where it would apply conservation and other policies. The signing also created a Fur Advisory Committee to advise government. The agreement called for spending up to \$50,000 annually to develop and administer northern fur resources, with Saskatchewan contributing forty percent. Because the North had a large number of Treaty Indians, Ottawa would pay sixty percent. The funding proved inadequate, and even though Ottawa gave extra, Saskatchewan wanted more. Saskatchewan contributed \$352,000 from 1946 to 1957 while Ottawa provided \$412,400. On expiry of the first agreement, the two governments signed another ten-year agreement to run until March 31, 1966.<sup>14</sup>

The CCF allowed affected parties some opportunity for input into the design of fur policies. After distributing about 15,000 questionnaires to trappers, fur ranchers, and fur dealers in 1944, the CCF claimed to have the support of ninety-six percent of trappers, of eighty-eight percent of fur ranchers, and of eighty-one percent of fur dealers for its plans. Phelps also met with trappers on a trip north in 1944, holding meetings in “all northern communities” to introduce policies. In another effort, the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Association, the corporation which controlled the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service (SFMS), established an advisory committee, but it met only once. Field officers’ conferences also gave DNR staff an opportunity to make recommendations.<sup>15</sup>

The process used by the CCF to gather public opinion suffered from serious flaws. First,

the CCF already seemed to have decided that it would intervene aggressively to structurally alter the fur business. Secondly, many who completed questionnaires and attended meetings did not understand the true nature of CCF plans. Finally, the process excluded many, particularly Aboriginals who could not read or write and did not complete the questionnaires. The widespread opposition which soon arose contradicted CCF claims of general support for its actions.

Controversy resulted when the CCF virtually eliminated all trapping by southerners in the North. The CCF required a one-year residence period, the recommendation of the area trappers' association, and the approval of DNR before allowing an outsider to trap. In effect, this policy reserved northern trapping for the area's residents.<sup>16</sup> The CCF further restricted northern trapping by limiting it to those who did not have a major source of income other than from trapping or fishing--in other words, usually Aboriginals. This rule eliminated trapping by many white northerners, including priests, bureaucrats, teachers, and business people.<sup>17</sup> The CCF enforced this policy less strictly with Aboriginals than with whites, likely showing its true intent. The policy of not permitting persons income from more than one occupation had no precedent in the province. Even Joe Phelps, responsible for the edict, received income from various sources, including farming and politics. In one case, the policy ended the long-standing conservation and trapping efforts of the North of 55 Mink Ranch, comprised of Churchill River Power employees. The CCF rejected their plans to continue operating, because the group did "not make their living from this source," even though they proposed forming a co-operative and using Aboriginal labour to improve the trapping area.<sup>18</sup> In a Candle Lake Conservation Area case in 1950-1951, the CCF stopped long-time trapper Alvin L. Akre from trapping after he became the principal at the Candle Lake School. Feeling unfairly treated, Akre complained that another trapper, Nemo Sackett, worked at many activities. On the advice of W. J. Berezowsky of DNR, the Fur Advisory Committee then disqualified Sackett from trapping. Minister Brockelbank supported the decision, which also appeased Akre. DNR also refused a trapping licence to Mrs. Hanson because her husband worked for DNR, even though she had long trapped in the area.<sup>19</sup>

Yet in the case of the Aboriginal trapper Matthew Natwejus, who had other employment in the Island Falls area, the CCF overlooked the rule.<sup>20</sup> It enforced the regulations more strictly against white than Aboriginal trappers because of the CCF belief that Aboriginals had a natural aptitude for trapping and fishing and that they would not succeed in other industries. The CCF possibly erred in its belief in Aboriginal aptitude for "traditional occupations." Valentine and Young described as "perhaps the greatest paradox" that the average Metis did not do well at trapping or fur preparation.<sup>21</sup> The banning of southern trappers and those with other sources of

income removed some of the best and most efficient trappers from the industry. These policies became part of the CCF tolerance of inefficiency in the trapping industry.

Shutting out numerous good trappers contributed to some remote areas becoming under-trapped by the mid 1950s. Many Aboriginals lost interest in trapping far from the village. Falling fur prices and increased access to welfare also took interest away from trapping in outlying areas. The CCF still protected Aboriginal trapping, even in under-trapped areas. A. T. Davidson, assistant deputy minister of DNR, and other officials agreed "too much security was being given these men."<sup>22</sup> DNR encouraged trappers to get out and take fur. It operated an "access trails" program in the north-west area in 1958-1959 to allow ground access to remote areas, and also provided two "camp trade" outpost stores, which allowed for longer stays on trap lines.<sup>23</sup> In another effort, DNR flew two trappers from the Buffalo Narrows area into an under-trapped area in 1961, also offering fur pickup and a trip out at Christmas.<sup>24</sup> Yet Aboriginal interest in trapping in difficult-to-reach areas waned further, even though fur stocks increased. Wild fur production dropped to a seventeen-year low in 1964.<sup>25</sup> The CCF stuck to its belief that Aboriginals should trap and did not open the industry to those it excluded. It still hoped that Aboriginals would trap the remote areas more intensively.

In another controversial move, the CCF introduced group leases for northern trapping areas. This move, consistent with a socialist preference for group action over individual enterprise, reversed the previous Liberal administration's plans for an individual trapline registration system. Group trapping brought heavy regimentation and forced co-operation between trappers.<sup>26</sup> The CCF broke the North into group trapping areas and intended to administer the areas much as "large wild fur farms." On April 3, 1945, at Phelps' request, an order-in-council established the Cumberland House-Pine Bluff Conservation Area. It became the first of ninety-nine areas eventually established. Conservation Areas included 3,584 trappers by 1950. Part of the far North remained outside the program until its extension to the northern boundary of Saskatchewan in 1958. Individual trappers could sell their right to trap in the trapping area, providing DNR and their group approved of the buyer. Regulations also required notifying Indian Affairs of vacancies.<sup>27</sup>

Resistance to the new trapping boundaries arose partly because the new divisions often violated traditional trapping arrangements. A CCF supporter at La Ronge wrote in 1945 "We have had a lot of agitation here about the trapping leases and got only 29 votes for Bowerman [federal CCF candidate]."<sup>28</sup> Stony Rapids residents in 1949 repudiated their chief, blaming him for creating a new division of the traditional hunting and trapping area used by the Stony Rapids and Fond du Lac groups. DNR had drawn a new dividing line in an effort to increase trapping of beaver by

Fond du Lac trappers faced with “extreme poverty.” The chief wrongly received the blame, and DNR seemed willing to reevaluate its decision.<sup>29</sup> Cumberland House trappers repeatedly agitated for changes to trapping areas, wanting expansion of area A28 to include traditional trapping territory. Their wishes sometimes conflicted with the desires of Sturgeon Landing trappers. CCF rules barred trappers, including Pierre Carriere, who trapped on the nearby HBC lease, from trapping in A28. This led to protests, which the CCF did not appreciate. Game Commissioner Paynter described Liberal supporter Pierre Carriere as the “chief agitator.”<sup>30</sup> The area system did allow some flexibility, by assigning some trapping rights closer to settlements to older and less mobile trappers.

The CCF also created trappers councils in each area. Councils had five elected members, with Indians, Metis, and whites, where present, having equal rights on the councils. Paynter claimed “this is the first time in the history of the province that Indians have been treated equally with all others.” DNR kept strict control of the system, dominating council meetings, setting agendas, and making final decisions. Because trappers could not set prices or relieve overcrowding of trapping areas, they often showed little enthusiasm for the meetings. Only twenty-four of eighty-six members attended one meeting at Cumberland House in 1954-1955. DNR continued to call the meetings in 1960, although it allowed trappers to chair some of the gatherings.<sup>31</sup>

All regions, even those with no previous regulation, soon fell under the CCF system of trapping licenses and fur royalty collection. In 1945, Phelps seemed alarmed when he heard that trappers at Fond du Lac did not have licenses. Metis needed to buy licenses, while Indians received these free of charge. The CCF also wanted Ottawa to establish fur rehabilitation areas on Indian Reserves.<sup>32</sup> Some northern Saskatchewan residents, including a number with a traditional claim to do so, hunted and trapped in the NWT. Beginning in 1949, they needed federal licenses to do so.<sup>33</sup>

In the interests of restoring endangered fur populations, the CCF placed strict controls on the harvest of beaver and muskrat. Many areas had virtually no beaver left in 1944. Muskrat numbers also had declined, due to overtrapping and the 1930s drought, which dried up marsh habitat. Phelps closed muskrat and beaver seasons, although he knew this action would hurt Aboriginal trappers. He thought construction work on the road to La Ronge and work programs could help fill the income gap. The CCF’s fur conservation program applied to the entire province. In the Pre-Cambrian area north of the Churchill River, beaver management held priority, while in the northern Saskatchewan River watershed, muskrat management took precedence.<sup>34</sup>

Habitat modification formed a major part of the CCF plan to restore beaver and muskrat

populations. Largely funded by the Northern Fur Conservation Area Agreement, the CCF built dams and flood control structures in various areas. The Oblate priest, F. X. Gagnon of the Beauval Indian Residential School, knew his area well and advised government on the placement of dams there. Over the years, DNR built many dams; in 1949-1950 alone, it built thirty-nine dams.<sup>35</sup>

Southern beaver stocks stood at a much higher level than those in the North in 1944. DNR consequently live-trapped beaver in the South and relocated them to the North. In 1945, DNR wanted Father Gagnon to “instruct the natives that these beaver were planted for their benefit and that they should not be molested.”<sup>36</sup> During 1946 and 1947, DNR transplanted 1,127 beaver, raising their number in most areas to a level considered sufficient for propagation. Relocation carried on though, including to the far northern area of Stony Rapids in 1952. While it was costly to fly beaver that far, Brockelbank hoped the effort would have a “psychological effect” on the Dene and result in an improved attitude to conservation. The program continued, with about 3,500 moved by 1955.<sup>37</sup>

Under the CCF, Cumberland House’s low-lying, wet delta area received a disproportionate amount of governmental and private attention directed at restoring and increasing fur stocks. The former Liberal government had entered into leases for much of the area. In response to drought drying up the marshes and damaging muskrat habitat, the HBC began the largest fur conservation program in northern Saskatchewan on leased land at Cumberland House in 1938. The HBC seemed to have altruistic motives for leasing the marshes. It wanted to restore fur populations, help Aboriginals become independent, demonstrate that “large-scale conservation schemes” could work, and encourage governments to take action. One lease ran from 1943 until 1964, while another expired sooner. The HBC built a headquarters and manager’s residence, and dams, dykes, and canals to control water levels and improve muskrat habitat and production. It spent about \$200,000 by the early 1960s on structures.<sup>38</sup> Although the project increased local employment and income, some trappers opposed the HBC presence. They disapproved of the HBC monopoly on buying furs from the leases and losing unrestricted access to the marshes. Phelps and the CCF also did not like the HBC involvement and tried to take the land back. The CCF viewed the leases as capitalist oppression of the northern people. They met with partial success when the HBC gave up the area north of the river. The company kept the lease south of the river, probably the most profitable of the two areas. Pressure continued for this lease to end as well.<sup>39</sup>

The CCF seemed overly suspicious about HBC intentions and did not fully appreciate the dramatic increase HBC efforts brought in fur production and income. The HBC lease, for example, produced 110,708 muskrat in the 1953-1954 season compared to only 16,000 taken from the A-28

side. Careful management, contracts with trappers, regular fur pickups, and the provision of traps and grubstakes helped bring the HBC success. Many better trappers wanted to trap for the company. Game Commissioner Paynter recognized the superior HBC administration, compared to that of DNR, and opposed cancelling the HBC lease until DNR could improve its management.<sup>40</sup>

Likely tired of opposition from the CCF and trappers, the HBC asked DNR in 1960 to end the lease, even though it did not expire until 1964. The HBC also viewed the project as successful, since it had helped restore fur production. During twenty-two years of HBC control, production had approximately quadrupled, muskrat and beaver trappers received \$830,000, and the HBC paid wages of \$150,000 to local staff. Over the years, Saskatchewan also collected more than \$185,000 in lease fees, royalties, and SFMS commissions from the HBC. The company claimed it lost about \$175,526 on the project. It offered the province a house, ten other buildings, and various assets for \$30,000, and did not ask any compensation for the approximately \$200,000 spent on dams, dykes, and canals. DNR, shrewdly sensing that the HBC might take less, offered \$20,000, which the HBC accepted.<sup>41</sup>

The CCF set out to turn the former HBC lease into a community development project. While DNR's Read wanted to eliminate all appearance of paternalism, contradictorily, he spoke of government paying for deficits. Aboriginals should make at least token payments on the project's purchase cost. The CCF looked for local support for the plan, but only about twenty-five percent of those eligible voted, with fifty voting for and forty against the plan. In spite of the lukewarm support, the plan went ahead. In October of 1961, trappers formed the Cumberland Fur Project, and the province helped them organize as a co-operative. The CCF repeatedly bailed out the money-losing organization, while the Federal-Provincial Fur Agreement paid off the debt to the province.<sup>42</sup> The new operation proved costly to the province and likely lowered fur production and local income. Yet, the CCF clearly preferred co-operative community ownership over private control.

Various other fur leases in the Cumberland House area predated the CCF era. The CCF also strove to end some of these leases, except in the case of the lease to Indian Affairs of the Sipanok area west of Cumberland House. Indian Affairs operated a successful conservation program there, aiding trappers from Red Earth and Shoal Lake Reserves.<sup>43</sup> Non-profit projects to improve fur habitat also received a warm welcome from the CCF. Ducks Unlimited began conservation efforts in the Cumberland House area in the mid 1940s. It also carried out water control work for the CCF in the former HBC lease area in the 1960s. By 1963, Ducks Unlimited spent about \$240,000 on area water control.<sup>44</sup> The CCF undid some of the positive effects of

conservation efforts when it built the Squaw Rapids hydro electric dam upstream on the Saskatchewan. The structure generated opposition at Cumberland House from the time it opened in about 1963. Fluctuating water releases repeatedly damaged fur habitat. The community also blamed the dam for many other problems.<sup>45</sup>

Of the various organizations and persons who worked on conservation projects in the Cumberland House area, DNR ran one of the least productive operations. It built some water control projects to improve fur habitat there, including those directed by J. Brady in the late 1940s. In these projects, local people used wheelbarrows to build earthen dams. Some dams extended to one-and one-half miles or more in length. With DNR interest rising and ebbing over the years, its dams often fell into disrepair.<sup>46</sup> Yet, the CCF preferred the inefficiency of its own operations to the efficiency of those who could profit from their conservation efforts.

Efforts to restore beaver and muskrat populations succeeded, both at Cumberland House and elsewhere. After severe restrictions on beaver and muskrat trapping in 1944-1945, trappers could again take muskrat in most parts of the province and some beaver under special permits in 1945-1946. The beaver harvest averaged about 1,200 per year in the eight years before the program began, while during the first ten years of the program trappers took an average of about 12,000 per year. By 1949 DNR saw "splendid progress." It described the trapper as "a fur farmer in the wild." The beaver harvest reached over 34,000 in 1954-1955. In spite of a large price decline, down from an average of forty dollars in 1945 to \$9.69 in 1954, Brockelbank claimed government actions helped increase income by over \$225,000. In 1958-1959, trappers in the conservation block took 31,164 beaver which sold for an average of \$9.04, compared to 1,260 taken in 1946-1947 which brought an average price of \$31.80.<sup>47</sup>

Muskrat production also increased from its low point in 1941-1942. Although conservation played a part in this recovery, muskrat numbers naturally rose and fell in a cycle. In the years from the beginning of the conservation program until 1952, muskrat production averaged 477,541 per year compared to 230,084 for the same number of years before the program began. Production reached 951,065 in 1952-1953. The most productive muskrat area, the Cumberland delta, saw large harvest fluctuations due to water conditions and disease. Flooding and refreezing of the water in 1947 led to DNR closing the muskrat season there. The area muskrat harvest dropped from 126,407 in 1946 to nil in 1948, causing destitution and the consequent distribution of relief.<sup>48</sup>

DNR closely regulated trapping and trappers. It expected trappers to carry out beaver censuses, although DNR distrusted their counts. Suspicion arose that some trappers inflated

numbers thinking this would give them a higher beaver quota. At Stanley Mission, the beaver house count fell from 1,860 to 986 after DNR, suspecting an exaggerated census, threatened to take away trapping rights. DNR also found trapping violations there, including beaver houses chopped open.<sup>49</sup> DNR required trappers to submit annual reports within thirty days of the end of the trapping season, refusing future permits for non-compliance.<sup>50</sup> DNR also closely regulated the taking of other fur bearers, as in the early 1950s when it issued no fisher or marten permits.<sup>51</sup> It also set trapping seasons, which varied by species, with some beginning as early as October.<sup>52</sup>

The CCF's strict controls on trapping caused dissatisfaction in many areas. Some thought the regulations contributed to poverty and hardship. Residents at Pelican Narrows, a poor community, called for a beaver quota.<sup>53</sup> At Island Falls, Horace Morin complained when DNR closed an area to trapping, since people did not have the canoes or dogs to allow them to trap farther away. He also objected to only married men receiving beaver licenses. Phelps' office consulted with Churchill River Power, whose superintendent expressed surprise that Morin complained, since Morin had a reputation as a docile, lazy person.<sup>54</sup> At Cumberland House in 1948, Pierre Carriere sent a petition with fifty-six names to DNR asking for an open beaver season. Trappers there also wanted changes to trapping areas.<sup>55</sup> As well, the quota system for muskrats raised complaints. One protester at Cumberland House in 1950 claimed that, after government stopped muskrat trapping the previous year, the remaining 10,000 muskrat died anyway.<sup>56</sup>

In at least one case, DNR used its power to control and prosecute trappers as a social measure. It charged blind seventy-six-year-old Andrew Raun of the Cumberland House area in 1951 with illegally trapping six beaver. He seemed to badly need the trapping income. While area trappers approved of him trapping near his cabin, DNR had refused him a beaver permit. Rev. Parker, the justice of the peace, fined Raun \$250 and \$4.50 costs, which represented more than one year's blind pension for Raun, or sixty days in jail. Raun went to jail. The jailing appeared motivated by a desire to protect the blind man "living in a deplorable, filthy state in his cabin on the Mossy River." While in jail, he had an operation on his toe nails, which possibly had not been cut for years. E. L. Paynter, Game Commissioner, wrote "It is quite a problem to know just what to do with people like this. Many of them think they should have the right to live and die as they wish. . . . I am inclined to recommend that the proceeds of the fur involved should be given to him."<sup>57</sup>

While northerners effectively resisted paying property taxes by refusing to do so, the CCF system for collecting fur royalties defied resistance since it required payment at the point of sale. Royalties varied over time and by species. In the late 1950s royalties ranged from a low of two



cents for squirrel and jack rabbit, to seven cents for muskrat, to one dollar for beaver, fisher, and mink, to \$1.25 for otter. Fur royalties and license fees totaled about \$3.8 million from 1944 to 1963, much more than the CCF spent on fur programs.<sup>58</sup>

In its most controversial trapping intervention, the CCF forced the marketing of beaver and muskrat, other than muskrat from the HBC lease near Cumberland House, through its new crown corporation, the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service (SFMS). Idealistically, the CCF sought to provide a "safe, sound market for trappers and fur farmers." It also wanted to give trappers the highest possible prices and improve the quality and prestige of Saskatchewan furs. Phelps justified creating SFMS by claiming overwhelming support from trappers, fur farmers, and dealers.<sup>59</sup>

Creation of SFMS served various purposes for the CCF. It fit with its socialist agenda, which preferred crown corporations over private enterprise. SFMS also helped break the power of private traders, thought responsible for keeping Aboriginals in debt peonage and poverty. Further, the CCF did not trust trappers or traders. Handling the furs itself helped the CCF enforce its controls for beaver and muskrat.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, the CCF looked to SFMS for revenue. Phelps wanted to use initial profits to expand DNR and expected SFMS to return a dividend to government.<sup>61</sup> By 1962, SFMS earned a surplus of \$412,319 and possessed a contingency reserve of \$25,000.<sup>62</sup>

SFMS hired W. H. Lefurgey as its manager, but since he did not satisfy Phelps, A. J. Cooke took over as manager in November of 1945. SFMS held fur auctions from its building in Regina. At four auctions from January to June of 1945, sales totalled about \$520,000. Phelps soon claimed that SFMS succeeded in raising prices for trappers. He also planned to expand into tanning and processing furs and making fur coats. Phelps, in his excitement, ordered a muskrat coat from Winnipeg, made with Saskatchewan skins.<sup>63</sup>

SFMS charged a commission of five percent plus other fees. DNR and SFMS both collected royalties. SFMS relied on agents, including DNR, the Fish Board, priests, and others to collect furs, paying them a fee of about one percent of the selling price. Rev. C. E. Gamache of Fond du Lac, sympathetic to SFMS, offered to collect fur, without pay. He stressed the need to replace delayed SFMS payments with advance payments made "on the spot," a suggestion SFMS refused to follow.<sup>64</sup>

The compulsory fur marketing system raised much more opposition than did the conservation measures, but Phelps and the CCF refused to listen to the complaints from trappers and fur dealers. Northerners still speak with great anger about the negative effects of CCF fur policies. One Metis man bitterly described how compulsory marketing destroyed the profitability

of muskrat trapping.<sup>65</sup> Many unhappy SFMS customers complained, with some saying they received only a small percentage of what they should have.<sup>66</sup> In one case, SFMS paid \$22.28 for thirty-six wolf pelts, which it sold for \$106.05.<sup>67</sup> In 1948, Rev. C. J. Waite of Montreal Lake railed against charges much higher than the ten percent fee he thought the CCF had promised. Charges reached twenty-five percent for fisher pelts, including royalties. Waite spoke of the CCF and its Soviet system robbing "my Indians."<sup>68</sup> L. E. Blanchard, MLA for Cumberland, wrote to Brockelbank in 1949: "The Indians tell me never before have we been so poor . . . they are getting desperate." Brockelbank dogmatically replied "I think you will agree with me that it would be very undesirable in the interests of your constituents to leave them completely at the mercy of the fur dealer as they were in the past."<sup>69</sup> The same year, 142 La Ronge trappers and fishermen signed a petition which opposed SFMS and favored an open market for fur and fish.<sup>70</sup> A letter from Deschambault Lake, originally written in Cree, read "For me I feed my dogs, when I have finished using them, all summer I feed them even when they are not working for me since I expect that they will be working for me again, but now, as far as we can see it is as if they are trying to starve us to death and children."<sup>71</sup> Chief Robert McKay of Red Earth Reserve complained to Brockelbank after SFMS destroyed rejected muskrat pelts. He reminded Brockelbank that he recently told trappers that nothing would please him more than to have the trappers call him "brother."<sup>72</sup> Slow payment by SFMS also proved a major issue for trappers.<sup>73</sup>

The anthropologist V. Valentine experienced resistance to CCF fur policies in the 1950s. The Metis he knew particularly disliked compulsory fur marketing, which destroyed the credit system and did not replace it with a reliable substitute. "For most people, all present wrongs are believed to have been caused by the present Government," Valentine wrote. Aboriginals "had only contempt and hostility for the Department of Natural Resources, and for the Provincial Government generally." He reported "I couldn't walk two steps without being accused of being some kind of a CCF spy or some other damn thing . . . it was all focused on the way in which the resources were being administered, and specifically, the compulsory aspects of beaver and muskrat."<sup>74</sup>

The resistance to compulsory fur marketing became part of a generalized opposition to the CCF presence and policies. Laurie Barron describes Aboriginal opposition as "an indictment of the very notion that the CCF was walking in Indian moccasins." The older generation particularly resisted, and Aboriginals fought back by continuing to use the HBC when they could.<sup>75</sup> Valentine thought the Metis felt "robbed of their natural heritage and that the new programmes are rapidly bringing about the disintegration of their society. The resentment is such that to be called a

'C.C.F.'er' is an anathema."<sup>76</sup> Some of the strongest open resistance to CCF policies came at Cumberland House. In 1947, a recording secretary at a community hall meeting admonished Pierre Carriere "for his anarchistic expressions and conduct at past meetings."<sup>77</sup> In 1948, R. T. Francis, a forestry student, wrote "I have heard from some great rumors that these people are very hard to get along with, i.e. what we have done for them in the past two or three years was more or less ignored by these people."<sup>78</sup>

Even when trappers and other northerners disagreed strongly with CCF policies, they often chose mild methods to register their opposition, such as petitioning the CCF. In 1949 for example, a petition from 147 Lac la Ronge area trappers and fishermen requested "the removal of compulsory marketing of fish and furs through socialist boards." Formal opposition from Aboriginals often depended on white advisers, as most Metis and Indians lacked education or experience with the white man and his policy and decision-making process. A language barrier also existed, as Aboriginals spoke primarily Cree or Chipewyan. Often a literate white person organized a petition, which arrived in Regina with numerous Xs made by those who could not sign their names.<sup>79</sup> Many trappers and others also used passive resistance, not co-operating with CCF fur and other projects. In the North, the powerless aimed more to minimize the negative impact of CCF programs than to bring structural changes. They delayed, faked compliance, and affected ignorance and incompetence. Most resistance stayed unorganized, although silent understandings and informal networks effectively worked against CCF plans. A Metis Society study found that Aboriginals used "accommodating language" when speaking to officials. They gave the answers they thought would please the officials, and they did not show their true "deep feelings and decisions." The report said "accommodating answers make things run more smoothly in the colonized world."<sup>80</sup> Resistance of various types to CCF fur policies continued to rise.

The CCF did create one mechanism through which trappers could register their concerns over fur policies with government. Beginning in 1950, the CCF used Annual Trappers Conferences at Prince Albert as one of its main ways to communicate with trappers. DNR provided most of the initiative, financing, and organization. Northerners participated increasingly by 1953, when ninety-one delegates from fifty-two areas attended meetings conducted in Cree, Chipewyan, and English. Yet DNR and white trappers from fringe areas often dominated. DNR anthropologist J. E. M. Kew depicted the organization as "dictatorial" and "paternalistic." The meetings acted as a "safety valve" for hostilities and as an "educational tool" for government, and with few exceptions did little to alter government policies. DNR continued its close supervision in the 1960s, and still gave grants to delegates. Some who attended spent the money partying and

then could not afford to rent a room.<sup>81</sup>

Northern trappers were not alone in their opposition to CCF fur policies. Resistance also arose among fur traders and dealers throughout the province. The CCF largely ignored the concerns of these capitalist merchants since it viewed them as part of the problem in the fur industry. The government worked to reduce and even eliminate their involvement in the business. Complaints from dealers flooded in to Regina. Schneider and Einarson, traders at Deschambault Lake, complained of forged signatures in support of SFMS and that Indians had been told that shipping their furs to SFMS would help the Red Cross. They wondered too if SFMS would collect debts owed them for advances to trappers. The pair soon sold their post to the CCF, which opened a government store there. The HBC also worried about collecting debts from trappers who shipped furs to SFMS. The Raw Fur, Hide, Horsehair and Wool Dealers' Association in 1944 opposed the creation of SFMS. When Phelps considered forcing the marketing of all ranch and wild fur through SFMS, the Lestock Silver Fox and Fur Association unanimously opposed the plan. Fearing the worst, Jewish fur dealers in Saskatoon asked for one year to close out their affairs. Fur dealer Mick Fyck wrote to Phelps saying "Do you think Mr Phelps that fur dealers were making so much profit on buying furs that you wanted to take this away from us." After trying the new system, the Raw Fur Dealers Association remained opposed to SFMS in 1948. It offered to handle furs, keep records, oversee quotas, collect fees, and "become keen guardians."<sup>82</sup> The CCF did not listen.

Although regulations allowed the HBC to handle muskrat furs from its Cumberland House lease, Phelps wanted it to market these furs through SFMS. After selling a trial shipment of muskrats through SFMS, the HBC decided to market all its furs in London. It seemed this would help the British government reestablish the London fur market, which had ended during the war.<sup>83</sup>

A recovery in fur prices to "exceptional" levels helped SFMS succeed. From 1944 to 1946, it marketed nearly two million dollars in furs. One large auction in August of 1947 offered the skins of 83,848 muskrat and 1,712 beaver and produced sales of \$254,400.30. About thirty brokers and agents from outside the province attended, including representatives from twelve New York firms. After the sale, A. J. Cooke personally traveled north to distribute returns to allow trappers to buy trapping equipment and avoid debt. Many trappers seemed less concerned about the future and quickly spent the cash. SFMS added two stories to its building in Regina, and Cooke declared that he had seen no equal to the new second floor display area. SFMS sales brought prices which equalled or exceeded those at any sale on the continent, he claimed. SFMS sold about eight million dollars in pelts by January of 1951, and earned a total surplus of \$277,611

by the end of 1953.<sup>84</sup>

In some cases, SFMS raised the prices of furs. In 1947, for example, it paid eighty-six cents for muskrat, while the HBC paid seventy-five cents for those from its lease at Cumberland House. DNR's Malcolm Norris surveyed fur prices in La Ronge and found that the HBC and other private interests paid far less for furs than did SFMS. Large mink sold at La Ronge for thirty-five dollars, while they had a market value of about sixty dollars. A report commissioned by Phelps for November and December of 1947 likely inaccurately concluded that trappers who sold to private interests lost about \$128,000 compared to SFMS prices.<sup>85</sup> In reality, the differences often seemed small, not large enough to justify accusations of unfair treatment by private dealers. Dealers could justify paying lower prices for furs, since they did not know in advance what prices they would receive for furs. Unlike SFMS, dealers paid for furs when they received them. Dealers also incurred costs by operating in isolated settlements and offering credit. Further, SFMS received operating subsidies of various types, including free labour from DNR officers who collected furs.

Many trappers did not experience the benefits from SFMS claimed by the CCF. While government claimed that statistics demonstrated the benefit from its programs, trappers knew they received lower prices for many furs than they had years before. Even though weakening world fur markets caused some of this decline, the CCF received the blame. Delayed payments from SFMS and lost credit at local traders also continued to irk many northerners. Consequently, opposition to compulsory fur marketing intensified. As early as 1949, faced with complaints from Liberals, dealers, and trappers, Brockelbank considered having to abandon the policy, even though SFMS showed a profit. As protests increased, DNR's Deputy Minister C. A. L. Hogg and Game Commissioner E. L. Paynter also questioned continuing the compulsory program. Even DNR officers became apathetic about SFMS. With the opposition reaching overwhelming proportions, Brockelbank again reluctantly spoke of ending compulsory marketing in 1954. The final blow to the system came when the Annual Trappers Convention, which had previously supported compulsory marketing, voted to end the system in 1955. The Fur Advisory Committee blamed Aboriginal delegates for the result, since most white trappers at the convention favoured compulsory marketing. In a weak effort to salvage the crumbling system, Brockelbank suggested increasing the initial payment. The CCF government, worn down by persistent and growing opposition to SFMS, allowed open marketing of beaver and muskrat pelts during the 1955-1956 fiscal year. The primary reason for compulsory marketing ending was persistent pressure from trappers. The CCF wanted to continue the system, even though the main initial justification for

creating the system, the need to protect fur stocks, no longer caused concern.<sup>86</sup>

From the point of view of many northerners, the SFMS had failed. During its time as a compulsory service, SFMS helped destroy the former northern economy while it did little to raise incomes. It possibly left Aboriginal northerners "poorer than ever."<sup>87</sup> The CCF also broke a promise to use the \$412,319 surplus to promote the industry and increase social services. Instead, the money went into general revenue.<sup>88</sup> However, from the CCF point of view, the SFMS succeeded. It largely accomplished at least one of its original purposes; it played a key role in the CCF's ideological attack on northern capitalism, including the HBC, private traders, and the credit system. Compulsory fur marketing helped weaken these institutions. SFMS continued operating as a non-compulsory service after 1955, with southern trappers using the service most. Northern trappers largely avoided the hated marketing system. In 1961-1962, SFMS handled 60.6% of the total wild fur catch, compared to 74.5% in 1949-1950. In nineteen seasons of operation, SFMS marketed more than twenty-five million dollars in furs, more than one-half of Saskatchewan's wild fur production.<sup>89</sup>

Although the CCF used a heavy hand in various matters--banning trapping by southerners and those who had jobs, imposing trapping areas, and forcing marketing through the SFMS--it chose not to use its power to reduce the number of Aboriginal trappers to a rational number. Instead, it institutionalized overcrowding. The number of northern trappers increased from 1,747 in 1947-1948 to 2,055 in 1959-1960. The CCF allowed practically any Aboriginals who wanted to trap to do so. The Fur Advisory Committee and later the Program Co-ordinating Committee held responsibility for approving new trapping licenses. While recognizing the poor economic outlook for trapping, the Program Co-ordinating Committee claimed vocational alternatives did not exist and turned down few applicants. It allowed thirty to forty new trappers per year. By 1959-1960, Cumberland House area trappers, operating in one of the North's most productive areas, had a mean gross income of only \$328, down from \$464.15 in 1953-1954. Many trappers failed to cover expenses, and trapping increasingly became an activity rather than an occupation. Few earned a living trapping. Allowing many to trap, rather than limiting trapping to fewer participants, added to the failure of the CCF plan to have trapping form one of the primary bases of the northern Aboriginal economy.<sup>90</sup>

In an initiative closely related to trapping, the CCF encouraged northern fur farming. The CCF and others viewed farming captive animals on fur farms as the future of fur production. During the 1940s, mink ranches replaced the once popular fox ranching. Northern mink ranching interested the CCF, since it would utilize coarse fish and offal from fish plants as feed and offered

hope for economic diversification. Many mink ranches began, particularly in the Buffalo Narrows and Ile a la Crosse area, which produced more than one-quarter of the provincial mink production by 1955-1956.<sup>91</sup> The province had about ninety-four fur farms by 1959, with 49,534 mink consuming about 5,685,372 pounds of coarse fish.<sup>92</sup> White people raised most furs, although the CCF wanted Aboriginals to enter the business. CCF encouragement existed more in spirit than in fact, since it had no program to help Aboriginals become fur farmers. Various DNR officials spoke about creating programs to move Aboriginals into fur farming, and the Center for Community Studies visualized a great expansion in northern mink ranching, with up to another sixty ranches on the west side and more elsewhere. The CCF, the Center, and experts all guessed wrong in seeing a bright future for fur farming. Prices crashed by the mid 1960s. Only twenty-one licenced mink ranches remained in the province by 1970.<sup>93</sup>

CCF efforts to restore and control fur stocks succeeded. Beaver once again felled trees and built dams, and muskrat played in thriving marshes. Yet the CCF hope that its multi-faceted fur intervention would bring prosperity to Aboriginals proved false. Benefits to trappers remained small for several reasons, some of which the CCF could not control. It could not reverse the long decline in world fur prices, which reduced the profitability of trapping. In 1960-1961 Canadian wild fur production totalled only \$12,360,000 compared to \$16,092,000 in 1923. Beaver prices fell from an average of \$27.36 in 1947-1948 to \$11.17 in 1959-1960, and muskrat from \$2.29 to \$.82. For 1959-1960, Treaty Indian trappers averaged returns of \$476, Metis of \$313, and whites of \$606. Trapping incomes fluctuated wildly, as seen in the drop in 1963-1964 to \$684,932.24 from \$984,702.25 the previous year for the northern block. Artificial fur, ranch fur, and foreign competition also hurt the industry. Pressure against using fur-bearing animals had not yet risen and was not a factor.<sup>94</sup>

CCF policies also contributed to the failure of trapping to form a base for the northern Aboriginal economy. Although fur stocks rose, trappers failed to increase the amount of fur taken; by 1960 wild-fur production exceeded that of the first year of the conservation program only once. Some remote areas saw little trapping, with Aboriginals preferring trapping closer to settlements. Many trappers also lacked interest in trapping, even close to home. The CCF failed to rationalize trapping by protecting inefficient and unmotivated producers and not opening trapping to outsiders. Consistent with socialist principles, the CCF wanted to spread trapping income among all northern Aboriginals rather than have a few trappers receive substantial incomes. Skilled and ambitious trappers consequently could not earn a good living at trapping. The CCF forced socialist principles on a reluctant trapping industry. It did so by expelling entrepreneurs from trapping, imposing a

group trapping model, opposing profit-oriented traders, and compelling marketing through the state-owned SFMS. Northerners resisted CCF ideology and actions, hurting the success of CCF plans.

One aspect of the CCF trapping interventions strove to end the credit system and replace it with a cash system. This effort failed dismally. The CCF seemed surprised when its tampering with credit caused serious new problems. Traders cut the amount of credit they gave, forcing trappers to frequently return from the trapline for supplies, unlike previously when they obtained enough goods for extended, efficient stays on the trapline. SFMS used a system of initial and final payments, but even the initial payment would not arrive for weeks or months. Trappers camped near the post office, drinking and gambling, waiting for cheques which often did not meet expectations. The cash system brought feast and famine, since many quickly spent their fur cheques, and few bought traps and nets for the next winter from cheques which arrived in the spring and summer. When fur income peaked at Cumberland House in 1946, with trappers receiving from \$1,200 to \$4,000, many quickly spent the money and then went on relief. Montreal Lake became a "bootleg paradise" when fur cheques arrived, with up to seven taxis bringing liquor in one night. Reverend Waite blamed the increased drinking on what he referred to as the "Soviet System" introduced by the CCF.<sup>95</sup> Under the CCF system, trappers commonly ended up broke and without credit, which increased dependence on social aid.

The CCF made weak efforts to fix its new system, mainly by talking about issuing payments in numerous installments. Indian Affairs and DNR unsuccessfully discussed a multiple-payment system for Montreal Lake in 1948. The HBC agreed to help DNR implement a three-payment system for the Cumberland House area, but the system broke down in 1950 when two fur payments came too close together. RCMP Constable Crawford noted this resulted in "considerable excess drinking." In 1950, C. A. L. Hogg, DNR's deputy minister, favoured implementing a larger system to hold back fur income for "bad times." Action did not follow, and the problem continued since the CCF seemed less concerned about the increased drinking and poverty than about ideology.<sup>96</sup>

Credit did not disappear completely. Private traders could still buy some types of fur, although a trapper might receive only one-tenth of the former credit. In many cases, traders allowed limited charge accounts for mothers, who would use the next family allowance cheque as collateral. Other government cheques also served as collateral, particularly if the trader handled the mail and could intercept the cheque. While the CCF resisted credit, even its stores issued credit at times.<sup>97</sup> Forced fur marketing ended by 1956, but CCF opposition to credit continued. One



observer in 1964 saw a “medieval approach” which regarded credit as “bad,” because it allowed people to live beyond their means.<sup>98</sup> The mighty credit system of the old fur trade never rebuilt. Instead of reducing northern problems, the CCF’s ideological attack on northern credit proved disastrous, contributing to economic inactivity, welfare dependency, poverty, alcohol abuse, and social problems. Even Morris Shumiatcher, Douglas’ former assistant, saw many negative effects from the CCF intervention.<sup>99</sup> The CCF supplanted the former paternalism of the HBC with the paternalism of government control and the welfare state.

As an adjunct to its attack on the HBC, other traders, and the credit system, and as a central part of the new society it sought to create in the North, the CCF established and owned stores which operated under a series of crown corporations. Malcolm Norris and J. J. Wheaton viewed them as the “main spring” for the new northern economy.<sup>100</sup> The CCF tried to buy the thirteen northern HBC posts in 1944. Willing to compete with the CCF, the HBC did not sell.<sup>101</sup> The refusal did not stop the CCF, which felt strong pressure from within government to start stores. George Cadbury of EAPB, Malcolm Norris, and A. K. Quandt all wanted to see government stores.<sup>102</sup> Most pressure to enter the retail business came from southern socialist politicians and bureaucrats, not from northerners. The stores formed part of the CCF effort to create a northern socialist society.

The CCF established Saskatchewan Government Trading Services (SGT), with its head office in Prince Albert, as a division of the Fish Board. An SGT store began at La Ronge in 1945.<sup>103</sup> The Board also opened a store at Deschambault, which it bought from private traders. SGT posts also opened at Snake Lake, Wollaston, Beaver Lake, and Birch Rapids by 1948.

SGT stores received heavy subsidies from the CCF. The government store at Deschambault did poorly, since many Aboriginals preferred to trade with a private store at Pelican Narrows, about twenty-eight miles away. A poor location for the SGT store and a poor stock of goods also hurt the operation. The CCF considered closing the post, partly because it thought the area had “a poor class of native” not interested in hard work. Yet it remained open, operating much as a social service, with the Fish Board assuming losses. Malcolm Norris and then Jim Brady managed the post, trying to influence Aboriginals to change trading patterns and deal with the SGT store.<sup>104</sup> The Fish Board and DNR subsidized various stores by providing staff and facilities and by flying store goods free of charge on flights to pick up fish. DNR gave SGT cash subsidies in exchange for SGT doing DNR work at Deschambault, Wollaston, and Snake Lake. SFMS also helped SGT by deciding, in early 1949, that SGT should collect its furs in most locations where SGT stores operated. This would give SGT a commission for handling the furs

as well as possibly increase sales of goods to trappers. In another form of subsidy, the CCF sold goods below cost at times, causing dissatisfaction with higher prices at private posts. In one case, cheap flour at Wollaston brought buyers more than 100 miles.<sup>105</sup>

The CCF analysis of the northern retail situation proved faulty, and its lack of knowledge about retailing added to problems. By 1947, contradicting the CCF claim of HBC price gouging, Norris found SGT stores could not compete with the HBC, which sold goods for about the same price SGT paid wholesale. Poor buying jeopardized the La Ronge store, which had a stock of three or four tons of foul sausage, enough lead floats to last for an estimated fifty years, and moth and mouse-eaten socks and coats. To save money, the CCF operated stores in ramshackle rented or second-hand buildings. The Beaver Lake store closed by 1949, and the Wollaston operation, on which the people had come to depend, hung in the balance. Happily, the situation at La Ronge improved, and it received a large, modern store in 1952. By 1953, in keeping with its loss of enthusiasm for northern programs, the CCF did not want to expand its system of stores and became more interested in turning the stores into co-operatives.<sup>106</sup>

Because many northerners found it nearly impossible to live without credit, the credit issue presented an ongoing problem for the CCF. Although the CCF opposed giving credit, SGT stores sporadically gave in to pressure from customers and allowed some buying on credit. In 1947, James F. Gray, Resident Director of the Saskatchewan Lake and Forest Products Corporation, under whom the stores operated, opposed credit, and credit stopped. As a result, the stores lost much trade and the future of posts appeared in jeopardy, since people could not wait for slow CCF fur payments. After various DNR staff applied pressure, Gray agreed to allow the Snake Lake store to extend credit, but only in cases where another government department or a regular government or salary cheque would guarantee payment. The loss of credit had severe effects. Some trappers even found they could not buy traps, as private traders no longer advanced credit if they could not buy the furs.<sup>107</sup>

Even though the Fish Board went out of business by 1949, CCF stores continued. Saskatchewan Marketing Services then looked after Saskatchewan Government Trading Services and two other divisions--the Fur Marketing Service and the Fish Marketing Service. In time, the CCF learned how to run stores, and they operated fairly successfully for much of the 1950s. SGT operated stores at Stanley, Cumberland House, Lac la Ronge, Snake Lake, Wollaston, and Deschambault. By 1956-1957, SGT had nineteen employees, fixed assets of \$124,351, sales of \$610,053, and a net surplus of \$15,335. The benefit of SGT stores remained uncertain though, since many did not want to deal with the hated CCF and their stores. The HBC and private traders

continued to dominate sales in most villages. As early as 1950, the CCF viewed SGT as a temporary measure until co-operatives could take over.<sup>108</sup>

As the next step in reshaping northern retailing, the CCF began an aggressive program of creating co-operative retail outlets by the mid 1950s. DNR's anthropologist Vic Valentine helped organize the Fort Black Co-op Store at Ile a la Crosse in 1955, using provincial funding and a loan through the credit society. Things looked good for a time, with the co-op underselling local stores, paying a dividend, and buying many furs. Some problems arose when free traders opposed Valentine's efforts, and older people feared losing their security at the HBC or Marion's store. Yet, in 1957 and 1958, CCF officials pointed to the store and other local co-operative efforts as proving that Metis could successfully operate a complex business. Over time, though, the store needed extensive aid. It failed about five times by 1970, with the province helping it reopen each time. One observer said the store ran much like a welfare agency, with credit carelessly given. Patrons also blackmailed the manager into giving them more credit by threatening to complain to the Co-op Management Advisor about the operation.<sup>109</sup> Other areas tried to emulate the early success at Ile a la Crosse. Co-op stores opened at Buffalo Narrows and Beauval by 1957.<sup>110</sup>

Local interest in a co-op store grew at La Loche by 1958, possibly spurred by high prices at the HBC store. A comparison of prices at the HBC store in La Loche and the Co-op store in Buffalo Narrows found that a group of items cost about fifteen percent more at La Loche after allowing for extra transportation costs to La Loche. Local promoters of a co-op found willing allies in Miss M. Crawley of Social Welfare and Paul Godt of the Department of Co-operation, who did not like HBC ways. The CCF took over the project, expecting to have to maintain control. P. Spaulding of Co-operation wrote "The meaning of co-operation, the value of loyalty to the organization, the value of money, thrift, and industriousness in the sense that they are meaningful to Canadians have little or no meaning to the residents of La Loche." The Department of Co-operation planned the store, and the CCF supplied most of the funds, expecting residents to only provide wall logs and \$1,000 towards the estimated \$31,000 cost. The store officially opened in 1959, with T. C. Douglas in attendance. It failed in the 1960s, apparently because the manager gave credit too leniently.<sup>111</sup>

The CCF further increased its imposition of co-op stores and the number of these stores when it turned SGT stores into co-operatives. Many northern co-operatives became little more than another form of CCF socialist enterprise. Little local initiative and interest existed, but the CCF thought support would come in time. The Northern Advisory Committee (NAC) pushed for the changeover of SGT stores to co-operatives. It wanted the province to provide a 100%

guarantee, carry losses, and place less emphasis on making a profit. The CCF responded by amending the Guarantee Act to allow a 100% guarantee for some co-ops. The Officials' Committee on Northern Affairs began meeting in 1958 to study changing SGT and the Fish Marketing Service to co-operatives. SGT then transferred its stores to Northern Co-operative Trading Services (NCTS) on March 31, 1959 for \$275,000. The CCF extended credit for the full sale price. NCTS and the new Co-operative Fisheries Limited (CFL) were "second tier co-operatives," with local co-ops having membership in the central co-operatives. An appointed southern board of directors oversaw the operation, while the CCF spoke of a five-year transition period to northern control. Some local participation existed, including at Cumberland House where an elected local board advised the central board. The co-ops also began using Aboriginal managers. In its first full year of operation, NCTS, together with CFL, did business of \$1,862,432.03. It earned a surplus of \$80,000, much less than the subsidies it received. The CCF continued to insist that northerners would have co-operatives, whether they wanted them or not.<sup>112</sup>

At one point, NCTS stores operated at Cumberland House, Deschambault, La Ronge, Pinehouse, Stanley Mission, and Wollaston, in addition to co-op stores at Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Ile a la Crosse, La Loche, Patuanak, Pelican Narrows, and Kinoosao. A floating co-op store also conducted business from a barge on Churchill Lake, following fishermen.<sup>113</sup> The stores likely lowered prices for goods and reduced the cost of living, especially where no competition had existed.<sup>114</sup> Ongoing strong involvement by the CCF ensured that the co-ops continued.

Even with large subsidies and much prodding, the co-ops remained problematic, partly because of a lack of true local support and because the CCF failed to find a workable replacement for the weakened credit system. Private traders still successfully extended some credit to good risks, while the co-ops never solved the "production credit problem." Faced with continuing losses, after it defeated the CCF, the Liberal government discontinued the operation of NCTS later in the 1960s. It first allocated part of the purchase debt to local co-operatives and then wrote off the remaining debt.<sup>115</sup> With the artificial props reduced, the number of co-ops dropped dramatically.

Co-operatives, other than retail co-ops, also operated in the North under the CCF. Jim Brady's promotion of co-operatives at Cumberland House led to a fur co-op forming there in 1952. Trappers unanimously petitioned government for the co-op, but support soon evaporated. It disbanded by 1953, likely due to dashed hopes when the trappers found that the co-op did not give them the freedom to control trapping regulations and sell furs to whom they wished. It seems they thought the co-op would let them circumvent the CCF regulations. A Cumberland House fur co-

operative again operated by 1963, apparently successfully run by trappers.<sup>116</sup>

The CCF had a dream for northern prosperity. Politicians and bureaucrats made and implemented ambitious plans to fundamentally alter the northern economy, particularly the Aboriginal economy. They visualized Aboriginals successfully pursuing “traditional occupations,” including trapping. At the same time, the CCF sought to protect northerners from the ravages of the capitalist system. This led to an ongoing attack on the HBC and private fur traders as well as the long-standing credit system. To replace capitalist relationships in the fur trade, the CCF introduced Aboriginals to various forms of socialist and co-operative organization, including SFMS, SGT stores, and co-operatives. The southern socialists imposed their plans on northerners, using paternalistic and colonial methods. Subsequent events disappointed the CCF. Aboriginals opposed the crown corporation form of ownership, detested compulsory marketing, and showed little interest in co-operatives. Further, trapping, even when reserved for northern Aboriginals, failed to provide the hoped for prosperity. However, the CCF did not place all of its hope for northern economic reform on its fur and retail projects but simultaneously intervened in other aspects of the economy. In another major initiative, the CCF reorganized the fishing industry. This endeavor also proved challenging, with many unforeseen pitfalls.

## **Chapter Six**

### **AT THE POINT OF A GUN**

Commercial fishing formed the second major sector of the northern Aboriginal economy visualized by the CCF. Policies for the fishery resembled those for the fur industry and formed part of the same CCF economic master plan. As with trapping, the CCF reserved commercial fishing primarily for northerners. In its view, greedy outside capitalists had long dominated the industry, hurting local participation and the northern economy. In another parallel to its trapping policies, the CCF wanted to increase Aboriginal participation in the fishery and spread the income from fishing to a large number of Aboriginals. It believed that Aboriginals possessed a natural aptitude to fish and that fishing could form one of the main activities in a new, prosperous Aboriginal economy. Promotion of Aboriginal fishing contradicted the CCF plan to modernize and assimilate Aboriginals in much the same way as did the CCF policy on trapping. Instead of moving Aboriginals into the modern world, fishing reinforced a pre-industrial, segregated lifestyle.

The CCF also applied its socialist philosophy to its intervention in the fishery. James F. Gray, later the head of the crown corporation in charge of the fishery, expressed the CCF belief that fishermen did not own the fish. The benefits from fish belonged to all the people of Saskatchewan.<sup>1</sup> Socialist ideology influenced the CCF choosing crown corporations to buy, process, and market fish. To improve the enterprises' chances of success, the CCF enforced its monopoly over fish processing and marketing in a large part of the North. At the same time, it discouraged and limited private investment in the fishery and created a hostile climate for capital. The CCF preference for socialist solutions eventually led to the creation of a largely artificial co-operative structure to handle fish.

Commercial fishing had long operated successfully with minimal government involvement. It formed the third largest industry in Saskatchewan in the mid 1940s. Hundreds of people fished, with little depletion of fish stocks. In the 1944-1945 fiscal year, the fish haul totalled about 13,397,427 pounds. Since many isolated lakes, including Wollaston and Reindeer, had no licensed fishermen, potential for expansion existed.<sup>2</sup> Prior to CCF involvement, white fishermen, processors, and dealers dominated northern fishing. They provided the necessary capital and

organization for a successful fishing industry. While Aboriginal people relied partly on fish to feed themselves and their dogs, most seemed uninterested in commercial fishing. Some commonly worked for non-Aboriginal fishermen. For several reasons, most fishing took place in the winter. Because the North had virtually no roads, caterpillars and tractors economically pulled sleighs loaded with frozen fish along ice-covered waterways and winter roads. Winter fishing also naturally allowed the fish to keep well. In contrast, fish netted in summer quickly spoiled unless kept on ice or in refrigeration.

A CCF-appointed royal commission investigated the fishery beginning in 1946. Members included UBC Professor A. Clemens, A. A. McAllister from Flin Flon, Supervisor of Fisheries A. H. MacDonald, A. Mansfield of Prince Albert, and Dr. D. S. Rawson of the U of S. The commission's report of February 1947 made seventy-five recommendations. It suggested ways to improve markets and adjust freight rates and advised giving "Indians and Metis a proper place in the commercial fishing industry." The report also stressed the importance of the fishery to the North.<sup>3</sup>

The CCF had its own opinions about the fishery. It thought the middlemen, who bought, marketed, and exported the fish, took too much while fishermen received too little. Opinion, not facts, formed the basis for this view. Its socialist convictions told the CCF that an unregulated capitalist system inevitably resulted in excessive profits and abuses. Phelps claimed that unscrupulous fish buyers had bled the North, and, along with fur buyers and bootleggers, "skinned" the people. Brockelbank thought dealers had "ways and means" of controlling Aboriginals, keeping them in near-perennial debt. Subsequent events proved the CCF analysis of price-gouging wrong. The fishermen's share of the selling price of fish dropped from the 1939-1943 period, when they received an average of forty-eight percent of the market price, to the 1955-1959 period, when, under CCF regulation, they received an average of only forty-seven percent.<sup>4</sup> It remains unclear why the CCF appointed the royal commission since it did not wait for the commission's report to act. Phelps and his cohorts quickly designed and implemented a three-pronged program to remake the fishing industry, targeting the production, marketing, and quality of fish.

As in trapping, the CCF, with a few exceptions, gave priority to northerners in fishing.<sup>5</sup> In colonial fashion, it only applied this principle to the menial fishing positions, while outsiders managed the fishery. Residents on lakes received first priority for licenses in various areas of the North. With the ejection of many outsiders, northerners comprised about ninety-four percent of area fishermen by the late 1950s.<sup>6</sup>

Phelps and the CCF claimed a groundswell of support for its interventions in the fishing

industry. Some fishermen, particularly those in the South, agreed with the CCF plans. For example, a fishermen's meeting at Meota, addressed by Phelps, voted unanimously for marketing through the Fish Board. About eighty-five percent of fishermen who answered a questionnaire supported the creation of a marketing board.<sup>7</sup> The CCF survey failed to accurately reflect the opinion of northerners though. Most northern Aboriginals could not read or complete a questionnaire.

The CCF set up a complex organization to control fish processing. It created Saskatchewan Fish Products (SFP) in 1945 to operate filleting plants and later that year added the Saskatchewan Fish Marketing Board to buy and sell fish. George Cadbury, the top CCF planner, agreed with replacing "competitive interests" with a marketing board. In a May 1946 reorganization, the CCF formed Saskatchewan Lake and Forest Products Corporation (SLFPC), which had three divisions: the Fish Board, the Timber Board, and the Box Factory. Phelps held the position of chairman of the corporation. James F. Gray, resident director of SLFPC, also took over responsibility for the Fish Board, and D. F. Corney became its general manager in December of 1946. The Fish Board also had three parts, with A. Mansfield in charge of sales, K. Dickson heading up production, and Gray looking after trading posts. The Fish Board, with its head office in Prince Albert, operated in six areas by 1948: Lac la Ronge, Beaver Lake, Meadow Lake, Wollaston Lake, Reindeer Lake, and Pelican Narrows. The CCF felt optimistic about its fishing intervention, and zeal for the program extended into the ranks of Fish Board employees. Art Lucas, the new sales manager, in 1947 wrote "I am satisfied more every day that the stand we have taken in the fishing industry is basically right . . . to drive the thin edge of the wedge into an industry dominated by exploitation + racket."<sup>8</sup>

Men dominated all levels of the CCF fishery. Only one woman, Mrs. E. Welsh, served on the first board of directors. Welsh, who qualified for the board because she had organized and served as president and manager of the defunct Reindeer Lake Fisheries Ltd., did not last long. The Flin Flon area Trades and Labor Council complained to Phelps that the Fish Board had hired a woman whose husband had a job with the mine. The council wanted a "just distribution of employment." Phelps considered her appointment as temporary and terminated Welsh's services effective March 31, 1946. He offered the approaching end of the fish delivery season as the reason for her dismissal.<sup>9</sup>

Unlike the fur industry, where the CCF justified its intervention by citing conservation needs, the fishery was not depleted. Instead, justification for Phelps' fish policy came from a timely crisis; *Trienophorus Crassus* cysts infested whitefish, endangering the industry. Phelps



credited these parasites, not CCF ideology, with making the construction of CCF fish processing plants necessary. While harmless to humans, the cysts made fish unappetizing, and the US stopped many large shipments of Saskatchewan whitefish. Filleting the fish and removing the cysts could make the product acceptable to the US market. Fishery regulation, including export standards, fell under the authority of the federal government, while the provinces administered the fishery. Ottawa established fish export standards. To deal with the infestation, government began grading lakes as A, B, and C lakes by 1943-1944. The "A" designation allowed the sale of unfilleted fish even though lightly cyst-infested, a "B" grade required filleting and candling of fish to remove cysts, and "C" lakes awaited inspection. By January of 1946, the process designated fifty "A" and twenty-eight "B" lakes in Saskatchewan.<sup>10</sup>

New regulations, not allowing more than fifty cysts per 100 pounds of fish, took effect November 14, 1944. One official minimized the potential impact of the new regulations. He thought that even if the crisis stopped northern fishing, this would affect only 944 part-time fishermen, including 589 "half-breeds and Indians who, no doubt, trap in season." Faced with opposition from fishermen, who thought it impossible to operate under the new regulations, Phelps wanted the standard eased to allow the marketing of sub-standard fish within Saskatchewan. The chief inspector for the federal Department of Fisheries admitted that the only reason for the regulations was to increase exports to the US. Ottawa then allowed a lower standard of ninety cysts per 100 pounds of fish for local sales. Political opponents took advantage of this relaxing of regulations to accuse the CCF of selling second-rate fish to Saskatchewan residents, fish not good enough for Americans.<sup>11</sup> The CCF set up bonded warehouses at Flin Flon, Big River, and Meadow Lake where inspections took place. Most fish passed through Flin Flon and Prince Albert, which had rail lines. Quality control measures and a shift of fishing to lakes with low infestations brought a 73.5% reduction in rejections at the US border.<sup>12</sup>

The CCF did not really need to go into the fish processing business, since others already owned fish plants. And even though private industry lacked the facilities to fillet all the fish required by the new regulations, it seemed willing to expand its capacity. Instead, the CCF imposed its monopoly over fish processing in large areas of the North. It built its first two fish plants at La Ronge and Beaver Lake. The La Ronge plant construction, which began in 1944, proved a fiasco. Long delays occurred due to winter weather and disputes between project managers. DNR's acting deputy minister, L. C. Paterson, wanted to abandon the plant and build it in Prince Albert as "a monument to this Government in the establishment of industry." La Ronge residents wished the plant relocated to English Bay, farther north on Lac la Ronge. A. Vander

Kracht, one of only three paid-up CCF party members in La Ronge, complained that local people did not receive construction employment. His complaint possibly lost credibility when another CCF supporter described him to Phelps as "half out of his mind anyway." Vander Kracht unhappily quit the party. Although the building eventually saw completion, foundations settled and floors and machinery tilted precariously. Complaints arose about staff drunkenness, a lack of supervision of female employees, and venereal disease among the staff. A report said few of the thirty-two employees could "state what his or her duties are." Axel Olson, the manager and an SFP director, lost his position due to incompetence but remained on staff. Neither Olson nor his replacement, Mr. Bodner, the Fish Board chairman, spent much time at the plant, leaving it "virtually unmanaged." Pollution from the plant also brought complaints. In 1947, the latest plant manager, M. A. McCabe, blamed complaints on the Liberal "propaganda machine." Yet, Dr. A. O. Blackwell, who checked the plant, found dirty conditions.<sup>13</sup> The plant's sorry saga continued in the years to come.

Construction at the Beaver Lake plant went much better, and it opened in 1945, managed by Kelly Dickson. SFP also built two large two-storey staff houses there. Indian fishermen, whose light dog teams allowed them to travel on the thin, early ice, began bringing fish in December. As at La Ronge, the plant hired many surplus staff. Fishermen, who paid for poor management through lower receipts for the fish caught, criticized the inefficiencies.<sup>14</sup>

The Fish Board bought a warehouse to handle fish at Flin Flon, Manitoba, the railhead and shipping point for a large area. It hired Don Phelps, a Wilkie area farmer and Joe Phelps' brother, to manage the warehouse, paying him \$200 per month. Don advised Joe on various aspects of fish handling, and the brothers agreed that "much of our field staff don't seem to know what it is all about." Don left but returned to temporarily manage the Beaver Lake fish plant in the winter of 1947-1948. He took no pay, "on account of family relations," although he billed the Fish Board for expenses, including the cost of wages for his hired man on the farm.<sup>15</sup>

While the CCF claimed its fish intervention was for the benefit of northern Aboriginals, this philosophy did not apply to the construction and operation of the plants. Although some Aboriginals worked there, whites dominated. Dickson, who helped with the construction at La Ronge, said "The native help here is not very dependable . . . another 6 or 8 good men would be more economical than those we are using at present." The dozens of employees at both plants in early 1946 included few, if any, Aboriginal persons.<sup>16</sup>

The Fish Board viewed Pelican Narrows, located at the head of three lakes, as an ideal location for a fish processing plant and established a plant there by 1946. It also located smaller

facilities at Sturgeon, Suggi, Windy, Deschambault, Snake, and Wollaston Lakes, and at Birch Rapids and Stanley.<sup>17</sup> The board placed its main plant for the Meadow Lake area at Meadow Lake. Elsewhere on the west side, it operated icehouses and packing plants at Ile a la Crosse, Canoe, La Plonge, Arsenault, Keely, and Green Lakes.<sup>18</sup>

Winter roads allowed for the economical transport of fish from outlying lakes to the board plants. Caterpillar tractors, often operating on unsafe ice, opened roads and pulled loads of fish. While the province had some tractors, private persons owned most of them. From January to March of 1946, Reindeer Lake alone claimed seven caterpillars and a number of lives. After one incident, when two privately-owned tractors fell through the ice and one man had a close call, Don Phelps told his brother Joe, "I would not feel too sorry for the freighters as they are mostly owned by fish companies."<sup>19</sup> The Board also used snowmobiles and airplanes to pick up fish in some areas.

Serious stock management problems soon plagued the Fish Board, contributing to its slide into insolvency. For practical reasons, it dealt mainly in frozen fish, although the market wanted and paid higher prices for fresh fish. In the fall of 1947, the board already had large quantities of fish stored in Prince Albert, Regina, Winnipeg, Montreal, Toronto, and Minneapolis, and sold only about one-third of the fish it bought the next winter. While it had a huge stock of some types of frozen fish, the board could not meet the demand for fresh fish.<sup>20</sup>

Fish exports continued in spite of the crisis in fish quality. The Fish Board located agents in New York City, Montreal, and Toronto, and its sales managers travelled extensively, developing markets. During the winter of 1945-1946, Saskatchewan exported nearly six million pounds of fish. The CCF plants however operated under lax quality controls. The chief inspector for the Department of Fisheries thought that the processing methods used could not produce acceptable fillets from highly infested lakes. Many infested fish slipped past the inspection system to the US. After a rejection of fish in 1947 caused the loss of the fish and the shipping costs, the board's sales manager, A. Mansfield, threatened to quit unless he received "a definite guarantee that this kind of negligence will not go on." Beginning in 1947, voluntary pre-inspection of export whitefish took place, but while this helped reduce rejections by over sixty percent, the US still blocked the import of 10,000 pounds of pre-inspected fish. 168 lakes were classified by 1948, with ninety-three in the "A" category and seventy-five in the "B" category. New, stricter inspection regulations began in 1950.<sup>21</sup>

The CCF also tried to sell fish to Saskatchewan residents, who ate less fish than the average Canadian. A winter mail order program and commercial locker plants helped dispose of

heavily infested fish, which could not meet export standards. Len Waite, who also sold fish by mail order, opposed the CCF dumping of inferior fish on residents, fearing destruction of the local market for fish. In 1951-1952, the CCF sold about one million pounds of fish of a total of 2,785,607 pounds sold in the province. With patronage dropping off, it ended its mail order business in 1955. Overall fish sales within Saskatchewan also fell, dropping to about 1,360,000 pounds in 1959. The policy of selling substandard fish may have played a part in consumers losing interest in fish.<sup>22</sup>

The CCF tried other ways to dispose of surplus fish, including canning and smoking fish at Meadow Lake and Prince Albert. From April 1 to September 30, 1947, the smoking and canning experiment lost \$9,854.03, but optimism remained. DNR bought a portable quick freeze unit and smoke house and refrigerated transportation. With the fish market at its lowest point since 1939, the board marketed smoked fish from a truck in Montana in 1948. Yet the canning and smoking operations failed, with the last operation at Prince Albert ending in about 1949.<sup>23</sup>

In one of its most controversial moves, the CCF enforced compulsory marketing within seventy-five miles of Fish Board plants. This meant that, in about one-third of the northern area, fish had to pass through government plants. The CCF monopoly kept many dealers and processors from handling fish and forced a private plant at Deschambault Lake to close in 1945. Phelps wrote of "the absolute necessity of having all fish go through our own Plant in order to insure a quality product." The CCF failed to enforce the seventy-five mile rule in the cases of Dore, Smoothstone, and Cowan Lakes, allowing L. Waite to operate there.<sup>24</sup> In some areas outside the compulsory marketing zones, the board entered into other arrangements, including for filleting at the Canada Packers Plant in Prince Albert and for DNR to buy fish at Cumberland House.<sup>25</sup>

By 1947, faced with criticism from fish dealers, Phelps and some in the Fish Board wanted to take over all handling of Saskatchewan fish. Phelps believed that putting dealers out of business in the forest industry squelched criticism, and he thought a complete monopoly might do the same in fishing. Blaming opposition on vocal dealers who feared the CCF threat to their livelihood ignored the severe, real problems of the CCF production, quality control, and marketing methods.<sup>26</sup>

Phelps allowed some private fish buying and processing to continue in the North, mainly on the west side. Len Waite and his Big River-based Waite Fisheries dominated there, efficiently buying, processing, and marketing "Arctic Brand" fish. He built a large filleting plant at Buffalo Narrows and placed smaller plants elsewhere. F. M. Clark also handled fish on the west side. In 1945-1946, Clark handled 976,293 pounds of fish, while Waite handled 1,065,986 pounds.<sup>27</sup>

The relationship between Phelps and Waite appears puzzling, given Phelps vehement

condemnation of fish dealers. Phelps treated Waite with great respect. Waite, who was not a CCF member, managed to preserve his business while helping the CCF take over much of rest of the industry. He advised Phelps on the fishery, even allowing the Fish Board to use his filleting plant blueprints to build almost exact copies. He co-operated with the CCF when in 1945 the Board took his plant at Dore Lake, before transferring it back to Waite in 1946. For a time, the board also held options to purchase Waite's plants at Buffalo Narrows and Big River. Phelps actively protected Waite from the Fish Board, other dealers, and fishermen. When Waite complained to Phelps that others wanted to process fish near Waite's Dore Lake plant, Phelps promised to do "everything in our power" to keep competitors away. The board also let Waite operate on Snake Lake, which fell within the seventy-five mile exclusion zone of its La Ronge plant. Even when Phelps wanted to take over all fish processing, he did not abandon Waite, but wanted to buy out his plants and put Waite in charge of the board's production division. Waite did not seem to oppose selling his plants, possibly seeing a favorable outcome for himself either way. Aided by Phelps, Waite enjoyed a near monopoly on the west side, in spite of strong opposition from other processors and fishermen.<sup>28</sup>

By siding with Waite, the CCF ignored one of its main reasons for involvement in the fishery--to protect fishermen from buyers' control. Some complained about Phelps' preferential treatment of Waite. K. E. Dickson of the Fish Board told Phelps "you are being openly accused of being in with Len Waite and his operations and there must be some reason for this and we cannot ignore public opinion altogether." DNR acted as a conciliator when Dore Lake fishermen went on strike against Waite's monopoly in 1946. Then, in 1948, the province sided with Waite against Dore Lake fishermen on the issue of splitting winter and summer quotas. Fishermen there wanted to be able to divide the take between the winter and summer as they wished. The CCF decreed seventy-five percent of the 600,000 pound quota as the summer catch, and reaffirmed Waite's monopoly.<sup>29</sup> Surprisingly, the capitalist Waite successfully co-existed with the socialist Phelps. While Phelps clearly appreciated Waite's advice and help, the relationship remained puzzling. Waite lost his protector with Phelps' defeat in 1948, and under J. H. Brockelbank met with harsher treatment.

Although Waite did well, the Fish Board did not. Phelps' alleged overwhelming support from fishermen for his interventions seemed elusive, with the compulsory aspect of the program particularly raising controversy. A report about the La Ronge plant said "some fishermen stated that 'they were selling their fish to the Government at the point of a gun.'" Many opposed the CCF plan, including R. F. Bradfield of Montreal Lake who "refused to work under a dictatorship."

Fishermen in the Primrose and Cold Lakes area defied regulations by taking fish to Alberta, which offered higher prices. Opposition to the Fish Board increased as its errors and losses grew.<sup>30</sup>

The Fish Board proved a financial disaster, largely because the CCF knew little about the fishery. Dreams of processing low-value, parasite-infested fish from remote lakes and selling them at a profit proved unrealistic. At times, the Fish Board also could not find enough fish for its newly-built plants, because of low prices and the reluctance of fishermen to deal with it. Board accountant W. J. Bague admitted "optimistic reports . . . have been more or less guesswork." Flying fish from Wollaston and other remote lakes in small planes brought losses. Board manager Kelly Dickson became very dissatisfied, tendering his resignation in 1947. Although he remained, Dickson thought they had squeezed all they could out of fishermen.<sup>31</sup>

The Fish Board also failed because the CCF wrongly thought northern fishing profitable enough for the board to act as a social agency and still make a profit. In one instance, the board gave medicine and food at Wollaston Lake when Dene there became ill. Three still died. In another, a board plane flew a 500-mile round trip to bring a patient to Flin Flon. The board also lost money on its stores, which it operated partly to provide a service. In some cases, the Fish Board gave limited advances to allow fishermen to operate, adding to the financial problems. The CCF also expected the board to provide supplies to Aboriginal fishermen, operate on unprofitable lakes, inefficiently prolong fishing to increase employment, and involve as many fishermen as possible. While the CCF issued 1,700 licences, spreading the income thinly reduced fishermen's incomes to a paltry \$100 to \$500. Even former supporters of the CCF fishery policy came to question its wisdom. Some blamed inefficient Aboriginal fishermen for the troubles. Dickson and other board managers called for limiting operations to nearby, heavy-producing lakes using competent fishermen. They wanted the board to ignore social issues. Yet a dilemma existed. Without controls, efficient white operators would again sideline Aboriginals. After Phelps left, a review of CCF fishing policies took place.<sup>32</sup>

With losses and controversy mounting, the CCF decided to bury the board and its failures and try again. The Fish Board closed on October 31, 1949, with an accumulated deficit of \$364,264.37. It was replaced by the new Saskatchewan Fish Marketing Service (SFMS). DNR took over responsibility for much of the new operation, including guaranteeing prices and absorbing losses. Government still ran the La Ronge plant, tendered out operation of the plant at Beaver Lake, and closed the Meadow Lake plant.<sup>33</sup>

The CCF seemed chastised and more wary after its costly education in the Fish Board fiasco. The disaster also damaged the credibility of CCF planners. SFMS acted less aggressively

than had the Fish Board, forcing its compulsory service only where at least fifty-one percent of the fishermen on a lake voted to deal with it. Fishermen at Beaver Lake, La Ronge, Deschambeault, and Pelican Narrows chose to use the service. Those at Snake Lake rejected using SFMS twenty-one to one. Some who did not want to deal with SFMS, as in the Canoe Lake area, later changed their minds. Brockelbank said "The fish dealers got hold of them and taught them a lesson the hard way."<sup>34</sup>

The SFMS system had its own problems. It particularly lacked clear goals and consistent methods. After several years of confusion, the CCF increased SFMS operations. The CCF had already transferred most former Fish Board assets to DNR, and it continued the clever system where DNR and its relatively large resources would take much of the financial risk for fish interventions. This approach helped the SFMS ledgers appear healthy, while large expenses hid in the DNR books. SFMS leased the plants at La Ronge, Beaver Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Deschambeault, warehouses at Flin Flon, Prince Albert, and Dilke, and other assets from DNR beginning December 1, 1952. SFMS avoided heavy capital expenditures, only building small processing plants at Pinehouse and Pelican Narrows. It also reduced its risk by acting as a marketing board and not actually buying the fish, unlike the Fish Board. SFMS proved popular with many fishermen, partly because they wanted to participate in the CCF floor price system. However, government only offered this program in some areas of the North. Support payments proved quite costly at first, but less so by the 1960s, due to better markets and marketing. By 1959, government spent a total of about \$265,000 supporting prices.<sup>35</sup> In 1951-1952, SFMS operated on forty-eight lakes, handling 5,317,834 pounds of fish. The amount of fish it dealt with fluctuated, dropping to 4,385,404 pounds in 1954-1955. In 1957, SFMS marketed about forty-seven percent of the provincial catch.<sup>36</sup>

The market for whitefish fillets grew greatly, but the CCF usually responded only slowly to business considerations and market demands. This unresponsiveness limited the output of the fishery and its benefits to the North. Yet in several cases, promising markets formed a large part of the motivation for building new plants. Commercial fishing at Reindeer Lake had ended when fish stocks declined, likely due to a control dam built in 1942 on the outflowing Reindeer River for the Island Falls hydro electric dam. Once fish stocks recovered, SFMS began a temporary operation there in 1951. DNR then built a permanent filleting plant and settlement, just inside Saskatchewan, at Kinoosao. The CCF, with Manitoba's co-operation, built a road to the railhead at Lynn Lake. In 1953, forty-one white and Aboriginal fishermen, operating as a co-operative, held fishing licences.<sup>37</sup>

Strong markets also influenced the CCF to build a large new plant at Wollaston Lake. Icelanders from the Lake Winnipeg area first commercially fished there in 1944-1945. Although the Fish Board took over the marketing in 1945-1946, the CCF allowed them to remain, since they lived on the lake. In 1951, fishermen unanimously approved marketing the fish from the lake through the SFMS for five years. But before the five years passed, the lake closed to fishing due to heavy parasite infestation of fish. The closing jeopardized the livelihood of about fifteen non-Treaty fishermen and ten Treaty Indians, who worked mainly as assistants. Spurred by a strong demand for fish in New York, cabinet in 1956 decided to build a filleting plant there, reversing an earlier decision. Cabinet also wanted to save money on social aid costs and asked how much the plant might reduce social aid expenditures. It seemed the plant could provide a substantial increase in local income, of up to \$80,000 per year, and reduce future subsidies. The province visualized creating a new community, with a joint Indian Affairs and provincial school and a federal hospital. Movement to the community could also help the scattered people "properly carry out their responsibility as citizens." DNR's R. N. Gooding flew over the area to choose a plant and townsite location. DNR then built the plant, the cost of which rose from an initial estimate of \$40,000 to about \$75,000, and leased it to SFMS. About 150 people lived at Wollaston Lake, including sixteen whites, nineteen Metis, and 117 Indians.<sup>38</sup>

The CCF also replaced the La Ronge plant, after it deteriorated from bad to unacceptable. About eight inches of lake water stood in the engine room, and the filleting and fish receiving rooms had water between the floor joists. Floors sloped, and the roof appeared in danger of collapse. DNR budgeted \$45,000 to replace the plant, which took place by 1956.<sup>39</sup> Construction also began on a new plant at Pelican Narrows, where mostly Treaty Indians fished and processed fish. DNR wanted Indian Affairs to contribute \$20,000, while Saskatchewan would guarantee a \$10,000 loan and give about \$18,000 in assets and a grant. A co-operative would operate the plant and own it on repayment of the loan. After lengthy delays waiting for Indian Affairs' funding, construction resumed in 1959.<sup>40</sup>

Fish royalties collected since the mid 1940s helped pay for plants and floor price payments. Levies stood at one cent per pound on trout and one-half cent per pound for pickerel and whitefish. From 1949 to 1959 the CCF collected about \$117,000 through SFMS and likely a similar amount from private dealers, paying more than one-half of the estimated \$400,000 cost of filleting plants.<sup>41</sup>

In spite of considerable spending by the CCF, its plants suffered from mismanagement. Sanitation problems seemed especially inexcusable. While the CCF enforced cleanliness at private plants, it tolerated a lower standard at its own plants. In one case in 1950, it allowed the Pelican



Narrows plant, condemned because it did not have a concrete floor, to continue operating. The following year, DNR closed both of Waite's Cree Lake plants for a lack of concrete floors. Waite promptly remedied the deficiency. In 1951, Fishery Officer F. M. Mitchell, on inspection of the Beaver Lake plant, found a "terribly rotten, stale fish smell" pervading the plant, as well as confusion and inefficiency. He threatened to close the plant, but gave it one year to improve. In 1956, Fishery Officer G. R. Bowerman found poor sanitation at Beaver Lake and Kinoosao. The new La Ronge plant appeared even worse, with extremely poor sanitation and cleanliness. Bowerman found a huge quantity of rotten fish, with some green from deterioration. In contrast, his inspection of the Waite Fisheries plant at Buffalo Narrows found it well-planned, modern, and clean.<sup>42</sup> Waite also produced a superior product, without government funding, and he provided more consistent opportunities to fishermen, steadier employment in his plants, and better working conditions than did government.

After Phelps left in 1948, the CCF repeatedly limited Waite's plans to expand his fish processing and sales operations. Additionally, while the CCF considered it essential to operate its SFMS plants only in monopoly situations, it opposed monopolies for Waite and other private operators. Waite described himself as feeling "provoked and frustrated at the seeming lack of interest by the Government of Saskatchewan, as well as the Federal authorities, in the development of an industry which could so easily bring stability and ultimate satisfaction to all concerned."<sup>43</sup>

Waite wanted to build various new plants, including a new plant at Buffalo Narrows in 1951, to replace his plant which had burnt. He asked for an assured fish supply and a virtual three-year monopoly on area "B" whitefish, while guaranteeing a fair price to fishermen. In spite of 166 signatures supporting Waite, Assistant Deputy Minister J. W. Churchman opposed Waite and recommended the CCF consider building a plant there instead. Churchman supported his position by referring to T. C. Douglas' policy of wanting to turn fish marketing over to co-operatives. Waite then built the plant without the assurances he sought. In 1954, DNR again threatened Waite's Buffalo Narrows operation by supporting a new competitor. Even though the competitor's operation appeared makeshift, Waite, with about \$130,000 invested in his new plant, seemed concerned.<sup>44</sup>

Waite was one of the first to fish at Cree Lake, beginning there in 1945. In 1957, he started moving his Dore Lake plant to Cree Lake after DNR verbally approved a new plant there. Dissension then arose within DNR. One official wanted to see a co-operative plant instead, although he thought it might fail due to a lack of road access. In the end, DNR approved Waite's plan.<sup>45</sup>

Cabinet authorized SFMS to talk to Waite about taking over his operations in 1955. After delays, Waite met with the minister and other officials in 1957, reaffirming his willingness to sell his entire operation, with insured assets of \$890,000.<sup>46</sup> The CCF did not proceed with the purchase.

While the CCF helped a relatively small number of fishermen at Wollaston Lake and Reindeer Lake, it badly neglected the west side fishery. Refusing to invest government money there, the CCF also repeatedly blocked efforts by Waite to build filleting plants at Ile a la Crosse and Patuanak. DNR opposed Waite's plans for Ile a la Crosse, while Father Moraud did not want to see a plant at Patuanak. Moraud feared a plant would bring demoralization and "Hotels, beer parlors, theatres." Frustrated Ile a la Crosse residents who wanted a fish plant petitioned Douglas in 1957. Waite, who had local support, offered to have a plant operating by mid-summer. Instead, DNR's V. Valentine and other officials wanted a co-operative. In 1958 cabinet finally approved building a co-operative plant.<sup>47</sup>

An uninspired fisheries policy existed under SFMS. Mediocre management often led the half-hearted effort, further hurt by poor equipment and inefficient fishermen. SFMS, DNR, and the Department of Co-operation all held responsibility for the program, but little co-ordination of efforts took place. The CCF seemed reconciled to losses, although questions arose in the legislature. Higher fish prices, an increased focus on meeting market demand, and subsidies helped SFMS survive. Saskatchewan fillet output rose from 998,338 pounds in 1950-1951 to 2,634,210 pounds in 1957.<sup>48</sup> Yet it could have risen much more with better management and more private investment.

Many in the CCF had long held a vision, consistent with their socialist ideology, to move the fishery to a co-operative structure. Already in 1945 Phelps spoke of turning the plants over to the fishermen, "as soon as they have learned the art of co-operating." The 1946 royal commission suggested creating fishermen's groups and the board of directors of Saskatchewan Fish Products wanted a co-operative structure. The Fish Board promoted local bodies, and weak groups existed by 1947 at La Ronge, Beaver Lake, and Meadow Lake. They still lacked a constitution or a central organization. Later, Douglas often spoke of wanting to move the SFMS to co-operative control. Criticism about losses and for creating dependence added pressure to make this change.<sup>49</sup>

Some early co-operative development took place. One official, J. A. Collier, claimed the CCF set up the co-ops "PDQ" without doing the "basic work" to make them true co-ops. A fishermen's co-operative began at Cumberland House in 1950. While ninety-seven members from the four area communities joined by 1959-1960, the co-op did not bring prosperity. The area

included 10.6% of the province's fishermen but only yielded 2.4% of the provincial fish production. The fishermen received a meagre median gross income of \$145. Co-ops also began at Reindeer Lake and Beaver Lake in 1950, although the Beaver Lake co-op soon collapsed. Reindeer Lake fishermen operated the first co-operative filleting plant in Canada. Growth continued. Forty-five percent of fishermen joined co-ops by 1957, when the organizations handled thirty-six percent of the fish.<sup>50</sup>

The CCF replaced SFMS with a new co-operative structure, in spite of little local initiative. A cabinet meeting led to the organization of the Fisheries Policy Committee, which in 1957 recommended the province build a federated co-operative structure. A report said "The growth of fishermen's co-operatives has been slow and in any case more nominal than real . . . these co-operatives are largely devoid of function and in main exist in name only." It visualized assuming existing assets, building new facilities, and taking over Waite's operation. The new organization would have a total fixed asset value of about \$762,000. The CCF would grant \$350,000, leaving the balance to be repaid over ten years. It would also give annual grants, operational subsidies, and provide working capital of up to one million dollars. A. G. Kuziak, DNR minister, liked the idea, hoping co-operatives would make northerners "self-reliant and self-respecting."<sup>51</sup>

Kuziak and Douglas altered some details of the plan, and cabinet endorsed replacing SFMS with co-operatives. The Co-operative Fisheries Limited Act passed in April of 1959, creating Co-operative Fisheries Limited (CFL). Control stayed in the South, since the appointed board of directors had only one northern member. The board included two fishermen associate directors by 1960, but it seemed that the CCF would not allow an elected board until CFL repaid one-half of the principal. Local co-ops did little accounting or managing, and the CCF thought fishermen lacked readiness to run the operation.<sup>52</sup> Brockelbank said, "This co-op will be a co-op in name and in principle – but not in ownership for the time being." He added "What we are trying to do is to make a century of progress for the people of the North in a generation."<sup>53</sup> Some opposed the move to CFL, including Mr. Corney of the Fisheries Policy Committee and the strongly socialist Lac La Ronge CCF Club. The club thought CFL promoted "a new class of entrepreneurs within the protective orbit of the co-operative movement and their possible re-emergence as a revived exploiting stratum operating within the restricted range of the co-operative field."<sup>54</sup>

The CCF continued to dominate CFL, retaining strict control and ownership. A strong central organization directed matters, partly because the CCF thought local groups lacked the necessary education, experience, and "communication infrastructure." The CCF ran the co-op quite skilfully. It continued its floor price subsidy plan and established a processing and storage

operation at Prince Albert. CFL charged a marketing fee of 12 ½%, which brought a surplus of \$50,000 to distribute in its first full year of operation. By 1962, fishers owned equity of \$341,240 in CFL and the eighteen member co-ops held \$139,901.85 of share capital. CFL handled fish for about two-thirds of Saskatchewan's fishermen by 1963, handling 47.1% of the catch.<sup>55</sup> The CCF allowed CFL a monopoly if seventy percent of area fishermen wanted to deal with CFL. This support sometimes proved difficult to obtain, as at La Ronge where repeated efforts from 1962 to 1964 failed.<sup>56</sup>

Some old problems continued under CFL. It used a system of initial and final payments, as had the Fish Board and SFMS. As a result, fishermen at Patuanak in 1961 waited for fish cheques, much as they did for government fur cheques.<sup>57</sup> Fish prices also still varied from lake to lake, depending largely on transportation costs. In 1960 for example, "A" whitefish from Montreal Lake brought twenty cents per pound compared to only six cents for those from Wollaston. Similarly, La Ronge trout brought thirteen cents compared to 6 ½ cents at Wollaston.<sup>58</sup> These price variations added to income inequities and low earnings.

Contrary to early CCF hopes, and in spite of its massive interventions through the Fish Board, SFMS, and CFL, fishing remained of marginal importance to most Aboriginals. In the Cumberland House area in 1947, it only comprised 4.24% of the economy. The area had valuable sturgeon in the Saskatchewan and Torch Rivers, which brought the high price of about eighty-five cents per pound at the lake in 1948. Yet limited sturgeon numbers necessitated strict controls. From about 1950 to 1962, fishermen took only about 7,000 pounds of sturgeon per year. In the early 1960s, although fishing provided little income, about one-half of Cumberland House area trappers also fished, while about twenty-five percent did so at La Ronge and only about ten percent at Stanley. Generally, those who both trapped and fished earned higher incomes than those who only trapped. In 1959-1960, 934 Northern Affairs Region residents held fishing licenses, a peak in participation. Many areas had a high rate of Aboriginal involvement in the fishery. At Buffalo Narrows, 60.8% of adult males fished, compared to 17.5% in the La Ronge-Stanley area and forty-five percent at Cumberland House. In other areas, including at Fond du Lac on Lake Athabasca, Aboriginal fishing remained minimal. Government encouraged Fond du Lac men to learn to fish commercially.<sup>59</sup>

CCF dreams of adequate incomes for Aboriginal fishermen also did not come true. White fishermen continued to dominate in some areas. Of sixteen operators at Beaver Lake in 1946, two white men received forty-four percent of the revenue. In the summer of 1947, the average fisherman at La Ronge received an income of \$189.90, which was \$8.85 less than their estimated

expenses. In 1952-1953, 122 fishermen at Big Peter Pond near Buffalo Narrows earned an average of about \$261.20, while they spent about \$256.70, without counting motor or canoe repairs. The twenty or thirty persons who worked at Waite's plant earned much more. DNR in 1958 claimed that about 1,500 people depended on fishing for most of their livelihood. This statement seemed false, since relatively few could live on their earnings from fishing, and most needed to rely on other income. Only a few did well. Four fishermen earned from \$5,000 to \$10,000 at Wollaston and Reindeer by 1960, but for many fishing became part of a lifestyle of poverty. Most earned only about \$500 per year in 1962, not enough to provide a motor, a boat, and ten nets, plus money to live. Many more fished than could make a living. Ile a la Crosse had about twice as many fishermen as needed, and Lac la Ronge could support about thirty small producers, not the seventy-five who often held licenses. Poor transportation, inefficiency, lack of skill, underutilization, undercapitalization, low prices, small lakes, and too many fishermen contributed to poverty.<sup>60</sup>

Ironically, while overcrowding characterized the situation on many lakes, some remote lakes saw much of the quota unused. As in trapping, Aboriginals wanted to work near their village homes and ignored opportunities farther afield. Over one million pounds of the Reindeer Lake whitefish limit stayed in the lake in 1959-1960. Lake Athabasca fishers took less than one-third of the two million pound whitefish and pickerel quota and much of the trout limit often remained untaken.<sup>61</sup>

Discriminatory CCF fishing policies added to underutilization of fish stocks in some areas. It applied these policies in several ways. The CCF blocked southern fishermen from participating and provided more help for Treaty Indians than for Metis and whites. It also applied most of its support programs to the east side, largely because the area's large lakes offered great expansion potential to meet market demands. SFMS operated almost completely east of the third meridian. The expensive Wollaston Lake plant served only thirty-five Treaty Indians, twenty-six Metis, and ten whites, while Ile a la Crosse's 506 Metis and eighty-one whites faced a long and uncertain wait for a plant. The guaranteed price plan also applied only north of the fifty-fourth parallel, again excluding unhappy lower west side fishermen.<sup>62</sup>

The CCF refused to devote the financial resources needed to provide an equal level of support to the entire northern fishery. Instead, as in many other programs, the CCF begged for federal aid. Ottawa chose to give very little. A Federal Price Support Act, designed to help fishermen in abnormal market lows, paid out only once in 1952-1953. It seems only Wollaston and Reindeer Lake fishermen benefited, since other fishermen delayed in asking for help. In 1950 Ottawa indicated it would not subsidize Indian fishing, and Indian Affairs refused repeated requests

from Saskatchewan for help. It claimed Treaty Indians paid taxes to Saskatchewan and opposed “treating Indians as a special class of citizens.” Indian Affairs did give some help to Indian fishermen by providing supplies and a one-time contribution of \$25,000 for the construction of the Pelican Narrows plant. The CCF continued to spend much on Treaty Indian fishing, including paying for fishery losses, floor price supports, and losses at its stores. Hope for federal help increased in 1964 with the first Federal-Provincial Conference on Fisheries Development, which wanted a national fishery development program. Formation of the Federal Provincial Prairie Fisheries Committee in 1964 and the subsequent creation of the Commission of Inquiry into Freshwater Fish Marketing also provided hope for increased federal spending.<sup>63</sup>

The benefit from CCF interventions remained unclear. The quantity of fish taken in 1944 remained unsurpassed by 1956, and the 1944 landed value of \$1,032,000 was not again reached by 1956, when it stood at \$784,000. Using inflation-adjusted dollars, the landed value of production fell by about fifty-five percent from 1944 to 1956.<sup>64</sup> Some improvement occurred by the 1960s, when the long-term trends in production, demand, and prices all increased. Annual production from 1945 to 1951 remained below ten million pounds per year, while from 1960 to 1966, production surpassed fourteen million pounds. From 1961 to 1963, Saskatchewan was the top Canadian producer of whitefish and lake trout. In 1962-1963, gross market value reached \$3,114,797.90, of which fishermen received \$1,477,448.38. Much of the production came from the Northern District, as in 1950, when it provided over one-half of the provincial production.<sup>65</sup> The improvement occurred largely due to improved markets and prices and not because of extraordinary CCF actions.

Many fishermen also could not see that they benefited from the CCF fishery programs. Similarly to trapping, compulsion by the CCF and resistance from fishermen characterized the CCF interventions in the northern fishery.<sup>66</sup> In spite of an overall low number of prosecutions, in some cases DNR acted severely in fisheries enforcement. When DNR and RCMP officers in 1951 used the authority of the Liquor Act to search the tent of Moise Laliberte, a Treaty Indian from Pine Bluff, they found some sturgeon hooks attached to wet line. Laliberte claimed Indian Affairs gave him the hooks years earlier, but charges resulted. In court, speaking through an interpreter, Laliberte agreed with the Mountie’s testimony and said he did not care what the court did to him. DNR asked the Justice of the Peace for more than the minimum penalty, and Laliberte received a fine of \$150 and costs or sixty days in jail. A. H. MacDonald, Director of Fisheries, thought the severe penalty should have an exemplary effect on other fishermen.<sup>67</sup>

Fishermen fought back at Cumberland House in 1953, after DNR began actions against two

men. DNR had found nets placed without identifying tags. The fishermen's co-op promised to pay fines, and someone contacted T. C. Douglas charging DNR with interference. DNR stopped one prosecution after it appeared that a new Justice of the Peace would hear the case and the suspect sent for counsel. Fishery Officer F. Mitchell wrote "I would suggest that this gang have been pampered too much, and instead of trying to initiate some program of their own they are sitting waiting for handouts. . . . There were 25 men in a new poolroom in midafternoon. . . . They have no thought of conservation and only a rudimentary idea of what co-operation means." Mitchell told the DNR officer to continue enforcement and not to be stopped by a threat of being beaten up, even though an RCMP officer had been beaten. Northern Administrator Brown offered contradictory comments, thinking "young Conservation Officers were too strict and over-enthusiastic," while also seeing habitual violation of fisheries regulations by Aboriginals.<sup>68</sup>

The CCF also carried out some prosecutions to enforce its fish processing monopolies. In 1951, the media covered a tangled story at Reindeer Lake after DNR seized John Ivanchuk's fish and equipment. A pilot had illegally delivered Ivanchuk's fish to a dealer at Flin Flon rather than to the Beaver Lake SFMS. Ivanchuk clearly preferred to sell his fish privately and the pilot considered compulsory marketing "unconstitutional." The *Ottawa Citizen* called the law "vicious legislation." Possibly because of the publicity, DNR returned Ivanchuk's goods and charges did not proceed.<sup>69</sup>

Fishermen also opposed a CCF-promoted change from winter to summer fishing. In 1944 about eighty percent of northern fishing took place in winter. For various reasons, the CCF promoted a shift to summer fishing. Fishing in summer fit well with the CCF plan for the Aboriginal economy, since trapping took place primarily in winter. Staggering fishing and trapping would spread economic activity and income throughout more of the year. Summer fishing also offered lower operating costs, and it could produce a higher quality product, since fresh summer fish did not need thawing before filleting. Many resisted the pressure to fish in summer. At Big River in 1944, all fishermen opposed the change, citing high wastage, low summer fish quality, and damage to fish stocks done by fishing prior to the fall spawning season. Agreeing with the CCF, Waite wanted to see about two-thirds of the fishery as a summer fishery. His wish came true. Sixty-seven percent of fish were summer caught in 1962. The following year, over 500 fishers fished only in summer, about 200 only in winter, and about 200 in both seasons.<sup>70</sup>

Fishers outside the commercial industry took large numbers of northern fish. Sport anglers hooked a rising number, and they and commercial fishermen both pressured the CCF for preferential treatment. Four other categories of fishing took place. Non-Indians purchased

domestic licenses to net fish for personal use; tourists bought franchise licences to net whitefish; Treaty Indians obtained free permits to net fish for their own use; and fur farmers used fish. DNR issued 456 domestic licenses and 1,341 licenses to Indians in 1944-1945. In 1958-1959 the domestic fishery took about 1,166,900 pounds and the Indian fishery about 1,786,000 pounds, while franchise fishing caught about 17,108 pounds in 1961. Fur farmers paid fees based on the type and number of animals fed with fish. The industry used rough fish, including tullibee, suckers, and burbot, and low-priced pike and offal from fish plants, peaking at about 6.5 million pounds of fish used in 1956-1957.<sup>71</sup>

Unlike furs, where CCF controls restored stocks, the demand for fish and other factors damaged fish stocks. Biological surveys of lakes began in the 1940s, supervised by Dr. D. S. Rawson of the U of S Biology Department. Yet in spite of ongoing studies and control efforts, changes in fish populations took place, including at Big Peter Pond Lake, where desirable whitefish, pickerel, and jackfish declined greatly in proportion to other species. "Gross pollution" from Edmonton, Saskatoon, and other cities damaged the Saskatchewan River system and fish stocks in the delta area, virtually stopping fishing there. Dams also hurt fish, including the Island Falls Dam on the Churchill, which generated power for the Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company at Flin Flon, and the Whitesand Dam on the Reindeer River, which provided water control for Island Falls. By 1963, the SPC dam at Squaw Rapids on the Saskatchewan, upstream from Cumberland House, blocked fish movement, likely further hurting fishing in the polluted delta.<sup>72</sup>

The CCF once confidently visualized fishing and trapping becoming the two primary bases for the Aboriginal economy. Fisheries policies formed part of the CCF effort to impose a northern socialist economy where Aboriginals would happily co-operate pursuing "traditional" occupations. Socialism in action imposed crown corporations and co-operatives and eliminated some private enterprise. The CCF colonial structure paternalistically controlled the fishery. While it imposed strong control, the CCF refused to devote adequate resources to the entire fishery. Additionally, sub-standard management promoted mediocrity. After twenty years of interventions, the CCF-controlled fishery brought only mediocre benefits to northerners. While the plan included many northerners in the fishery, the vast majority earned only meagre incomes, often not covering costs. CCF policies contributed to the fishery becoming part of the northern lifestyle of poverty. The CCF plan for the northern economy also included other elements. While the southern socialists did not encourage substantial participation by Aboriginals in some sectors of the economy, they did think northern Aboriginals could farm much as peasants once did.



## **Chapter Seven**

### **JUST ONE JUMP OUT OF THE STONE AGE**

Along with trapping and fishing, the CCF reserved northern agriculture largely for Aboriginals, expecting them to farm both as peasants and socialists. The new government used its northern colonial structure to apply socialist ideology to northern agriculture in a manner which southern farmers would not have tolerated. It kept control and ownership of farm land and directed the most minute aspects of farming operations. It also prevented interested northerners and southerners from farming in the North. The CCF proved inept at farming and frequently demonstrated how not to farm. The program brought few benefits to the North.

Northern agriculture was not only an important part of the northern Aboriginal economy, but also constituted an integral part of CCF community development plans. While community development in Saskatchewan was in its infancy in the 1940s, the CCF had already introduced some community development projects to the North. As the years went on, the CCF placed increasing emphasis on these programs. This accompanied a realization by the CCF that its interventions in trapping and fishing were not working. Community development programs then played a crucial role in CCF plans to develop the Aboriginal economy. These projects included not only agricultural initiatives but also fur, fish, and co-operative development programs. Research-based community development plans brought new life to the CCF plan for the North. By the late 1950s, community development programs carried the primary responsibility for bringing economic and other change to northern Aboriginals. The CCF spoke of involving northerners in community development, and used co-operatives, ratepayers associations, and fur councils to include token northern input. DNR officers continued their role as the primary development catalysts.

Much of northern Saskatchewan saw no economic activity other than trapping and fishing before 1944. While some optimists believed successful agriculture could extend far into the forest, the North presented severe limitations for farming. The underlying rock of the Canadian Shield emerged in many areas, and even where soil lay, it usually lacked fertility. Additionally, frosts shortened the growing season to the point where few crops could mature. Pockets of fertile soil

and a more hospitable climate lay near some water bodies. There, rivers dropped fertile sediments, and the proximity of rivers and lakes moderated temperatures. The largest areas of fertile soil and favourable climate were found in the Saskatchewan River delta and the lower west side area near Beauval. There, farmers had long grown crops and raised livestock. Fur traders and missionaries initiated agriculture, and some Aboriginal people became interested in growing food as well.<sup>1</sup>

DNR, the CCF's colonial arm, administered northern crown land, including agricultural land. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture, with its greater agricultural expertise, had little involvement in northern agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Yet a lack of knowledge about farming matters cannot completely explain the fiascos which followed.

The CCF expended most of its northern agricultural effort at Cumberland House. Due to sedimentation, the Saskatchewan River delta boasted rich, fertile soil. Cumberland House sat on Pine Island, an island of about 15,000 acres in the delta, divided by the Bigstone River from Spruce Island, also known as Farm Island. It had about 3,500 acres. A white man, Thomas Harvey, leased Farm Island from about 1929 until he left in about 1940. He employed up to nine people, raised up to 400 cattle, and sold butter and eggs to area residents. When the CCF came to power, local agriculture consisted mainly of raising gardens, cattle, and feed for horses and cattle.<sup>3</sup>

The CCF expected Aboriginals to farm both as peasants and socialists. Peasant farming is usually associated with pre-industrial societies, where large land owners dominate tenant farmers. Images of poverty-stricken subsistence farmers, who have no viable alternatives to follow but to continue working for their oppressors, come to mind when speaking of peasants. In the case of northern Saskatchewan, the CCF was the landlord and visualized Aboriginals in the role of peasants. Aboriginals, like peasants, would farm small plots of land, using horses and unmodern equipment. Socialism influenced the CCF version of peasant farming, since the state, not private persons, owned the land. The CCF also wanted Aboriginals to farm co-operatively and not alone.

When Phelps visited Cumberland House shortly after the CCF took power, he noted the potential of the local grass to feed cattle. DNR soon considered nearly all of Spruce Island and over one-half of Pine Island as arable, with drainage and flood control presenting the main problems. DNR sent J. Johnson there in 1945 to launch a four-point community development project, which included muskrat development, a sawmill, education, and a farm.<sup>4</sup> DNR's Allan Quandt went to Cumberland House in 1946 to assess agricultural possibilities. Like others, he saw the area's potential to provide much needed local food. Quandt, a socialist, opposed private farms and favoured CCF subsidized farming on Spruce Island using surplus Aboriginal labour managed by the CCF. A bridge would provide a link to Pine Island. Quandt saw obstacles though, created

by past “lying and cheating” of white men and by the area being “just one jump out of the Stone Age.” He concluded “If over a period of a hundred years we succeed in bringing about a reasonable change I feel the effort is well worth it.” Quandt found support among local white people for the idea of a CCF farm. He even won the qualified support of Rev. Parker, the Anglican minister, who feared outside influences, contrary to the “progress” wanted by Quandt. Local people then met and unanimously voted for the project.<sup>5</sup>

The CCF quickly began farming. R. N. Gooding bought mostly used machinery and Tom Leia managed the farm, which had about 300 acres broken by 1947. The farm grew produce, some of which DNR sold and some which local people received for working in the garden. A work and wages program employed locals to make hay. With Phelps pushing, DNR bought chickens and low-grade cattle by 1948, but after flooding hurt crops, Quandt ordered most livestock sold. He wanted to see the project obtain a better grade of cattle. DNR also spoke of using a five-year plan to improve the farm. Outsiders dominated, and no Aboriginal worked at the farm for a salary in 1948.<sup>6</sup>

After Phelps’ defeat in 1948, the new minister, J. H. Brockelbank, also involved himself in the farm. He found and considered buying a French coach stallion from Quebec, but another DNR official questioned the need to raise horses. Brockelbank offered advice on the choice of a bull, preferring an Aberdeen Angus to a Shorthorn. He also “supplied” a John Deere Model B tractor. The operation grew. An ambitious building program included a manager’s house and office, a barn, a hay shed, a two-storey hen house, a cattle shed, a work shop, and a granary.<sup>7</sup>

Farm problems increased by 1950. It became difficult to tell who was in control of the farm. The agricultural representative Don Neilson and others spoke of a lack of definition of the farm’s purpose. Neilson wanted to turn the project into a demonstration farm, using two full-time staff, instead of local part-time labour. The farm should run like a business, generate a profit, and show the Metis how to farm, rather than try to “rehabilitate” them by hiring them. Towards this end, Neilson wanted to increase the cultivated acreage to 600 acres, move authority from Prince Albert bureaucrats to the farm manager, and improve accounting methods. E. Dodds, field supervisor, wanted more mechanized equipment, noting most locals did not want to work there. Poorly chosen machinery and wet conditions added to the problems. R. N. Gooding noted other deficiencies, which included a delay in beginning a school milk program, poor cattle quality, and chickens which did not produce well. He also criticized Leia’s care of the machinery and questioned whether Leia should work there. Leia appeared frustrated, thinking his superiors were “down on him.”<sup>8</sup>

By 1951, DNR accepted Neilson's idea of expanding the project to serve as a demonstration farm. Brockelbank chose one of five options presented by Neilson, electing to concentrate on cattle, hogs, and chickens, but growing a cash crop on 100 acres to reduce the risk. The new plan required more farm buildings and living quarters for possibly three employees and their families. The farm would operate much like a crown corporation.<sup>9</sup> A major letdown occurred when DNR found they only had 150 acres broken, instead of the 340 acres claimed by Leia. This was surprising since, of the many officials who visited the farm, someone should have noticed the error. As a result, DNR needed to clear and break much more land than expected. In spite of an excellent harvest, with wheat producing over forty bushels an acre, the farm lost \$1,701.80 from April to December, 1951.<sup>10</sup>

DNR soon gave up on the new plan. In 1952, E. Dodds considered the demonstration farm a failure and recommended DNR lease the land to a new farmer, using his example to inspire Aboriginals. Brockelbank agreed, and cabinet decided to rent the farm and dispose of the stock and equipment. After advertisements ran in major newspapers, DNR selected W. M. Miner and his two associates, U of S graduates. The trio lost interest when government would not give them financial assistance to farm. Lack of road access to markets likely formed the main obstacle for them.<sup>11</sup>

Local people also opposed bringing in outside farmers. J. Brady questioned the CCF right to take over or to privatize the land, describing it as communal land. He claimed that government had failed to establish even one local Aboriginal in agriculture, that the project used Aboriginals as temporary, unskilled labour, and that it aimed for profit, not education. Locals saw the farm as "an imposed evil." They thought the CCF lacked confidence in them. Yet Brady also doubted the local Aboriginals, whom he depicted as "barely emerged from a semi-nomadic background . . . emotionally at variance with the concepts and usages of a strictly sedentary mode of life."<sup>12</sup>

The CCF and DNR wallowed in indecision about the farm. In 1953 Churchman tried to interest the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) in taking it for an experimental farm. DNR disposed of its swine and shipped twenty-one head of cattle to Winnipeg, fearing they would soon die of advanced age. DNR had butchered some beef the previous winter, but local people did not want to eat the meat, and DNR sold it for five dollars per quarter as dog food. Brockelbank then approved a plan to rent the farm to local people in forty-acre plots. This new plan meant a return to rehabilitation as a goal. The heavily subsidized program would involve eight "fairly high calibre Metis" supervised by DNR. The Metis seeded up to twenty acres each, but a "fine start" abruptly ended in June when floods hit.<sup>13</sup>

Cabinet reversed the rehabilitation plan in January of 1954, deciding that the farm should either support itself that year or stop operating. Brown found the decision rather confusing, and Brockelbank appealed to T. C. Douglas for the rehabilitation program to continue. Brockelbank thought he had attended the cabinet meeting which made the new plan, but seemed unable to remember participating in the decision. He described the cabinet minute as “confusing and rather meaningless.”<sup>14</sup> Flooding again hurt farming in 1954, with no crop put in on Farm Island. A feed shortage resulted, and winter “ice conditions” led to the loss of some cattle in the river.<sup>15</sup>

Chaos grew, while the farm earned \$300 and cost \$6,000 in 1955-1956. Dodds considered “DNR activities in Cumberland to be approaching an all time low.” Neilson told a meeting that the people did not really need farm income, since they did quite well from natural resources. Senior officials, however, wanted to buy two more bulls. Brown admitted the long-term policy confusion, writing “in no instance was any policy decision completely followed through in field administration.” Fearing that stopping farming would cause deterioration of assets and risk DNR’s investment, Brown wanted to rent the farm to a private party. Operating on his own plan, Turnbull, the latest farm manager, wanted money to make the farm self-sufficient with cattle and chickens. He wrote ““I think much has been gained as far as the native is concerned. I actually think he has gained more than we can estimate or actually value in terms of money.” In 1957, Brown wanted to buy one or two more bulls, while Churchman hoped the Department of Agriculture would take over the farm.<sup>16</sup>

The farm operated without a plan “on a maintenance basis.” While broken land reverted to willow growth, DNR waited to see what part the farm could play in a community development plan, on which the CCF increasingly relied to solve northern problems.<sup>17</sup> By 1961, J. E. M. Kew, in Cumberland House to work on community development, described the farm as “at a stand-still.” Under the CCF, Metis agriculture had declined. Local people held less land and fewer people owned cattle than prior to CCF involvement. The Metis owned sixty-eight cattle in 1947, while in 1960 they had only about twenty-four. DNR owned ninety-five cattle in 1960, up from twenty-one in 1948. Kew saw a low level of Metis enthusiasm for the imposed farming. The CCF seemed largely responsible for the decline of farming because local people had to compete with the DNR farm for the use of farm machinery and with the cheap subsidized food grown by the farm. Further, the program taught farm labour, not farm management, and the low wages it paid did not act as an incentive to farm. The CCF also failed to provide capital and land to local people. Kew also attributed some blame for the failure to local people who censured those who appeared too ambitious.<sup>18</sup> The Social Credit candidate in 1960 ““saw lots of buildings; but little farming.””<sup>19</sup>

Turmoil continued in 1961. By that time the CCF had spent about \$110,000 on the farm, not counting the tens of thousands spent by planners on air flights to Cumberland House and for their expenses and salaries. Farm revenues over the years brought in about \$18,985, and capital assets totalled about \$17,135. Numerous people suggested plans. Neilson wanted a co-operative farm, but Kew saw this as potentially “disastrous,” with too many organizational problems. Outside parties seemed interested in buying the assets. The local community council wanted to rent the farm, but Minister A. G. Kuziak and a Department of Agriculture specialist wanted Agriculture to operate a training farm. DNR’s R. McKay naively thought the farm could solve various problems including those of population increase, a high cost of living, unemployment, resource depletion, malnutrition, and low education. He wrote “I am positive that the farm will work, that is if it is tried.”<sup>20</sup>

By 1962, the latest farm manager quit, and DNR used a “native boy” to care for the farm. DNR and an interdepartmental committee created by Treasury Board seemed to agree on some things. The Canadian Vocational Training Centre (CVTC) at the U of S would train young Aboriginals who would alternate between the Centre and farm placements. Some graduates might take over the DNR farm, some would work for farmers outside the area, and some would farm on a proposed land development project. Looking for local input, officials met with thirteen residents to discuss the farm. The meeting lacked direction and adjourned after Louis McKenzie, described as “apparently in high spirits,” passed out. By 1963, the CVTC plan seemed in jeopardy, partly because local people showed little interest. Treasury Board also delayed and still had not made a decision on the farm in 1964. Government refused to lease the farm to an interested outsider because a study of the delta area would take at least two years. Another committee also studied the farm.<sup>21</sup> With the CCF election loss in 1964, eighteen years of CCF farming ended on Farm Island. Not one Aboriginal farmer farmed there. The CCF had blocked local farming, demonstrated how not to farm, and failed to bring any discernible “rehabilitation.”

The CCF also applied its control and planning expertise to Pine Island, the larger island on which Cumberland House sat. The province owned most of the land there, ownership which the CCF carefully guarded. DNR rented eight or nine parcels of land to Aboriginals, with about thirty acres cultivated in 1950. Local people asked to have land surveyed into eighty-acre plots to allow for mixed farming, but DNR made other plans. Brady recommended DNR survey a large area into forty-acre leases, a scheme in which at least sixteen persons then seemed interested. They would have three years to make improvements and break twenty acres, with the DNR farm serving as a “Mother Farm,” helping develop “a new economy and way of life.” DNR then reversed itself,

instead turning to a co-operative model. By 1951 it surveyed eight plots of forty acres which people would lease and operate as a co-operative. DNR would break the land, supply machinery, and supervise, while the people would farm like peasants, using mainly horses. Delays occurred, and DNR had only seventy acres broken by 1952. Deputy Minister Churchman then thought they should increase the farm size and not use horses. DNR dallied, citing the need for more study, while local interest waned. Brady later criticized the CCF plan to use “small peasant methods” of farming.<sup>22</sup>

The CCF also saw potential for agricultural development in the larger Saskatchewan River delta area. Various studies in the 1940s and 1950s, including by the U of S, the federal Department of Agriculture, and PFRA, all found arable soil suitable for agriculture.<sup>23</sup> Soil surveys identified several hundred thousand acres of arable land by 1954. Influenced by socialist ideology, the provincial Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life in 1954 visualized leasing, not selling, primarily grain growing farms of at least 250 acres to experienced farmers.<sup>24</sup> The HBC worried about the future of their fur lease and the trappers’ incomes if land drainage and agriculture went ahead. Concern increased when PFRA used bulldozers in the HBC lease, destroying many muskrat houses. The HBC suggested farming could take place on a narrow strip of higher land along the Saskatchewan, one-quarter to one-half mile wide. This option would affect the HBC operation much less.<sup>25</sup>

The PFRA and Manitoba proceeded with a pilot project in the delta, the Pasquia Land Settlement Project, which overlapped into Saskatchewan. While Saskatchewan agreed to an easement, it would not sell the portion of reclaimed land in Saskatchewan. Sale of land conflicted with the CCF policy of only leasing land, while Manitoba would sell its land there to farmers. Manitoba spent about one-quarter million dollars on the project by 1953.<sup>26</sup> PFRA again investigated the Cumberland House area in 1957, and a Department of Agriculture official visualized projects possibly five times the size of Manitoba’s 100,000 acre project.<sup>27</sup>

Yet the CCF hesitated to develop the delta, even though an interdepartmental committee in 1962 pointed to about one million acres of suitable land. The Center for Community Studies visualized farm land for “several hundred farmers” including some Aboriginals. An order-in-council in 1963 established the Saskatchewan River Delta Development Committee to again investigate. Reclamation costs varied from about sixteen to sixty-two dollars per acre in 1963.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of obvious agricultural potential and repeated study, the CCF dragged its feet during twenty years for various reasons. Local Aboriginals repeatedly opposed the idea of outsiders coming to farm nearby. In 1950, residents expressed “grave concern” about opening up

farming, and DNR's Gooding feared they might not get enough of the good land.<sup>29</sup> Developing the delta into farm land also might reduce trapping incomes. Further, some feared drainage would flood Cumberland House. A mixed development of trapping and agriculture could have partially addressed the concerns.

Primarily because of CCF inaction, nothing came of the extensive studies and plans to drain, clear, and develop the delta. The CCF lacked the political will to spend the hundreds of thousands of dollars required, and it would not allow private capital to participate. The CCF refused to sell land on the islands and in the larger delta area to outsiders, preferring that Aboriginal people farm the land. At the same time, CCF actions and policies kept local people from farming. Had the CCF applied these policies to southern Saskatchewan, farmers would have revolted or stopped farming, since they could not have operated under the type of restrictions imposed by the CCF in the North. The Saskatchewan delta, despite great agricultural potential, remained undeveloped. After twenty years of intervention and study, the CCF could not point to one farmer it started farming.

Extensive farming did not make sense for most of the North, but agricultural potential did exist in some other small areas. In 1943, J. Mitchell of the U of S Soils Department studied the Meadow Lake to Buffalo Narrows area and reported to the Department of Agriculture. He found some farming, including the Beauval mission farm, which had a flour mill and sawmill powered by turbines in the La Plonge River. Ile a la Crosse had "very good gardens," and Dr. Lavoie had fruit trees there. A few cattle and horses grazed at Buffalo Narrows. At Buffalo River, nearly all the Dene had good gardens, and the nearby Dillon River flats provided hay and grazing for many cattle and horses. While scattered areas could support farming and gardening and some expansion of these activities could take place, Mitchell saw no great agricultural potential.<sup>30</sup>

Additional surveys of northern agricultural potential took place by 1950, including those by A. R. Brown of the Department of Agriculture's Co-operative Extension Program, T. R. Coupland, Assistant Professor of Plant Ecology, and H. C. Moss of the U of S Soils Department. Other than in the Cumberland House region and in some west side areas, good agricultural land lay mainly in pockets near streams and lakes. Interest in substantial agricultural developments still appeared from time to time, including in 1957 when agricultural representative J. D. Neilson thought the Clearwater River Valley north of La Loche might grow food to supply Uranium City. A 1964 estimate suggested the provincial forest had about three million arable acres, although much of this needed drainage or clearing.<sup>31</sup>

The CCF tried to increase northern farming and gardening, aiming mainly to increase food



self-sufficiency. It thought Aboriginal people should garden and develop a taste for vegetables besides potatoes. J. D. Neilson promoted northern agriculture, beginning work as the northern agricultural representative in 1950. While he worked for the Department of Agriculture, DNR paid some of the costs and seemed to direct many of his activities. Neilson helped develop large community gardens at Snake Lake and La Loche, and numerous settlements received gardening equipment. The CCF sometimes tried to motivate Aboriginal gardening by using prizes. It provided \$500 for prizes in 1961.<sup>32</sup> The U of S also continued to help develop agriculture. Its Horticultural Department and the agricultural representative in 1952-1953 studied the suitability of various grains, legumes, vegetables, and fruit. The Extension Department and the Canadian Vocational Training program also helped with canning and/or cooking courses at Beauval, Ile a la Crosse, and Montreal Lake.<sup>33</sup> The CCF focussed much of its agriculture effort on children by promoting 4-H clubs, likely because it hoped the children would continue to grow food as adults. Establishing the clubs was agricultural representative Neilson's main long-term aim. The 4-H program included citizenship and leadership training and trips south. By 1963 clubs included 522 members in about nine communities. Neilson worked to have local people take over as leaders.<sup>34</sup>

The CCF also promoted northern ranching. Pinehouse already had a few cattle in 1950, including those of J. Cockburn, the SGT manager, who ran afoul of DNR when he failed to obtain a permit for wild hay.<sup>35</sup> The CCF introduced its own project there in 1953, hauling in a cow behind a bombardier. Three local people received five heifers and a bull in 1954. While the plan called for repayment with heifers, a later report said "those chosen were not promising individuals . . . One man lost all his animals by drowning . . . dogs, kids and cattle did not mix . . . so the individual living in the settlement in 1957 transferred his cattle to the remaining one living on an island." By 1958, the herd numbered thirteen and it seemed the project might succeed.<sup>36</sup> The CCF also promoted raising livestock elsewhere, including at Buffalo Narrows.<sup>37</sup>

Agricultural co-operatives, including a Vegetable and Fruit Growers Co-operative which formed at Ile a la Crosse in 1954, also received encouragement from the CCF. Government provided machinery, with the co-op to repay one-half of the cost over ten years.<sup>38</sup> The North also had potential for wild berry production. The ag rep helped establish a small frozen blueberry marketing project at Beauval by 1953, and the Department of Co-operatives studied marketing berries.<sup>39</sup> Wild rice became of interest by 1963, when the experimental planting of 400 pounds of wild rice took place. La Ronge Industries Ltd. of La Ronge harvested wild rice, about 14,000 pounds, valued at \$7,000, in 1964.<sup>40</sup>

The CCF spent little on northern agriculture, besides that which it misspent at Cumberland

House. Officials, including Assistant Deputy Minister Davidson and Northern Administrator Brown, did not expect or favour a rapid “wholesale development of agriculture.” They and other officials seemed not to care whether farming formed part of the northern economy. The Department of Agriculture established the Special Demonstrational Livestock and Crop Production Assistance Policy in 1957, but it only had an annual budget of \$5,000. Cutbacks for 1961-1962 deleted the full-time assistant agricultural representative position, while ag rep Neilson found himself overworked and with inadequate financing for larger projects. Inconsistent planning and a lack of money plagued northern agricultural programs. No substantial agricultural growth took place under the CCF.<sup>41</sup>

Agriculture formed an integral part of CCF community development plans from the beginning. The CCF initiated its primary early community development project at Cumberland House in 1945. Three of the four aspects of the project, the DNR farm, a muskrat habitat project, and a sawmill, all directly strove to improve the Aboriginal economy. The development plans at Cumberland House foundered with the ongoing fiasco at the farm and the failure of local people to show interest in forestry. Aboriginals had correctly expected “another of the white man’s failures.”<sup>42</sup>

Various failures caused the CCF to lose enthusiasm for its plans for Aboriginal farming, trapping, and fishing. It also seemed puzzled and lost confidence as its dreams for Aboriginals crumbled. Seeking alternatives to its failed policies, the CCF increasingly turned to community development. More subtle than earlier policies, community development offered the hope that northerners would internalize and apply CCF ideals to their lives. Aboriginals then would voluntarily follow the CCF plans for them and become productive members of Saskatchewan society. The CCF continued to use its colonial apparatus to apply this plan, using DNR and other government departments to introduce expanded community development projects to the North.

Community studies and community development became closely linked under the CCF. The CCF hoped that study would provide a grasp of Aboriginal societal dynamics and guidance on how to reach its economic and social goals for Aboriginals. The CCF engaged in several studies by the late 1940s. Malcolm Norris began an economic and social survey of some villages in 1947.<sup>43</sup> In 1948 the CCF asked Richard I. Ruggles of McMaster University to survey northern “social conditions” and “physical characteristics” to help clarify social and economic development issues. In 1948, in an early effort to combine research and community development, DNR asked the Fish Board, Social Welfare, Agriculture, Education, Public Health, and the Saskatchewan Recreational Movement to each study the Cumberland House area and to make plans for about five

years.<sup>44</sup>

The growth of northern community development paralleled its increasing use by other western governments to solve problems of underdevelopment at home and abroad. Community development called for facilitators to stimulate and direct communities towards goals, which, ideally, the communities should set or at least participate in setting. The CCF, however, did not include northern communities in most goal setting or in determining and implementing strategies to meet goals. The CCF's colonial approach extended to its community development and co-operative projects, with decisions made outside the region. In 1948, A. O. Aschim, a forester, suggested a DNR-directed forestry-based program to supplement other programs in developing a diversified economy at Cumberland House. Yet he saw an obstacle in the local attitude to "material progress." He thought many had "the intelligence of a school child, but the obstinance of a Missouri mule," and saw community leaders as a "hindrance to progress." He wanted to exclude community leaders from the decision-making process.<sup>45</sup> In 1949, Assistant Deputy Minister J. W. Churchman, Malcolm Norris, and Jim Brady all wanted to see strong government direction in community development. Norris said "if the initiative comes from the people themselves it sometimes takes years."<sup>46</sup> For success, both community development and co-operatives require spontaneous and enthusiastic local initiative. Subsequent failures proved the need for local support.

Confronted by failures and a loss of direction at Cumberland House, the CCF turned its attention to developing communities in the west side Buffalo Region, from Beauval to La Loche. The CCF hired an anthropologist, V. F. Valentine, for the summer of 1952. He returned in 1953, joining DNR's permanent northern staff. His job became to advise the CCF on how to "provide a more secure, happier life for the residents of our more remote areas." Dr. Harry B. Hawthorne of UBC evaluated Valentine and his work and told DNR that he was "favourably impressed" and deemed him well qualified to work as an anthropologist. Hawthorne wrote "The essential problem of the Metis today is that they are unable to help themselves. . . . It would be presumptuous to try to account for the failures of intelligent, patient men who have tried to aid the Metis." He proposed a three-year program to bring change among the Metis. DNR's Planning Office, staffed by several geographers, also studied the Buffalo Region and provided data for CCF interventions there.<sup>47</sup>

CCF politicians and bureaucrats alike recognized the paternal and colonial nature of northern programs, which seemed the antithesis of ideal community development models. J. W. Churchman, acknowledging the failure of plans for assimilation, placed faith in Valentine's study. Once the CCF had more information, he thought it could alter its programs so the Metis would

accept them better. J. H. Brockelbank told Premier Douglas and other cabinet members “we have helped to foster a ‘beggarly’ attitude on the part of these people in which they have come to expect that the Provincial Government will carry the whole burden of solving their dilemma, while they do nothing.” J. A. Collier, a CCF employee from Regina, critically described the colonial situation, where the “great white father” tried to remake the North, with “almost all done for and damn little done with” the northern people. In 1958, A. G. Kuziak, the Minister of Natural Resources, thought Valentine’s work helped government understand that the initiative had to come from local individuals to work together to deal with problems. Yet while officials called for Aboriginal self-determination, they wanted Aboriginals to change rapidly and in particular ways. R. G. Young, a DNR geographer, and Valentine wanted Metis to move from what the two saw as irrelevant lives. This goal contradicted their desire to have this happen spontaneously, with Aboriginals choosing, rejecting, and changing aspects of the invading culture. Left to their own choices, Aboriginals well might choose not to change. Officials said that any solution to the “problem” had to involve northerners, yet the approach remained highly directed since the plan to change Aboriginals remained non-negotiable.<sup>48</sup>

The CCF soon placed most of its hope for northern change in Valentine and his community development program. After a general study of the North, Valentine began a pilot project exploring techniques of change at Ile a la Crosse, where he lived for about two years beginning in 1955. Using co-operatives as the key to community development, he encouraged formation of a co-op store, a co-op fish marketing association, and a power co-op. Indian Affairs nearly lured him away in 1956, but the CCF induced him to stay, with a hefty raise. His primary responsibility became expanding the northern community development and rehabilitation program approved by Douglas and cabinet.<sup>49</sup>

While Valentine worked on new plans, the community development and “Northern Native Rehabilitation” programs remained small. C. S. Brown, Northern Administrator, oversaw the work. M. Miller, DNR director of research and planning, commented: “Brown, humbly and quite properly, makes no more claims for the present ‘program’ than that it is a series of remotely related measures which directly and indirectly help provide the natives with seasonal work. There is no policy involvement on their part.” Development efforts also increasingly came from other departments, including Co-operatives, Social Welfare, and Health. Co-operatives employed an anthropologist at Prince Albert and representatives for Buffalo Narrows and the east side. But a lack of co-ordination plagued the various attempts to work for community development. “Brown has no proposals to offer to alter the situation, nor does he seem unduly perturbed by it,” expressed

Miller with dismay.<sup>50</sup>

The community development program came to life, though. Phase One of DNR's new plan, the Ile a la Crosse stage, ended in 1956. Claiming success, Valentine moved to Regina to plan the expansion of the program. The Ile a la Crosse study demonstrated that "encouraging the greater participation of local people in community affairs" could solve some Metis problems. Phase Two of the project would employ "action-research" to apply research and community development at Cumberland House. The CCF chose this community because it was the largest Metis settlement and had natural resources, high literacy, local initiative, a reputation as a "major problem area," and a long history of failed government projects. Direction for the project would come from the anthropologist and his assistant, housed in comfort at The Pas. They would have the help of a deputy minister's committee of seven, a five-member research team, seven special consultants, and four technical consultants, working with a multi-level community structure. Various departments approved the inter-departmental effort. Phase Three called for applying lessons learned to other communities. But before Phase Two could begin, Valentine moved to the federal civil service, bringing a "temporary halt" to the project. His leaving possibly saved Cumberland House from the worst insult yet from the CCF. The full-blown plan did not proceed under Valentine's replacement.<sup>51</sup>

After Valentine left, the community development program also faltered at Ile a la Crosse, since the people had not internalized co-operative values. DNR sent E. N. Shannon, who conceded he had no training in the matter, there to continue the work. To integrate the Metis and end their special treatment in the areas of resources and hospital tax collection became his goals.<sup>52</sup> His tough approach to community development would force integration and impose responsibilities.

Basic principles of community development had fallen by the wayside, as Valentine and the CCF acted without community support. Several experts warned about proceeding alone. In 1957 Carl C. Taylor of Arlington, Virginia, an expert on community development, questioned the dynamic role played by Valentine and cautioned that action should await "development of the consciousness of the people."<sup>53</sup> A 1957 government document also quoted a warning from J. R. Rees, Director, World Federation for Mental Health, that trying to shape new developments in other cultures can produce unfortunate consequences and do great harm.<sup>54</sup> The CCF did not heed the warnings.

The CCF remained committed to the strategy of community development and Valentine's "action oriented" and "applied research" approach. Tom Wylie, the new director of anthropological research, lived and researched at Cumberland House in 1959. DNR also spoke of

hiring possibly three more anthropologists to work in the North. It even saw some success and claimed that local people took initiative in building the Buffalo Narrows recreation centre, the Ile a la Crosse curling rink, and the La Loche co-op store, while DNR remained in the background.<sup>55</sup>

Another major effort at community development began in 1957, when the CCF and the University of Saskatchewan sponsored the independent Center for Community Studies, located at the U of S. W. B. Baker, the director, oversaw a consulting division guided by Dr. Harold R. Baker, a training division headed by Dr. Darwin D. Solomon, and a research division led by Dr. Arthur K. Davis. By 1960, the Center developed an interdisciplinary team with fourteen professional positions. After researching some southern communities, it turned to the North in 1959, guided by anthropologist Charles Brant of Portland State College.<sup>56</sup>

DNR and the Center entered into a three-year contract from April 1, 1960 to March 31, 1963. Its budget of about \$220,000 would pay for research, training, and seminars aimed at improving the situation of northern Metis. The Center delivered community development training for many DNR and other government staff and offered community leadership courses in numerous northern communities. For the study, the Center relied on professionals, including the English anthropologist Dr. Peter Worsley, the economist H. L. Buckley, the anthropologist J. M. Kew, and many others.<sup>57</sup>

A preliminary report from the Center by 1961 described the northern situation as colonial and as a microcosm of two-thirds of the world. Yet the Center also praised the CCF for the steps it took against northern colonialism. It blamed the colonial situation in the North on “200 years of white control” and not on the CCF. The study failed to recognize the primary role the CCF had played in strengthening and perpetuating the northern colonial situation. Colonialism also continued in the community development program, although the CCF claimed “a decisive break with past tradition.” Compulsion remained a dominant feature of community development, which W. B. Baker described as “planned change” and as “rational manipulation of impinging forces.”<sup>58</sup>

DNR kept the primary responsibility for community development, which ranked as one of its main tasks. Nineteen COs at ten northern headquarters worked as the primary development workers, overseen by a supervisor of community development. Yet the program lacked viability, since the officers had only a few weeks of training. Even if they mastered the necessary skills, DNR expected them to carry out conflicting authoritarian and facilitating roles. In reality, most areas saw little community development. Some in DNR attributed ongoing northern problems to Aboriginals. In 1963, W. R. Parks, DNR’s director of forests, blamed DNR failures at Cumberland House on “the general apathy and unreliability of the natives. . . . They need to develop a sense of

responsibility.”<sup>59</sup> The CCF also continued to rely on anthropologists. One, Mike Kew, who spent time at Cumberland House, lost faith in the plan. “I have seen the odd blurb in the COMMONWEALTH [CCF/NDP newspaper] about the great Northern development projects,” he wrote, “But I suspect there is a great difference as always between what the seers in Regina hand out to their lackeys and what the Indians on the Bigstone (reserve) receive as they walk that long main street of La Ronge.”<sup>60</sup>

Not many successes came about, but when one did occur, DNR did not hide its pleasure. In the Pelican Narrows area in 1963-1964, DNR instituted a community development pilot project, which saw trappers elect an Aboriginal fur patrolman. The band chief and fur councillors guided his activities. A. H. MacDonald described it as “a remarkable achievement with respect to the involvement of the people in managing their own affairs.”<sup>61</sup>

The CCF made an additional community development effort in 1962, establishing the Community Development Branch within the Department of Municipal Affairs. Ray Woollam received the task of creating local government structures and moving responsibility to local people. He left in 1963, after doing some community development work at Green Lake and Canoe Lake.<sup>62</sup>

Although the CCF dominated community development work, Roman Catholic priests also saw community needs and designed and operated several development projects. They received little support from the CCF. Father Chamberland of the Beauval Indian School and Father Darche of Buffalo Narrows each offered some vocational education in the late 1950s. Father Darche also developed the Young Men’s Centre and Unity Training Centre at Buffalo Narrows.<sup>63</sup> In the latter project, helped by a \$500 grant from the province, Darche arranged for two female community workers to come there in early 1964. He also asked the CCF for lumber to build an alcohol education centre at Buffalo Narrows.<sup>64</sup> Overall, the CCF preferred to run projects itself.

The creation of northern co-operatives by the CCF often went hand in hand with community development efforts. The co-operatives also came about primarily through CCF initiative, with many of the same people working to develop communities and create co-operatives. The CCF used co-ops as part of its attempt to introduce socialist ideals to northerners and to solve northern problems. In colonial fashion, the CCF kept paternalistic control, not trusting northerners to run profitable, businesslike operations, and preventing movement of full responsibility to the local level. Co-operatives operated in retail, trapping, the fishery, forestry, housing, and handicrafts. Even with heavy subsidies, retail co-operatives did not usually lower prices dramatically, and co-operative marketing could not make the inefficient resource industries profitable.<sup>65</sup> In some cases, co-ops lowered prices and improved incomes, but not enough to

overcome poverty, since the larger structure of the northern economy played a dominant role.

During its first five years in government, CCF efforts at encouraging northern co-operatives remained minimal. Cumberland House saw the most extensive co-operative development in the late 1940s, largely due to Jim Brady's efforts. Local enthusiasm for co-operatives remained strong there for a time. In 1950, H. E. Chapman, director of Extension Services for the Department of Co-operation, helped conduct a co-operative school for about thirty-five men. Attendance rose to about 250 in the evenings, when women and children came to view co-operative films. By 1952, wood products and sturgeon fishing co-ops, a co-op store, and a credit union operated. All soon failed.<sup>66</sup>

Although the Department of Co-operation hired its first field man for the North in 1949, it was not until the 1950s that the CCF devoted large resources to co-operatives. The department developed Extension Services and helped found the Co-operative Institute in 1955. The CCF chose Ile a la Crosse for its first major effort to found co-ops. There, Vic Valentine, the DNR anthropologist, promoted co-operatives as part of the CCF pilot project in community development. The CCF also approved a co-op advisor by 1956 for Ile a la Crosse. Promotion of co-ops proceeded largely by trial and error, with efforts made in some areas and not in others. After two years as a field worker, Terry Phalen succeeded Harold Chapman as director of Extension Services, a position he held for fifteen years. By 1959, the department had five northern Co-operative Management Advisor positions.<sup>67</sup> In another significant development, the Northern Handicrafts Co-operative Association Ltd. began as an all-woman organization at La Ronge in 1960, with the CCF providing substantial advisory and monetary help. A strong demand for the handicrafts helped the co-op succeed for a time. About eighty producers participated by 1962.<sup>68</sup>

Co-operatives ideally spring from local enthusiasm, motivated by a desire to join in meeting a community need. Under the CCF, northern enthusiasm remained weak at best. The CCF used great compulsion in creating co-ops, compromising the independence of the co-operative movement. DNR, responsible for most northern development, particularly pushed co-operatives, while the Department of Co-operation seemed more concerned with their economic viability. At times, the CCF justified its promotion of co-ops by asserting that Aboriginal culture had a tradition of co-operation which would make co-operatives work well, a view Phalen shared in 1956. He later changed his mind about the predilection of Aboriginals to co-operate and acknowledged that the program grew primarily due to CCF actions and not from local initiative. He described co-operatives as the "corner-stone" of the CCF development plan for the North. The co-op program remained a CCF enterprise, without links to Federated Co-operatives Limited or other southern co-



operatives.<sup>69</sup>

Trapping, fishing, and agriculture comprised the three primary parts of the economy visualized by the CCF for northern Aboriginals. All three failed to meet CCF expectations, and it became increasingly clear that its poorly conceived programs would not build a successful new northern economy and society. The CCF then increasingly turned to community studies and community development methods to design and implement changes. Yet these efforts also failed to solve northern problems, and the Aboriginal economy weakened further and social problems grew. There was, however, another economy that existed in the North at that time, which could have brought stability, if not prosperity, to northern Aboriginals. But they were not to be part of it.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **A PRE-INDUSTRIAL WAY OF LIFE**

The CCF accepted and perpetuated the notion that Aboriginals were not ready or suited for industrial occupations. It thought restructured and government-supported trapping and fishing, along with subsistence agriculture and improved community functioning, should suffice to care for Aboriginal needs. While the northern economy also included the industries of forestry, mining, and tourism, the CCF reserved these mainly for non-Aboriginals and did little to encourage Aboriginal participation in these areas. Douglas and his cohorts applied a socialist model to forestry, taking ownership of the resource and control of the industry. They chose not to take over the mining industry, preferring instead to increase revenues by raising taxes and royalties. Federal interest and a strong US uranium market drove mining development. Under the CCF, northern tourism remained in private hands, although government strictly regulated and controlled operations. The socialist reputation and policies of the CCF limited northern forestry, mining, and tourism development by alarming potential investors. With the exception of some mining companies, major firms stayed away. Further limits on development came from the underdeveloped state of northern infrastructure. As a result, the northern economy satisfied few. The CCF failed to meet its goals for diversifying the provincial economy and bringing prosperity to the North; Aboriginal people found the economy increasingly unable to support their needs and non-Aboriginals saw little future there for themselves.

Although trees covered northern Saskatchewan, a lack of access meant that most forests remained unharvested in 1944. The forest industry had heavily logged accessible areas, leaving a false impression of forest depletion. No major wood processors operated in the province. Relatively little mining development had taken place in Saskatchewan--much less than in some other provinces. Remoteness and a scarcity of major discoveries contributed to the relatively small role mining played in the economy. For a time, miners dug gold on the north shore of Lake Athabasca, but their community of Goldfields became a ghost town with the onset of World War II. Various small mines brought little benefit to the province. One large mine operated in 1944, at Flin Flon, Manitoba, where Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting mined most of its ore from the

Saskatchewan side of the border. Tourism played only a minute role in the northern economy in 1944. No roads entered the North; only water or air transportation could bring visitors into the remote northern beauty. Virtually no tourism facilities awaited the few who ventured north. Given the lack of previous development, northern Saskatchewan offered the CCF great opportunities for expansion of economic activity in 1944.

In keeping with socialist principles, the CCF claimed most of Saskatchewan's forest resources for the people, ejected private companies, and created a state apparatus to run much of the industry. For the most part, the CCF did not use the forests for Aboriginal economic development or promote Aboriginal involvement in forestry. CCF actions demonstrated that it considered forestry primarily as a non-Aboriginal activity. The lack of roads and railways also limited where a large-scale forest industry could operate, and most Aboriginal communities had no road or rail access.

Although northern Saskatchewan's tree cover stretched to its northern boundary, the southern part of the forested area, south of the Canadian Shield and often covering less than one hundred miles from north to south, formed the province's prime commercial forest zone. By the early 1900s, the largely US-based forest industry heavily logged the prime white spruce stands in the accessible areas. Mills in Prince Albert and elsewhere sawed the trees into lumber, much of which left for markets outside the province. With the easiest pickings taken, some lumber barons left the province. Largely uncontrolled cutting continued though, including during the Great Depression and World War II. The post-war years saw the release of pent-up housing demands, and Canadians clamoured for lumber.<sup>1</sup> When the CCF assumed power, most logging and processing of trees took place near the southern edge of the northern forest. Some forest areas looked depleted, particularly those near roads or waterways. While the area farther north also had trees, a lack of road access and the smaller size of the timber meant their commercial potential went untapped. Secondary forest industries were few, and Saskatchewan did not receive the full potential benefit of its forests. No pulp or paper mill operated in the province, although export of trees to mills in Manitoba and Ontario took place.

Much like it did in trapping, the CCF justified intervening in forestry partly by claiming gross depletion of the resource. Further, as with furs and fish, the CCF thought private enterprise could not manage the forest resource well. Consistent with its socialist beliefs, the CCF claimed northern trees for all residents of the province. The people would not actually receive the trees, but the CCF would handle them for their benefit. It rapidly established the Forest Products Marketing Board. Creation of the Saskatchewan Timber Board (STB) followed in September

1945, with a mandate to cut, log, saw, purchase, and manufacture timber products. The CCF foresaw higher returns to producers, lower prices for consumers, and profits which would pay for social services for citizens.<sup>2</sup>

Once again, Phelps led the charge against an existing industry. His new policy only allowed private interests to cut and process state-owned trees as agents of the Timber Board, which let tenders for logging, sawing, planing, and delivering green lumber. The Timber Board then processed and sold the lumber. It also extended its control to pulp, ties, posts, and poles from Crown lands. T. C. Douglas cleverly compared the new set-up to hiring someone to cut an agricultural crop, with the province the landowner. The CCF also used the analogy of partners. Where the CCF saw a partnership between government and industry, loggers and sawmill owners experienced coercion.<sup>3</sup>

The CCF appointed the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Forestry in 1945, but its mandate did not extend to looking at the basic issue of the CCF takeover of the industry. Phelps and his colleagues had already made that decision. The commission's 1947 report emphasized using aircraft and parachutists to protect the forest from fires. It also recommended a forest inventory and expanding markets for unused forest growth. In subsequent years, the CCF stressed research, protection, and management of the resource. Many of the non-socialist aspects of the CCF forest policy were based on the commission's findings. To help manage the resource, DNR began a forestry school at Prince Albert in 1946 to train forest managers, enrolling primarily southern students.<sup>4</sup>

Similar to its interventions in fishing and trapping, the CCF made a show of gathering input. Phelps consulted twelve MLAs about the changes. He also surveyed industry people asking if they favoured "contract logging by tender of crown timber." Sixty-six percent of respondents supported the scheme. Contradictorily, in the same year many operators opposed the forced selling of lumber to the board. The CCF ignored the opposition, claiming to have over ninety percent support from operators and sawmill owners.<sup>5</sup>

Much of Phelps' alleged support from the industry evaporated when the reality of the new system became clear, since operators had not understood the extent to which the CCF meant to take over the industry. Some Norquay-area companies, who had met with Phelps, apparently thought the board would help market their lumber. Opposition increased when operators found the new system created financial hardship by paying much less for lumber than did the open market. The Timber Board refused to grant a rate increase, citing a desire to eliminate inefficient operators. It frequently found itself accused of not paying enough. Further, as with trapping, the marketing

board system endangered credit. Loggers and saw mills could not obtain credit from buyers to whom they could no longer sell. The Pas Lumber Company, the largest holder of licensed timber berths, did not like the new policy. It agreed to try the plan only after a three-day meeting in Regina with the CCF. In 1945 the Manitoba Saskatchewan Forest Products Association opposed a fifty percent royalty increase on berth timber. The CCF ignored the opposition, even dropping operator representation on the board, which had included two operators and one ex-operator. It characterized opponents as persons unhappy about losing their profitable situation. Gray, the resident manager of Saskatchewan Lake and Forest Products Corporation, compared those waiting for the Liberals to return to power to someone waiting for the sheriff or police to leave in order to get back into business. The CCF thought taking over the whole industry reduced opposition, presumably by weakening opponents.<sup>6</sup>

Again, as in fishing and trapping, most of the “capitalists” targeted by the CCF consisted of small family operations. Hundreds of loggers and small sawmills worked in the forest-fringe area, providing mainly meagre incomes. CCF policies greatly affected their livelihoods, and most could do little to fight back. While, in terms of business size, most forestry operations resembled the small southern farms, the CCF did not interfere with farmers’ operations. The CCF found it much easier to take control of forestry operations since this industry relied heavily on trees from provincially-owned crown lands. Also, those who worked in forestry represented a much less potent political force than did farmers.

Internal opposition also arose to the CCF plan. Phelps took C. Philip Reed, a DNR officer at Love, to task over Reed’s testimony before the royal commission. The officer had alleged political interference by an MLA in forestry. Reed then attacked Phelps, accusing him of failing as an “Industrial Tycoon,” of employing teachers and farmers to run the forest program, and of hiring employees before advertising the jobs. As a result, Phelps had “left instead of right hand men.”<sup>7</sup> In 1948, after someone in the Paddockwood area filled a road washout with manure and put up a sign designating it as a “CCF culvert,” the local DNR officer wrote a nasty letter to the board manager, complaining of board operations and saying that he took a lot of heat for unpopular policies.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to taking over the industry, the CCF worked to conserve the forest resource. It made a plan to space the cutting of white spruce over twenty years and began a forest inventory. The CCF drastically cut quotas in the 1940s, but partially restored cutting with the implementation of the Dore-Smoothstone management plan in 1950-1951, which brought most remaining large blocks of white spruce under management. The CCF rejected clear cutting, which was common

before, and set minimum size limits for trees cut. Government operated four tree nurseries in 1946, and some reforestation took place through replanting. DNR decided to curtail its northern forest nursery program by 1948, thinking the forest regenerated “more quickly and efficiently” on its own. Apparently changing its mind, DNR built a new forest nursery north of Prince Albert by 1961.<sup>9</sup>

Protecting the forest from fire formed a major part of the plan for forest restoration. The province formed the first smoke jumper group in Canada in 1947. By 1955 the forest protection network included eighty-five fire towers and staff at nearly fifty locations.<sup>10</sup> DNR taught Aboriginals to fight fires in the late 1950s and depended heavily on them for manual labour on fire lines.<sup>11</sup> DNR divided the North into two zones by 1961, with the area south of the fifty-seventh parallel and the Beaverlodge area receiving “top priority.” Elsewhere, DNR often let fires burn themselves out.<sup>12</sup>

Over the years, logging increased a little in the area north of the prime commercial belt, particularly in the Buffalo Narrows, Cumberland House, and Flin Flon areas. Lumber from the latter two areas could rely on Manitoba’s roads and railways to reach markets. Before 1959, the value of Northern Region forest products averaged from \$750,000 to \$1,000,000. The Timber Board made lumber available to northerners, who could purchase lumber at reduced prices for their own use. Veterans, trappers, fishermen, and prospectors could receive free timber permits. Lumber sold by the Timber Board also helped build northern schools, hospitals, and community buildings.<sup>13</sup> Overall though, the northern forest industry remained small under the CCF, limited by CCF policies.

Consistent with its socialist ideology, the CCF encouraged two types of forestry operations: government-owned and co-operative. Government mills included Timber Board and DNR mills. The board operated eleven yards and had forty-nine employees by 1947. After reorganization in the 1950s, the Timber Board fell under Saskatchewan Forest Products (SFP), which also included Saskatchewan Wood Enterprises, formerly the Prince Albert Box Factory. The STB opened a new mill at Big River in 1950 and also owned a sawmill at La Ronge and later at Air Ronge, which stopped operating by about 1954. In 1950, the STB set up a pole department to supply power poles, with Northern Wood Preservers at Prince Albert preserving the poles. SFP handled a volume of more than five million dollars of products by 1954. It ran eight yards and eight planing mills located in the forested area in 1964. By then it paid the provincial treasury about \$5.9 million in surpluses.<sup>14</sup>

DNR also operated sawmills and planers, including portable mills which it moved around

the North. One or two units could fit in airplanes, although it seems these saw little use. Larger DNR mills worked at Pemmican Portage, Buffalo Narrows, Ile a la Crosse, Beauval, and Lac la Ronge, while smaller operations sawed lumber for Fish Board buildings, schools, teacherages, and homes in many other villages. When communities used DNR mills, local people supplied labour, paid timber dues, and later also paid the sawyers' wages and gas and oil costs. With the expansion in the 1960s of the northern housing program, DNR bought more mills and another planer.<sup>15</sup>

In several cases, the CCF promoted forest industry co-operatives. DNR helped establish Cumberland House Wood Products Co-operative in 1950. Using a DNR-owned steam-powered sawmill, the co-op should have thrived. It received great advantages over other operations, including concentrated high-grade cutting areas and extensive aid. Instead, government lost at least \$4,000 from 1949 to 1951 due to poor management and maintenance. In 1951-1952, again operating with DNR money and supplies and with a contract for 500,000 board feet, local people lacked interest in working. They took out only about 200,000 board feet and did not saw the trees into lumber. DNR's Shaw, wrote "you cannot trust these people with valuable machinery as in the course of a very short time you will have nothing left but scrap." Director of Forests W. R. Parks later described the co-op's first two years of operation as a "complete failure" except for providing some local work. The co-op ended operations after three winters when it did not have \$500 needed for repairs.<sup>16</sup>

The CCF revived the Cumberland House Co-operative in 1962. Prospects looked rosy with a ten-year supply of spruce-bud-worm-damaged wood, at a cutting rate of about one million board feet per year. Fearing failure, local people resisted the project, but with prodding, they reluctantly agreed to the plan. Although outsiders managed the operation, problems soon arose. Locals attempted sabotage, the new beer parlour took workers away on drinking bouts, and some got "itchy feet." The CCF then imported Metis workers from Green Lake, but they allied with opponents of the project. At a high cost, DNR then hired an outside crew, which used mechanical logging in place of the horses used until then. DNR estimated the first season's loss at \$6,003.33, although local people received about \$16,500 from the operation and it lowered welfare costs. Social aid had risen dramatically from \$10,199 in 1960 to \$53,747 in 1962-1963, and the CCF decided to continue the project. Even with a provincial grant and loan backing for 1963-1964, optimism again proved unfounded. The manager left and water releases from the Squaw Rapids dam caused cats and trucks to break through the ice. The operation cut only 575,000 board feet, and a net loss of \$6,733 resulted. Yet the Department of Co-operatives saw success and gave another grant. Loan guarantees stood at \$22,000 by 1964. The CCF stubbornly stuck with its

artificial co-operative, even though private operators would not have needed subsidies and may have provided more jobs and income.<sup>17</sup>

A CCF-supported co-operative also operated at Buffalo Narrows. There, in 1960, twelve residents, including DNR's L. Reznechenko and G. Parsons of the Department of Co-operation, each invested \$100 in a sawmill. The sawmill incorporated as the Buffalo Narrows Sawmill Co-operative in 1961 and obtained a CCF-backed loan of \$10,000. The co-op made no payments in the first two years and by 1964 accumulated other debts of \$6,500. Although the co-op resisted, DNR then took the mill, adding it to its operations.<sup>18</sup> The province tired of the ongoing problems, even though local initiative existed and the co-op operated more like a true co-operative. Contradictorily, the artificial co-op at Cumberland House continued with CCF support. Likely the CCF viewed the social and economic needs as being greater at Cumberland House and used the co-operative to try to meet them.

Working under strict CCF controls, some private concerns continued to log. Various operators held timber berths in 1944, granted in 1930 or earlier by Ottawa. Phelps and the CCF bought back many berths, spending about \$150,000 on these purchases by 1948, leaving only seven operators with berths. The Pas Lumber Company remained the largest, with rights to 123.18 square miles, down from 224.19 square miles in 1945. It also agreed to build a high utilization sawmill, on which the CCF held a purchase option.<sup>19</sup> Hundreds of small sawmills still operated, mostly in the forest-fringe area, sawing for the Timber Board and persons who owned land outside the provincial forest. The forest industry employed about 3,523 persons in the province in 1947.<sup>20</sup>

The CCF seemed to intentionally create obstacles to timber access, which discouraged development. In one case in 1948 and 1949, Nisto Mines wanted to cut timber in the Stony Rapids-Black Lake area for its mining operation. Although suitable timber grew in the area, DNR refused permission, citing a possible future local demand. DNR unrealistically suggested the mine might cut timber in an inaccessible area hundreds of miles to the south-west and then bring it by water through Alberta and along Lake Athabasca.<sup>21</sup> In 1953 DNR sabotaged a private contractor in the Beaver Lake area by giving him small amounts of timber in about seventeen scattered areas, making economical operation impossible. Private operations at Green Lake and Meadow Lake experienced difficulty obtaining trees, hurting development. DNR's District Superintendent A. Hansen wrote that the Meadow Lake sawmill owner constantly expanded and tried to put the onus on DNR to supply timber. The operator had no choice but to look to DNR, since it controlled all timber on crown land. This type of attitude prevented development of the great potential of timber and other industry.<sup>22</sup>



Forestry development also suffered from the CCF's great exaggeration of forest depletion. Although the detailed forest inventory soon contradicted the alarm over depletion, the CCF still justified its intervention in 1949 by citing unscrupulous cutting, conservation, and management practices. One official said it would have taken "only a few years until we had no marketable timber left."<sup>23</sup> The CCF eventually revised its idea of what it considered "commercially productive." In a complete about face, in 1952 DNR claimed that Saskatchewan possessed "one of the largest remaining untapped rich forest areas of North America." By 1956 the CCF estimated about fourteen billion board feet of saw timber and six billion cubic feet of pulpwood in the commercial forest zone. Depletion in 1955 totalled about thirty million cubic feet, while available volume grew by about 220 million cubic feet. Simultaneously, Saskatchewan imported large amounts of wood products. Mr. Atkinson, the superintendent of the Nisbet Plywood Company, called it "gross under-utilization."<sup>24</sup>

Northern District lumber production eventually increased with improved road access. Most forestry labour came from the South, with only about fifty northerners working in bush operations in the winter of 1958-1959. Director of Forests W. R. Parks blamed this on Aboriginals' lack of dependability. They often did not return to work after receiving their pay and going home.<sup>25</sup> In 1962-1963, while the NAB area produced 8,356,623 board feet of lumber, the industry remained tiny compared to the size of the resource. The North had only sixteen of the province's 500 sawmills. Only 255 of 2,700 men working in forestry and sawmills in 1961 worked in the tree-covered North.<sup>26</sup>

Even with the realization that depletion was a myth, provincial production increased little, from \$3.9 million in 1948 to \$4.2 million in 1958. The value varied from \$2.4 to \$4.5 million in the intervening years. Forestry as a percentage of the net value of commodity production dropped from 0.7% to 0.5%. In 1959, the Stanford Research Institute, in a CCF-commissioned report, blamed low output on past overcutting, while contradictorily seeing underutilization of most wood species.<sup>27</sup>

The CCF inability to bring a pulp and paper industry to Saskatchewan represents one of its greatest failures in forestry management. This industry could have employed thousands in the bush and mills, using otherwise non-salable trees. It also would have brought badly needed revenue and economic diversification. Beginning in the 1940s, some in government, including DNR's Industrial Development Branch and cabinet, recognized the potential of pulp and paper. Several false announcements of mills took place in the mid 1950s. Skepticism greeted the CCF promise before the 1956 election of 3,000 jobs and a sixty-million-dollar mill for Prince Albert.

The mill vanished. Another plan in 1962 also fell through.<sup>28</sup> In spite of the CCF's uncharacteristic willingness to use private investment for this development, capital stayed away. After the defeat of the CCF in 1964, the new Thatcher Liberal government quickly and successfully negotiated a pulp mill for Prince Albert. They also obtained an agreement for a second pulp mill at Meadow Lake, a deal which the NDP cancelled by paying compensation when they came to office in 1971.

Although trees covered the northern half of the province, at the end of the CCF era Saskatchewan ranked last among the provinces in per capita forest production, at about eight dollars per capita. It produced less than one-half of the lumber it consumed, forest related industries employed only about 3,000 people, and only one large non-portable sawmill operated, owned by the CCF. While dismal production figures and missed opportunities stood out, the CCF praised its sustained yield policy and the work of its crown corporation, the Saskatchewan Timber Board.<sup>29</sup> The CCF did not admit its limitations in forestry. In spite of limited knowledge about the industry, the CCF stubbornly continued its destructive control.

Somewhat surprisingly, the CCF admitted it knew little about mining. Unlike with all other major northern resources, the CCF did not involve itself in extracting, processing, or selling minerals. Yet its policies and actions greatly affected mining; CCF socialist ideology, high royalties, and the lack of infrastructure prevented northern mining from realizing its potential. Saskatchewan's relatively small mining industry existed in spite of CCF policies, not because of them.

DNR retained responsibility for mining until the CCF created the Department of Mineral Resources in 1953. Joe Phelps knew little about mining, later describing himself as "almost flabbergasted" with the mineral development job. Realizing his limits, Phelps relied heavily on others, using his deputy minister Vern Hogg, a geologist, as the "main sparkplug" while exercising caution that things would not "backfire." Phelps viewed mining development as less urgent than fur, fish, and timber, which he thought needed crisis intervention. Minerals would keep in "nature's storehouse." While Phelps allowed private capital into mining, the CCF reserved the right to involve itself in producing minerals.<sup>30</sup> Consistent with its ideology, the CCF thought mining companies had added to their wealth by exploiting the people. Much as in forestry, Phelps visualized a partnership between government and industry, although with the mining companies running the mines.<sup>31</sup>

The CCF proved an unfriendly partner by passing the Mineral Taxation Act in 1944. Since the owners of much of Saskatchewan's titled land owned the mineral rights, the CCF wanted the landowners either to give up the mineral rights or pay an ongoing tax. The CPR, which owned

large amounts of land, lost its effort to have the Supreme Court disallow the legislation. For the first time in Canada, the CCF also charged royalties for mineral depletion on private lands.<sup>32</sup>

Phelps viewed increased royalties as a satisfactory alternative to socialization of mines. The new government quickly raised royalty rates for larger mines, affecting the only large mine operating in the North, Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting at Flin Flon.<sup>33</sup> Phelps pledged not to socialize the mine.<sup>34</sup> Taking it over would have proven difficult anyway, since the mill and part of the ore body sat in Manitoba. Royalties collected there rose from \$178,808 in 1944 to an estimated \$1,230,000 in 1946, about a seven-fold increase.<sup>35</sup> The increases turned the operation into a gold mine for the CCF. Over \$36,000,000 of ore passed through the Manitoba mill in 1949, with about seventy-four percent of the rock coming from the Saskatchewan side. It employed about 2,600 persons.<sup>36</sup>

CCF taxation and royalty increases discouraged mineral exploration, and distrust existed that the CCF government would take over discoveries. Apparently noting the negative effects of its policies, the province applied a sliding royalty scale based on profits beginning in 1947. The CCF also soon promised “full protection to exploration interests.” In another liberalizing move, cabinet changed CCF policy to allow uranium prospecting, while Ottawa controlled the sale of uranium.<sup>37</sup>

To counteract the low level of mineral exploration, the CCF developed a five-year plan to train prospectors in 1945. Dr. J. B. Mawdsley of the University of Saskatchewan helped design the program, which initially trained about twenty men at the U of S. DNR then taught and aided prospectors through the Prospectors’ Assistance Plan, with Malcolm Norris looking after many administrative details. DNR helped by providing free air transportation, equipment, and assaying, and waiving fees. New discoveries included radioactive minerals at Lake Athabasca and near Lac la Ronge. Thinking the area north and east of Lake Athabasca had received enough stimulus, the CCF confined the program to the area south of Latitude 58 degrees 30 in 1950. An annual prospecting school began at La Ronge in about 1953. It still operated for three weeks a year in 1964, and a Prospectors’ Assistance Plan also continued.<sup>38</sup> A CCF program also provided the mining industry with information. The Saskatchewan Geological Survey began in 1948, and the government carried out magnetic and electro-magnetic surveys by airplane and used field teams for mapping.<sup>39</sup> While the CCF wanted mineral development, the stimulus it provided remained modest.

The future visualized by the CCF for northern Aboriginals did not include mining. The CCF thought they lacked the preparation, skill, and ability for highly structured industrial work.

On the other hand, it saw Aboriginal bush skills as an asset for prospecting. Under the Native Prospectors Assistance Plan, DNR taught prospecting to Indians at La Ronge and elsewhere in their language. In 1949 it sent two pairs of Aboriginals into the field, paying each person \$100 a month and supplies. The plan continued after Indian Affairs withdrew funding in 1950, seemingly because J. P. B. Ostrander, the regional supervisor of Indian agencies, opposed Norris' involvement. Ostrander said Norris stirred up criticism of Indian Affairs educational policies. Norris still worked on the program in the 1960s, although Mineral Resources had taken it over from DNR.<sup>40</sup> In addition to the CCF-sponsored teams, many Aboriginals worked for private firms, forming as much as eighty-five percent of some crews. They did mostly unskilled jobs, including cutting lines.<sup>41</sup> In contrast, the mines hired few Aboriginals. Typically, in 1959 nearly all of the 2,700 mine workers came from outside the area. DNR said "Native workers generally have been unable to adapt to a way of life that requires work underground and regular hours as hardrock miners." It blamed "Their pre-industrial way of life."<sup>42</sup>

Although the CCF claimed success, the effort to increase mineral production did not bring dramatic results. Saskatchewan produced metallic minerals valued at \$20,342,885 in 1943-1944, compared to \$25,455,751 in 1950-1951.<sup>43</sup> Metallic minerals, including uranium, declined in relative importance under the CCF. They comprised 84.5% of the provincial mineral production in 1945. This plummeted to sixteen percent by 1964, mainly due to the development of southern petroleum and potash resources.<sup>44</sup> CCF policies and a lack of infrastructure contributed to the slow rate of metallic mineral development. While prospectors could fly or paddle into remote areas, efficient removal of most minerals required road or rail access.

The uranium industry proved the exception to the pattern of little mining development. Extraordinary international demand and encouragement from Ottawa rapidly developed uranium mining. Washington's desire to buy as much uranium as possible drove the development of uranium mines at Lake Athabasca, and Canada entered into large contracts with the US Atomic Energy Commission by 1948. Contracts set prices and quantities for five-year periods. Eldorado Mining and Refining Limited, a federal crown corporation, mined and subcontracted to fill the contracts. Dramatic price increases, government payment for infrastructure, favorable depletion allowances, and a three-year tax exemption for new mines made profitable operation possible. Eldorado staked more than 150 claims in the Lake Athabasca area by 1947. Both governments also lifted restrictions against private prospecting for uranium. A staking boom began in 1952 when Saskatchewan opened some new areas, with 252 claims recorded the first day. Eldorado, as the only legal purchaser of uranium ore and concentrates, built a processing mill in 1952. Other mines,

including Gunnar, Ace, and Lorado, produced uranium for it at a guaranteed price. By 1953 the Economic Advisory and Planning Board claimed Saskatchewan's production had "almost doubled the free world's reserves of uranium." Saskatchewan led Canadian uranium producing districts in output from 1953 to 1957. US and British demand for uranium fell in 1958. Disastrously for the industry, the US did not exercise options on Canadian uranium after contracts expired in 1962-1963. Some mines closed, and Saskatchewan's uranium production fell to \$19,902,485 by 1964 from \$44,561,832 in 1957.<sup>45</sup>

Uranium mining proved uncontroversial, and public hearings and strict environmental controls did not exist. Even though the US nuclear weapons program formed the main market for uranium in the 1950s, the CCF supported uranium mining. Contradictorily, many CCF members wanted disarmament and participated in the Ban the Bomb movement. Brady and Norris marched against the bomb at the Regina legislature in 1961. At the same time, the two promoted northern prospecting. Canadian sales contracts limited uranium to non-military uses only beginning in 1965.<sup>46</sup>

While friendly to federally-directed uranium mining, CCF policies hurt the mining industry. E. F. Partridge, president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Mines, described the CCF in 1957 as doing little for the industry but wanting high taxes and royalties. By 1956, the CCF reinvested less than five percent of the annual revenues it collected from mining back into the industry, compared to almost fifteen percent in 1944.<sup>47</sup> CCF policies in the areas of royalties, taxes, and infrastructure also discouraged mining development adding to overall northern underdevelopment.

Tourism formed the third primary aspect of the non-Aboriginal northern economy under the CCF. Northern Saskatchewan offered visitors spectacular natural attractions. Phelps described it as "another country altogether."<sup>48</sup> DNR depicted the North as "a potential summer playground for literally millions of people."<sup>49</sup> Lush forests, fast-flowing rivers, profound lakes, and lichen-covered rock provided a natural environment for a large variety of recreational activities.

The absence of a strong CCF vision and commitment for tourism meant that the North missed a golden opportunity for northern development. Influenced by its socialist ideology, the CCF discouraged large-scale private tourism development. An unfriendly atmosphere to investment and unnecessarily strict control over private development ensured underdevelopment would continue. The CCF maintained ownership of most potential development land and invested little in tourism infrastructure. As a result, the area received none of the large investment in tourist facilities seen in various other Canadian wilderness areas. Although the CCF considered applying

its crown corporation model to tourism, this did not proceed. After briefly owning and renting tourist cabins at La Ronge in the late 1940s, the CCF soon abandoned the idea of owning facilities.<sup>50</sup> Northern poverty and lifestyles also hurt tourism. Southerners turned away in disgust and fear from the sight of poverty-stricken Aboriginals living in unpainted shacks in treeless, garbage-littered communities. Many refused to vacation in a wilderness dotted with slums.<sup>51</sup> Shoddy facilities, uncommunicative Aboriginals, incidents of violence, and rude tourism operators also hurt repeat business.

Few tourists went north before the mid 1940s, although the occasional party flew in to fish a remote lake and some adventurers canoed through parts of the North.<sup>52</sup> The completion of the highway to La Ronge in 1947 opened up that part of the North to tourists. La Ronge, where angling soon surpassed commercial fishing in economic value, quickly became the primary tourism destination. La Ronge was “strictly a man’s camp,” and few families came along. In 1951, about 6,000 tourists came to La Ronge, including about 4,100 Americans from thirty-six states. Americans stayed longer and spent more than did Canadians. To encourage Americans to come, the province sponsored US sports writers to come to La Ronge to fish. Facilities remained rudimentary, however, with no campground, no place to buy a legal drink, no filleting table for people to clean their own fish, hazardous water and sanitation facilities, and inadequate emergency services. While CCF policies limited development, growth which occurred lacked regulation, and inexperienced people with small financial resources provided services in low budget facilities. By 1951 DNR turned away interest in building tourist camps at La Ronge, claiming it had enough accommodation for the time being.<sup>53</sup> Hunter Bay on Lac la Ronge also attracted outfitters, and DNR worked to formalize arrangements there through leases for commercial and residential buildings.<sup>54</sup>

Tourism took priority over commercial fishing at La Ronge by 1949. To prevent damaging public relations with sports fishermen and to save game fish for them, DNR closed Lac la Ronge to summer commercial fishing. Indian Affairs supported the decision, since it saw little interest among Indians in commercial fishing anyway. Soon the government fish plant, built for the commercial fishery, handled primarily tourists’ fish in the summer. La Ronge grew as a tourist centre, built on angling, with trout making up about one-half of the sport fish taken. Winter commercial fishing took place largely to reduce whitefish numbers to protect game fish stocks. Elsewhere, a multiple-use policy applied to most lakes, allowing both commercial and sport fishing.<sup>55</sup>

Angling interest at La Ronge fell with depletion of game fish stocks. DNR limited the

number of pike anglers could catch by 1950. Already in 1948, DNR tried to shift angling pressure to the Churchill by establishing a canoe route for tourists. After rejecting a 174-mile-long route with twenty-three steep portages, as “too tough for popular use,” they chose a route from La Ronge to Stanley, which required only two days each way. DNR also spoke of dispersing tourists by extending the road north to other lakes and of broadening the area’s appeal by improving facilities.<sup>56</sup>

Although expansion of facilities took place by the 1950s, tourists frequently complained to DNR about dirty and inadequate tourist camps, poor equipment, and guide rates fluctuating with demand. Visitors, who booked a cabin, ended up in a tent, a boat shortage kept some on shore, and a guide wanted to sleep and not fish. The fish plant’s filleting and shipping service also proved unreliable.<sup>57</sup> Some improvement took place, when DNR finally acted to provide some camping facilities by 1953. La Ronge seemed increasingly prosperous due to tourism, and ten outfitters had invested about \$600,000. It also boasted four “good” cafes, a nine-room hotel, and four stores. The CCF advertised and made movies promoting the area to Americans. Yet even with improvements, the tourism development remained overly rustic, and by 1964 many tourists again complained about unsanitary conditions in most restaurants.<sup>58</sup>

The CCF severely restricted private cottage development in the La Ronge area, with few exceptions prohibiting cabins on the shoreline. It also allowed little cottage development on the big lake’s hundreds of islands, in spite of a strong demand. Those who did manage to build on islands had to content themselves with leasing and not owning the building sites. After turning down the request of a California man in 1962 for a thirty-year exclusive right to develop and sell or lease islands on Lac la Ronge, the CCF decided to sell islands themselves, but soon reverted to leases.<sup>59</sup>

Next to La Ronge, the Denare Beach area, on Beaver Lake near Flin Flon, received the most tourism development in the North. There, as at La Ronge, DNR controlled policies, planning, and surveys, while private persons carried out small developments within the parameters set by the CCF. Much more development of cottage potential took place there than at La Ronge, and by 1958 Denare Beach had about 250 cottage lots.<sup>60</sup> Also on the east side, employees at the Island Falls power plant on the Churchill built dozens of cabins on the dam reservoir, apparently with the company’s consent, but without the province’s permission. The company had no lease for the land, but only a development license. It appears the cabin owners paid neither lease fees nor taxes.<sup>61</sup> Surprisingly, the CCF allowed this unregulated situation to continue, while regulating even remote trappers’ cabins.

Other than at Beaver Lake and Lac la Ronge, the North offered little tourism or cottage development accessible by road. Unattractive communities and a lack of road access prevented DNR from realizing its hopes for tourism development on the west side. While the CCF built a road to Buffalo Narrows in 1956, most other areas remained isolated.<sup>62</sup> Many who could afford to do so flew to one of the numerous fly-in fishing camps. There, tourists could enjoy the pristine environment away from the squalor of Aboriginal villages. Forty-one of ninety-three Public Health approved tourist camps in the North in 1961 operated only as fly-in camps.<sup>63</sup>

Aboriginal people played only a small role in tourism, mainly working for white employers as fishing guides. An exception existed at Cumberland House, where local people guided hunters in the 1940s and owned outfitting camps by the 1950s. A Regina-based business built possibly the largest operation there. The CCF considered imposing standards for guides, but they remained unregulated when a DNR report in 1951 described some as “completely useless.” More successful tourist operators preferred to use white guides, which worked against maximizing Aboriginal employment. One-third of the La Ronge Aboriginal work force guided in 1956, earning about \$62,000. Commercial fishing had never returned more than \$27,000 to local fishermen.<sup>64</sup>

Hunting brought few tourists to the North, partly because the CCF severely restricted caribou, moose, and elk hunting. Barren land caribou still appeared abundant in 1944, but their numbers soon declined precipitously. Sport hunting of barren land caribou closed in about 1952, while Aboriginals continued to take large numbers for their own use. Due to over-hunting, virtually no moose or elk remained in many areas in 1944. Later on, as moose populations increased, more southern hunters came north, particularly to the Cumberland House area. Hunters of water fowl also came to the delta area. Yet a lack of road access limited hunting there, and fewer than 200 hunters flew in per year.<sup>65</sup>

CCF officials also sometimes took on the role of tourists, taking advantage of business trips to hunt. They appeared little concerned with conservation. J. L. Phelps and other officials flying with him shot four caribou in 1946. Their plane could not carry all of the meat, so they left some behind. Phelps later wrote “The boys all thought they had a real outing.”<sup>66</sup> In 1951, five officials, concerned with reduced caribou herd sizes, did an aerial check of caribou on the west side. They found numerous planes in the area for the caribou hunt. They then killed four caribou themselves.<sup>67</sup>

The CCF and private persons made modest efforts to develop tourism. Already in the 1940s, the CCF tried to attract American anglers. It also created the Department of Travel and Information in 1957 to promote use of recreational facilities. Two new tourist associations formed



by 1957: the Northern Saskatchewan Tourist Association, based in Prince Albert, and the North-West Tourist Association, for the west side. New roads attracted more small-scale development, including at Jan Lake and Missinipe.<sup>68</sup> Yet, in spite of great potential, northern Saskatchewan likely received less than one percent of Canadian tourism. Even many Saskatchewan residents shunned the area, preferring to holiday in neighbouring provinces and states. The CCF said it recognized the potential, but in 1959 the Stanford Research Institute saw little effort to develop the North for tourism.<sup>69</sup>

The CCF plan for the North separated the economy into Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sectors. It reserved the benefits from forestry, mining, and tourism largely for white people. Joe Phelps' northern vision did not include forestry as a major option for Aboriginal people.<sup>70</sup> The CCF colonial structure kept control of forestry, with crown corporation head offices, forestry administration, and the CCF's main sawmill all located in the South. A combination of CCF hostility to private industry, a preference for state and co-operative development, underfunding, misjudging forest resources, and a lack of infrastructure removed forestry as a major element of the northern economy. CCF forestry policies added to northern unemployment and underdevelopment.

The province also did little to move Aboriginals into the mining industry. Beyond working on prospecting crews, Aboriginals had little involvement with mining and received few of the benefits. The CCF did allow private capital to explore for minerals and develop mines. Yet, the severe lack of infrastructure and a reluctance by the mining industry to trust a socialist government contributed to mining remaining at a low level in the North. Uranium mining, driven by exceptional US demand and leadership from Ottawa, proved the primary exception.

Tourism formed the final major aspect of the northern economy. Neither government nor private parties made major investments in tourism. Obstacles to tourism development included the lack of good highways, rail connections, and major airports. The North's glaring social and economic problems also proved incompatible with attracting visitors. Possibly most of all, CCF ideology and policies hurt tourism. While it invested only little, the CCF did not try to attract major private capital. Fear of the CCF's socialism also kept investors away. Additionally, its policy of allowing little private land ownership hurt development both of facilities and cottages. The CCF's strict controls proved effective at keeping growth out. The province did not control much actual development, since little took place. The low level of tourism deprived northern people and the province of a major potential source of economic development.

The northern economy under the CCF consisted of six main industries: trapping, fishing,

farming, forestry, mining, and tourism. The CCF reserved the first three mainly for Aboriginals while it did little to encourage Aboriginal participation in the other three. This situation existed partly because Aboriginal people already possessed experience at trapping and fishing. For its part, farming held out hope of increasing northern self-sufficiency. The CCF viewed these occupations as within Aboriginal capabilities, given close supervision. To increase Aboriginal participation in these three industries also required relatively small investments of time and money, and it seemed realistic to expect relatively quick, positive results in these areas. Further, many Aboriginal people lacked readiness to pursue non-traditional occupations. To move them into forestry, mining, and tourism would require a large investment of time and money, particularly for education and vocational training initiatives. In addition to not wanting to devote the resources necessary to accomplish this vocational shift, doubts about the ability of Aboriginals to work at new occupations limited CCF actions. Largely excluded from trapping, fishing, and farming, non-Aboriginals dominated forestry, mining, and tourism. Of the six northern industries, mining proved the most profitable. Various politicians and other CCF officials articulated occupational policies, but CCF actions spoke most loudly. As in other colonial areas, economic benefits left the region, carried to the centre of power by taxes, royalties, profits, and wages.

The influence of socialist ideology appears much more in CCF policies for the North than for the South. In southern Saskatchewan, most people experienced a mild CCF socialism primarily through health programs and utility monopolies. In contrast, a very different CCF socialism shaped the northern economy, actively determining the shape of trapping, fishing, farming, and forestry, while it more passively influenced mining and tourism. Crown corporations, marketing boards, and co-operatives became instrumental parts of the CCF's northern presence. The CCF especially wanted Aboriginals to accept and use socialist forms of ownership and organization. It also expected Aboriginals, in socialist fashion, to share northern wealth with the entire province. Had the CCF also applied its socialist ideology to northern welfare, health, and education services, the worsening plight of northerners might have been alleviated considerably. Instead, the CCF followed very different principles when it came to establishing social policy.

**Part Four**

**POVERTY STRICKEN AND DISEASE RIDDEN**

## **Chapter Nine**

### **SCARCELY MORE THAN PALLIATIVE**

The CCF emerged from the Great Depression convinced that much of the harsh suffering had happened unnecessarily and that government could and should establish economic and social programs to create a more humane and caring society. Once in power, Tommy Douglas said “in terms of technological progress we will measure our success by what society does for the underprivileged, for the subnormal, for the widow, for the aged and the unwanted child.”<sup>1</sup> The CCF also wanted northerners to accept these and other socialist values. They should share with each other and share their resource wealth with all residents of Saskatchewan. Yet the CCF proved hesitant to apply its socialist ideals to northern welfare, social service, health, and education programs. This contradiction existed partly because the CCF feared that Aboriginals would take advantage of generous programs. Receiving something for nothing might spoil them and further weaken their reputedly weak work ethic. The CCF suspected that Aboriginals had not yet internalized the socialist ideal of working for the good of the larger society and might not work if they could live without doing so. It also thought that, since Aboriginals paid little in taxes, they should not expect to receive much back. Additionally, neglect of northern needs took place simply because residents of the North lacked a voice and political influence in Regina, the distant provincial centre. CCF policies resulted in a situation where it provided enhanced welfare, health, and education services in the South and left the capitalist economy there intact. Meanwhile, it applied the reverse to the North, imposing a largely socialist economy while expecting northerners to fend for themselves in the area of social benefits.

Few residents of northern Saskatchewan depended on welfare payments in 1944, even though many lived in poverty by southern standards. As time went on, the capacity of trapping and fishing to support the growing Aboriginal population and its changing lifestyle greatly diminished. The CCF relied heavily on work-for-welfare programs to keep northerners from starving, while maintaining lower welfare benefit rates in the North than in the South. In the closing years of the CCF government, with poverty increasingly overwhelming Aboriginal communities, the CCF loosened its welfare purse strings and increased payments to northerners. Job creation efforts,

other than those of short-term make-work projects, remained minimal. The dominant Aboriginal poverty of the CCF years manifested itself in social problems, crime, delinquency, child neglect, and village slums.

Prior to 1944, governments accepted little responsibility for the welfare of northern residents. Over the previous decades, both the federal and provincial government had created modest programs directed at alleviating the direst poverty of some “deserving poor,” including the aged, physically disabled, and widows. Some northerners received government aid, with those residing in settlements more likely to receive help than those living in the bush. Many illiterate northern Aboriginals who might have qualified for the programs never applied, not knowing of their existence. A lack of staff to dispense governmental charity added to the low level of payments. Saskatchewan had no welfare worker or social worker stationed in the North, and Indian Affairs, while responsible for the Treaty Indian population, provided virtually no social services there.

Aboriginal people helped each other through hard times, sharing the bounty of the land within a relatively small group. Credit from the Hudson’s Bay Company and other traders provided needed goods throughout the year, and they carried trappers and their families through lean times. The HBC even looked after people when they grew old, remembering their service to the company when young. Aid for the needy also came from the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. While paternalistic, this old system provided security to northerners and alleviated suffering.

The federal family allowance plan was the first major social program to affect the North. Ottawa passed enabling legislation in 1944 and payments began in 1945.<sup>2</sup> The allowances brought dramatic change, since children had to attend school in order for mothers to receive the cheques. Families moved to villages to enable school attendance, while men spent time away from their families, fishing and trapping. The payments of five dollars per month per child provided a large part of the cash many required. People still lived largely from the land, eating surprisingly large quantities of wild meat, making garments from animal skins, and using logs to construct shelters.

Provincial welfare payments to northerners remained low until the early 1960s. Although rates rose, the CCF paid lower rates in the North than in the South. Many northerners also lacked access to full welfare services, since DNR officers handled most welfare administration. The CCF did not design special welfare programs for the northern or Aboriginal population but instead applied frugal versions of its southern programs. CCF welfare efforts appeared largely motivated by a concern to alleviate the worst northern poverty. For the most part, the CCF did not use

welfare payments to buy political peace in the North, as relatively little organized unrest existed.

A brief examination of CCF social policies in the South makes its northern program contrast more clearly. Of the three areas of social spending, which included welfare, health, and education, the CCF spent the most money on improving health and education services. It devoted relatively little money to enhancing welfare programs, in spite of saying in 1948 that welfare recipients no longer received payments as charity but out of society's responsibility. CCF spending on education and health rose much more quickly than for social aid. During the war, welfare spending took fifty-two percent of the education, health, and welfare budget while welfare's share of this budget declined to about 18.1% by 1953. Much of the "progress" in welfare policies by 1964 owed more to a growing economy, improved finances, higher taxation, and changes in societal attitudes towards social aid than to CCF idealism. In 1947 the EAPB said the province could not afford to ensure a "decent standard of living for all." In 1952, Budget Bureau severely criticized the social aid program, but the CCF did not implement its recommendations until 1959.<sup>3</sup> While the CCF did not shower the southern poor with great generosity, it applied a much more frugal policy to the North.

CCF politicians, advised by their bureaucrats, decided northern welfare policies. CCF ministers of Social Welfare were O. W. Valleau from 1944 to 1948, J. H. Sturdy from 1948 to 1956, T. J. Bentley from 1956 to 1960, and A. M. Nicholson from 1960. Continuity existed in the higher echelons of department staff, with J. S. White serving as deputy minister from the 1940s to 1964.<sup>4</sup>

The CCF introduced some structural changes to the welfare program, partly following the reform plan of the former Liberals. It passed the Social Aid Act in 1944, repealed the Direct Relief Act, and created the Department of Social Welfare. The new department brought Child Welfare, Old Age Pensions, Social Aid, Welfare Services, and Corrections together. Its name changed to Department of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation in 1949 when it took over veterans' rehabilitation activities. While social services grew much more slowly than did education and health services, the CCF greatly increased Social Welfare's staff numbers. They rose from 157 to 646 by 1949 and to about 800 by 1957.<sup>5</sup> Douglas likely approved of the sense of urgency and zeal which existed among the staff. Many shared his vision to have society take responsibility for society's weakest members.

For many years, the Department of Social Welfare relied on various categorical programs, using means tests to determine eligibility, to meet specific needs. It applied these differently in the North than in the South. Needy mothers, the aged, the blind, and the disabled in the South received

help from separate programs. The CCF minimized the use of these programs in the North, preferring to use a basic welfare program for all. This policy, which reduced benefits paid to the unemployable, grew from the CCF desire to prevent Aboriginal dependency on welfare.<sup>6</sup>

Although it recognized the northern social and economic problems, the minimal social services provided by the CCF did not begin to adequately address the needs. Rather simplistically, the CCF thought Aboriginals needed rehabilitation. Departmental reports repeatedly spoke of the need for Aboriginal “rehabilitation.” Use of this term placed the fault for indigency and other shortcomings on the individual or group and not on the larger economy or society. In 1952, Budget Bureau recognized the inadequacy of Saskatchewan’s rehabilitative services for “depressed minorities,” including for Aboriginals, calling them “scarcely more than palliative.”<sup>7</sup> The Departments of Social Welfare, Natural Resources, and Municipal Affairs all worked with Aboriginal rehabilitation projects, but their various programs lacked clear goals or consistency.

During the early CCF years, the Local Improvement District (LID) Branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs held responsibility for social aid in the North. The LID inspector and the RCMP administered much of the social welfare program. With the establishment in 1947 of the Northern Administration Area, responsibility for social welfare administration moved to DNR.

The CCF did not post even one of its hundreds of Department of Social Welfare staff to the North. Instead, workers from the South ventured north on quick trips. Nor did the CCF create a separate social welfare administrative region in the North. Rather, the department administered the North as part of southern regions. Prince Albert served as the primary centre to provide northern welfare services, although the department delegated many northern services to DNR. Natural resources officers, trained to manage natural resources, also governed the human population. In the South, the Department of Social Welfare, perennially lacking in funding, public esteem, and popular support, nonetheless had staff with a moderate to high level of skill and training. In contrast, DNR officers received little training to administer welfare programs. Both DNR management and field staff lacked expertise in meeting welfare needs.

George Burgess, a Welfare Services Division officer from Prince Albert, helped DNR administer welfare programs. DNR often issued short-term assistance by giving out “requisitions,” a paper which “clients” exchanged for goods at the store. Burgess or another officer approved other short-term and long-term assistance. Central office in Regina then mailed “payroll” cheques to the clients.<sup>8</sup> In 1950, DNR thought the system worked well, with its officers keeping “a close check on indigent and ailing people.”<sup>9</sup> DNR soon came to dislike handling social services, though,

and fought to rid itself of the responsibility. This reluctance also did not add to the quality of service provided.

Asking DNR to provide welfare services fit with the CCF desire to have one department handle and co-ordinate northern services. It also confirmed the low priority northern social services held for the CCF. Using DNR to administer the programs saved the CCF large amounts of money on administration and programs. In contrast, Mineral Resources became a separate department from DNR to oversee the important work of mining. Yet, in the opinion of the CCF, northern social services did not warrant a regional office, a local office, or any resident staff. As a result, the North received a much lower level of social aid, child welfare, and other social services than did the South.

DNR became involved in northern welfare administration partly because it acted as the municipal government for the North. Elsewhere in Saskatchewan, the province and municipalities shared relief costs, and the municipalities administered most social aid. Many employed specialists for this work, while the province suggested payment schedules and procedures.<sup>10</sup> Since the North lacked a true municipal system and DNR collected little in taxes there, Social Welfare paid 100% of the relief costs. Ottawa in turn helped pay social aid costs, following various formulas. Effective January 1, 1958, the federal government paid fifty percent of most social aid costs.<sup>11</sup>

Until its demise in 1949, the Fish Board helped fill the need for northern social aid. It provided supplies to fishermen, operated on uneconomic lakes, prolonged fishing to allow local fishermen longer employment, and provided food, medicine, and transportation to the ill. This generosity contributed to its failure.<sup>12</sup> The Fish Board's losses taught the CCF to operate SFMS and CFL, the Fish Board's successors, in a more businesslike manner and not provide social aid.

Indian Affairs held primary responsibility for status Indians, and Indians on northern reserves did not qualify for most provincial programs. For many years, Indian Affairs offered only minimal social aid programs in the North. It had virtually no specialized staff to handle social services there, since it employed only seventeen social workers in Canada. Ottawa shared the CCF suspicion that Aboriginal people would easily become dependent on welfare, a risk which rose as programs increased in generosity. A 1947 federal-provincial meeting about northern social aid saw agreement "that 'giving' too freely of any commodity was not a sound policy to these people, who seem to become more careless with added help." The officials agreed that subsidies to the fishery formed a more acceptable method of helping Indians, who "were in a sorry state." Indian Affairs used a "Ration List" of widows, orphans, and indigents to determine who received "rations." Treaty Indians did not yet receive old age pension payments, and only thirty-five percent of the



elderly who would have received old age pensions, had they not been Indian, received rations. It seems that the rations program used a less generous eligibility criteria than did the old age pension program. Payments under the rations system often did not amount to much. In 1956-1957, the Carlton Agency, responsible for much of the North, issued welfare payments totalling only \$600. Indian Affairs thought the Indian agent doled out money too freely, and disallowed an expenditure of six dollars for curtains, a window shade, and a table cloth for an elderly widow, describing this as a “dangerous precedent.” Treaty Indians received Family Allowances, but often, to prevent misuse, the Indian Agent handled the cheques and saw that the child received “certain necessities.” Indian Affairs sometimes set up a family allowance credit with a local trader, against which the family could draw from an approved list of goods. The list did not include basics like flour or lard, since the families should spend the allowance on “extra foods needed by growing children.” These rules did not apply to non-Aboriginals. Beginning in the late 1950s, Indian Affairs loosened its purse strings, but liberalization remained slow. It did not issue cash or cheques to Indians until 1959.<sup>13</sup>

CCF politicians and bureaucrats perpetuated a false myth of high northern welfare costs. After almost a full year of CCF government, provincial northern social aid spending totalled only \$73,224.94 annually, apparently including old age pensions, mothers allowances, and social aid. The CCF viewed even this low spending as too much. Joe Phelps, who opposed direct relief, thought he saw welfare dependence. He said that northerners, who wanted to buy liquor, asked “when am I going to get my relief cheque.” According to him, the chief Indian spokesman at Cumberland House wanted to know what the government would do to bring in social aid. Phelps replied that he wanted to move people off social aid and use it only as a last resort, hoping that fur, fish, and forestry industries would eliminate much of the need for social aid. Northern Administrator J. J. Wheaton wrote in 1947 that many recipients viewed social aid as a “life pension.” The Ile a la Crosse area, where thirty-eight applicants accounted for almost one-half of northern recipients, particularly concerned him. He launched an investigation of payments, using income information from the Fur Marketing Service. Cuts then took place at Ile a la Crosse, where the number of recipients dropped to twelve by the spring of 1948. L. M. Marion, Liberal MLA, complained about the disqualifications, claiming that those cut off received even less from trapping a few rats (muskrat) than they formerly had from social aid. Social Services also did not want to use mothers allowances in the North, preferring to use social aid instead. Burgess feared mothers “will be content to sit back and not work.” Apparently white mothers in the South would not lose their work ethic if they received aid, while northern Aboriginal women would. Possibly showing

some reservations about the harsh northern policies, DNR's Assistant Deputy Minister Churchman asked Deputy Minister Hogg in 1948 whether he thought they acted too severely in handling social aid cases.<sup>14</sup>

The CCF continued to tightly control the purse strings, limiting payments during 1947-1948 to 229 northerners. Social aid payments, not including categorical allowances, totalled \$8,838.34, or less than one dollar per capita. Of this amount, food allowances comprised \$8,717.53, with fuel and miscellaneous costs accounting for only \$120.81. In comparison, overall spending for the province reached \$1,123,092.24, or well over one dollar per capita. During 1948 and 1949, family payments ranged from five to thirty dollars per month, often appearing unrelated to the size of the family unit. One family of five received thirty dollars per month, while another family of seven received only twelve dollars. Most payroll recipients received social aid for a lengthy period of time, often because of chronic unemployability. During the 1948-1949 fiscal year, from eighty to ninety-one families received payroll cheques at a cost of \$13,081. Emergencies added further costs. This increased spending apparently triggered another administrative crackdown, and with "closer supervision" spending decreased in the following year. To control spending, Burgess instructed DNR officers on proper procedures. The Northern Administrator also took central control over issuing emergency relief requisitions, taking this responsibility from DNR officers. In an emergency, the officer then had to arrange a temporary credit at a store and request a requisition to cover this.<sup>15</sup>

Spending again rose during 1951-1952 when NAD recipients received \$22,263, mainly for food. The CCF allowed much less for fuel, clothing, shelter, and miscellaneous expenses in the North than in the South. During 1954-1955, 484 northern recipients received \$40,193.27 of a total of \$1,539,620.08 paid in the province.<sup>16</sup> By this time, northern per capita welfare costs surpassed those in the South. Yet spending per northern recipient remained below the southern level.

The number of social aid recipients and total social aid spending increased for various reasons. While the Aboriginal population grew rapidly, the economy did not. Although more people fished and trapped, per capita income decreased from these sources. The CCF destruction of the credit system, which formerly carried people through lean times, also added to social aid costs. Under the new system, many drank, gambled, and spent lavishly, before applying for social aid. DNR's anthropologist Vic Valentine pointed out another reason in 1955: "The Government is felt to have taken away all of the natural resources that really belonged to the people," he observed, "and by taking them without the consent of the people it must pay." He thought Aboriginals began to accept the government view that they could not manage their own affairs.

They could no longer live in the old ways, and did not fit into the new ways either.<sup>17</sup>

The formal arrangement which saw DNR handle northern social aid at the field level ended in about 1951, although DNR still reluctantly issued food orders in urgent cases until a social welfare officer could arrive. Minister J. H. Brockelbank preferred that Social Welfare take over full responsibility for this work. Yet Social Welfare did little to increase services, even though need increased, and by 1955 it still had only one travelling social worker to handle social aid and child welfare. "Accumulated demands" meant the social worker could not meet many of the needs when he visited settlements. More importantly, prevention received little attention. With the failure of the system to provide services, several senior DNR officials again wanted to take over social aid administration. This change would allow the social welfare worker to concentrate on child welfare. In 1956, after the lone worker, Hugh Parsons, requested a transfer, Social Welfare appointed Miss M. Crawley, a "highly trained welfare supervisor," and Mr. Paul Fritz, social worker, to cover the entire North. Crawley studied welfare needs and recommended giving DNR full responsibility for social aid and increasing social aid payments as part of a "balanced, developmental program." DNR took over both Public Assistance and the Hospital Services Plan in 1958-1959, except in the incorporated municipalities of La Ronge, Creighton, and Uranium City. This freed "professional welfare workers" to devote more attention to less routine matters. A new Social Welfare Act also treated the NAB as a municipal government, which gave legislative force to the arrangement.<sup>18</sup>

DNR officers used considerable discretion in administering social aid. One person objected to unfair social aid administration at Cumberland House in 1950. The complainant said that the Metis DNR officer, likely J. Brady, helped fewer than one-half of the people, those who were "drunk every week." At the same time, many children went to bed hungry.<sup>19</sup> A study of Ile a la Crosse in the 1960s said DNR officers used "ideosyncratic solutions," often not following welfare regulations, and giving aid to those who did not qualify. New officers at first cut ineligible people from social aid and then reinstated them when the officers developed close relationships with the local Metis.<sup>20</sup>

Various factors brought another large increase in northern social aid payments in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The rising population, the growing inadequacy of the northern economy, and an escalating demand from northerners for social aid caused the welfare rolls to swell. The CCF also became more concerned about guaranteeing the rights of recipients, one of the main goals of The Social Aid Act of 1959. Barriers to employables receiving assistance decreased. Prior to this, only unemployables could usually receive long-term aid. Northerners soon discovered they

had a right to receive welfare. Peter C. Tompkins, a Metis DNR officer, broadcast a radio information program telling Aboriginals about new social aid programs.<sup>21</sup>

Provincial social aid for the NAD rose from \$17,020 in 1950-1951 to \$174,181 in 1960-1961. Rates remained below southern rates, and services varied between communities. Of six areas in 1960-1961, Sandy Bay depended on social aid the least, with only twenty percent of residents on welfare, while 59.6% of Cumberland House people received aid. Within the entire NAD, 33.8% of the population received help. The payments per recipient also varied, from an average of sixty-five dollars at Sandy Bay to ninety-two dollars at Ile a la Crosse, and eighty-three dollars for the entire NAD. Outside the more prosperous areas of Uranium City, La Ronge, and Creighton, 864 of 1,069 NAD families received some social aid. Federal and provincial payments, including family allowances, pensions, and social aid, totaled about \$1,041,000, an amount almost equal to the combined income from fur and fish. Pensions and allowances provided more income than did social aid. Social aid spending rose further in 1961-1962, when it reached \$156,921.19 in permanent aid and \$81,385.88 in emergency aid. Some communities received a large percentage of their income from welfare by the early 1960s. The relatively prosperous community of Sandy Bay received about twelve percent of its income from social aid, while La Loche received closer to fifty percent. In spite of rising demand for services, the CCF still devoted little to staffing. Social Welfare employed only two workers to visit the entire North, neither of whom had professional degrees.<sup>22</sup>

The CCF paid lower social aid rates in the North than in the South, partly because of a fear that raising rates would hurt the morale of northerners and take away their incentive to work. The low returns from trapping and fishing added to the danger of welfare dependency because even low welfare payments amounted to more than most received from trapping and fishing. Southerners also believed that northern Aboriginals did not need much money, thinking they could live off the land. Likely for these reasons, DNR negotiated with Social Welfare to pay lower food allowances in the North than in the South. Clergy, DNR officers, and others still thought the rates were too high. On the other side, champions of welfare rights, including civil servants, MLAs, and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, lobbied for higher rates. Faced with rising complaints, the CCF promised in the 1960 election campaign to bring northern rates in line with those in the South. Director of Northern Affairs MacDonald also reluctantly buckled to pressure in 1961. He recommended adopting the higher southern rates, which paid 95.5% more for two adults and five children than the northern schedule: \$133.00 compared to \$68.00. MacDonald feared higher rates would have a disastrous, debilitating effect on trapping and fishing, unless they could use work

programs to dispense the aid. A cabinet committee decided they should pay the same rates in the North and South, with some adjustments for rent and fuel payments and deductions made for fish and game. The CCF raised the rates in 1962-1963, when 4,071 northerners received aid of about \$325,589. Expenditures rose further in 1963-1964 to \$390,737.46. Even with the new rates, a large differential remained between northern and southern payments. During 1963-1964, the NAD had an average monthly cost of \$16.79 per recipient compared to the provincial average of \$25.92.<sup>23</sup>

MacDonald's concern seemed justified. Those who received welfare increasingly earned more than did trappers and fishermen. This removed the incentive to work and made these once honourable occupations little more than hobbies for many. Even if someone wanted to support their family by trapping or fishing, they likely could not do so. Many, including DNR officers and the Center for Community Studies, opposed liberalizing welfare and wanted to see alternatives to social aid. The CCF, however, increasingly paid welfare instead of using make-work programs, largely because Ottawa refused to cost-share some projects.<sup>24</sup> Increased spending did not bring prosperity. At Sandy Bay, one family lived in a tent on a lakeshore in minus thirty-five degree weather.<sup>25</sup>

Observers claimed that Aboriginals felt little shame when they received welfare. Because nearly all in a community received aid, no stigma existed. This added to the movement to social aid. Oblate Priest, L. Lavasseur, said that Indian people valued sharing and honored those who gave to others. To accept the help of the government agent, the new provider, "is to honour him as once the chief was honoured when he distributed the spoils of the hunt." Anthropologist J. E. M. Kew thought Cumberland House residents viewed social aid as a right, as citizens of Saskatchewan, once they inadvertently heard of this right at a public meeting in 1959. Many Aboriginals also did not seem to mind working less if government would support them. Early in the fur trade, traders noticed that some Aboriginals failed to respond to higher fur prices by producing more furs, and instead produced fewer furs, since they needed to trap less to obtain the necessities of life. A similar phenomenon possibly occurred with the introduction of social aid.<sup>26</sup>

Not all northern Aboriginals wanted easy access to social aid for everyone. In 1963, Mrs. Elizabeth Montgrand of La Loche spoke up at a local meeting attended by the Minister of Social Welfare A. M. Nicholson. Although her neighbours ridiculed her, she also wrote to Nicholson. Montgrand opposed giving social aid to single girls with babies because this encouraged illicit relationships and having babies. She favoured giving social aid to sick and deserving widows instead.<sup>27</sup> In his reply, Nicholson refused to address these issues.

Many northerners and others, both non-Aboriginals and Aboriginals, viewed the introduction of welfare to northern Saskatchewan as the greatest error made there by government.<sup>28</sup> Father Mathieu of La Loche blamed the social aid program for ruining northern people, since they stopped working and lost self-respect.<sup>29</sup> Morris Shumiatcher, former assistant to T. C. Douglas, viewed the welfare program for Aboriginals as a major mistake. He claimed Douglas had “political nymphomania” since he never learned to say no. Shumiatcher blamed many Indian problems on welfare dependence. He also attributed the high Aboriginal crime rate and social problems to welfare.<sup>30</sup> The CCF received blame both for introducing welfare and not paying enough.

A major change in social aid came with a slow shift from various categorical programs, with eligibility determined by a means test, to one program using a needs test. With means-tested programs like old age pensions, the amount paid did not vary with individual need. Different programs also had different eligibility requirements. The Budget Bureau, as early as 1951, pointed out the administrative confusion caused by the categorical programs and suggested moving to only one program. The Social Aid Act of 1959 brought needs tests and the budget deficit method of calculating benefits to social aid payments. Over the following years, the department phased out various categorical programs and means tests.<sup>31</sup>

Although some liberalization of welfare took place, T. C. Douglas and his government preferred to pay northerners to work rather than give them welfare. The CCF expected able-bodied men to labour in “work and wages” programs. This policy had various precedents. Indian commissioner Edgar Dewdney required Cree to work for rations in 1879 as part of the federal government’s effort to exert control over the plains Indians.<sup>32</sup> More recently, governments provided relief in exchange for work on public works projects during the Great Depression.

In the case of the CCF’s northern program, the work performed benefitted the community by performing useful services or providing small infrastructure projects. Yet the main source of the CCF affection for make-work projects was a fear of Aboriginals losing their work ethic. Promotion of these projects by the CCF seems surprising, since in recent decades left wing parties have opposed similar policies. The socialist CCF government wholeheartedly wanted the northern poor to work for their food in varied programs.

DNR operated a work-and-wages program to reduce relief at Cumberland House in 1947. Calling the payments “advances,” DNR required employable recipients to sign agreements for repayment. Workers repaid most of the \$4,018 advanced by graveling the road to Pemmican Portage and making hay at the government farm. Phelps objected to paying in advance, calling it “a very dangerous practice” which perpetuated “the credit and debt system.” “Special Works”

programs in the community also included labour at the government farm and sawing lumber. Following flooding and failure of the fur harvest in 1948, DNR's Wheaton thought they "might need to administer a complete community under Government control." DNR continued to use the Special Works Program to lower welfare payments, spreading the work among residents with families. Payment varied with family size. A worker with six or more dependents could receive up to fifty dollars per month. Special Works Programs also operated at Ile a la Crosse and Beauval by 1948, and in 1949-1950 program workers cut trees for the Timber Board at Cumberland House and La Ronge. The CCF continued to use make-work projects in many parts of the North in the years which followed.<sup>33</sup>

Thinking work projects would not solve northern economic problems, DNR tried to reduce the program at Cumberland House by 1954. Mr. McKenzie, a CCF supporter and self-acclaimed "Key Man of Mr. Bill Berezowsky, M. L. A.," lost his job at the DNR farm in the cutbacks. McKenzie and the CCF MLA quickly objected. McKenzie complained that the CCF did not provide jobs, in contrast to the HBC manager who found work for ten men in Manitoba. McKenzie also pointed to poverty saying "Lots of kids go to bed with out supper." In reaction, C. S. Brown, Northern Administrator, wrote "The workings of governmental financing is far beyond the scope of his imagination. He seems to be strongly of the opinion that all governments take care of their supporters by providing employment. This situation has been created and aggravated by past policies of pouring money into this quagmire settlement." Berezowsky believed the story about hungry children and wanted to see a "Works" program. Even Brown conceded that Cumberland House had "no employment, no credit, and no money other than pensions and family allowance."<sup>34</sup> DNR gave \$400 for "small work projects."<sup>35</sup>

Work programs continued to help the CCF reduce relief. In 1955 some DNR officers thought "even women with children should be encouraged to do something." The progressive Miss Crawley of Social Welfare supported work for wages programs in 1958. In one project, Cumberland House workers would have cut and sold firewood to residents, with social aid paying for the wood. Her department refused to advance \$1,000 for the project. She also wanted to see a larger program which would train people and use local labour to build roads, in place of heavy equipment. Work programs operated sporadically in many villages. During the winter of 1961-1962, with about one-half of the people at La Loche already on relief, residents avoided starvation by eating squirrels and rabbits. To minimize welfare payments, DNR asked Treasury Board for money for a sawmill program.<sup>36</sup>

Revival of the Cumberland House Wood Products Co-operative in 1962 helped the CCF

provide employment as an alternative to social aid. Social aid costs had risen by about 500% since 1960. Even though local people treated the debt-ridden project with apathy and resistance, the CCF saw success, since it provided work and training and reduced social aid costs.<sup>37</sup> Lacking local support, government operated the co-operative. DNR portrayed Cumberland House as a self-destructive community where people would not work together or take advantage of government efforts. A. H. MacDonald, the Director of Northern Affairs, thought places like Cumberland House needed a year-round work program to provide an alternative to idleness and welfare dependency. After nearly everyone there received relief in 1962-1963, DNR launched a project of road work, fireguard construction, and garbage pickup, using community development funds.<sup>38</sup>

Ottawa and Saskatchewan cost-shared various work programs in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Municipal Winter Works Program included \$10,000 to hand-clear a winter road from Buffalo Narrows to La Loche in 1959-1960. It also helped DNR with a muskeg drainage project at La Ronge, keeping some off social aid for a while. Money for workers to clear rights-of-way for roads came from the National Employment Service of 1960. The Community Employment Program, which began in 1962, paid out wages of \$31,838 over three years to La Ronge and Pelican Narrows men. Three projects in 1961-1962 and six in 1962-1963 received funding from the Winter Works Incentive Program. For 1963-1964, due to poor trapping and fishing, the program expanded to about \$200,000. The projects effectively reduced social aid rolls. In 1960-1961, out of a labour force of about 2,800, northern social aid recipients included only eighty-six able-bodied persons. Prosperity did not result from the work though. Daily average project wages of \$7.42 in 1962-1963 equalled less than one-half of the average provincial wage. The projects would also have been more effective had they extended to summer, the trapping off-season and often the time of highest unemployment.<sup>39</sup>

Late in the CCF era, unemployment continued to worsen. To ease suffering, the province proposed many Municipal Winter Works Programs for 1963-1964. One project which proceeded hired Stanley Mission workers to build an airstrip. In appreciation of the work, Malachi McLeod, representing the "Metis and Non-Treaty People," thanked E. Kramer, Minister of Natural Resources. "If not for this, a lot of people would be hungry. . . . We would not like to go on Relief, because then, a lot of people would not want to work," he wrote. Ottawa also gave \$50,000 as its share of a forest improvement project for the Meadow Lake and Beauval/Ile a la Crosse area. Kramer wanted Ottawa to fund future forestry work and wrote to the federal Minister of Forestry, Maurice Sauve: "these people are anxious to work and earn a living for their families. The overall cost in dollars is little more than Social Aid costs while the results in human dignity are manifold."



Even with the projects, social aid in some areas rose by about forty percent that winter.<sup>40</sup>

CCF work for wages projects would likely have expanded had Ottawa not withdrawn support for some programs. Kramer, who preferred these projects to demoralizing and degrading social aid, failed to obtain some funding. In 1964, Judy LaMarsh, Minister of National Health and Welfare, claimed the Unemployment Assistance Act did not allow them to “share in assistance to persons who perform work for the assistance they are granted.” Recognizing the need for a solution to “one of the oldest and most intractable problems in the history of social welfare,” she held out hope this policy might change.<sup>41</sup> The Department of Social Welfare joined Ottawa in opposing the programs. It said the projects encouraged poor work habits, interfered with others’ employment, had higher administration costs than social aid, stigmatized individuals, and violated people’s rights. Ottawa’s willingness to cost-share welfare but not work programs likely fortified the department’s position.<sup>42</sup>

The CCF and DNR still advocated work-and-wages programs. Projects recommended by community leaders and government staff included a sawmill program, building houses for indigents, erecting thirteen fire halls, constructing portages, road work, providing recreational facilities, and many other projects. The estimated cost stood at \$153,522 for 1963-1964. Even the Center for Community Studies liked work-and-wages programs, contending the government and people of the province did not know of the “urgent need in the North for make-work projects and developmental programs of every kind.” In its last budget the CCF provided for a large work and wages program. CCF reliance on work for wages as an alternative to social aid remained strong.<sup>43</sup>

In spite of welfare and work programs, poverty characterized the CCF era in the North to a far greater extent than in any other region of Saskatchewan.<sup>44</sup> While the level of destitution changed little over the twenty years, northern reliance on government payments increased, as CCF policies and other forces eroded the traditional sources of income. Southern visitors who saw the suffering reacted with shock. Mrs. John A. Bell of Moose Jaw wrote Premier Douglas in 1948. She told him of conditions at Montreal Lake where up to ten people lived in one room, and many lacked adequate medical care, food, and clothing. “Mr. Douglas, you are a Minister of the Gospel, as well as the head of our government. Please in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ won’t you see that something is done for these poor people, now before winter sets in,” she appealed.<sup>45</sup> Many who spent more time in the North viewed poverty as a normal part of the colonial situation, where a small group of white persons lived a middle class life style, while the Aboriginal population lived in privation.

The CCF assumed that northerners could rely on the bush for necessities, including food.

Yet many Aboriginals discovered that the land would no longer feed them. Moose had nearly disappeared when the CCF came to power, although conservation measures helped restore their population in some areas. Dene in the far North found the barren land caribou increasingly difficult to find. By 1951, Canada's caribou population dropped to about 670,000, from possibly 1.75 million in 1900. Wastage by Aboriginals, including killing animals for their hides, killing more than needed, using caribou for dog food, and not using the entire carcass, all added to the decline. According to Mr. Terry of DNR, one Dene killed 125 caribou in the fall and was almost out of meat by January.<sup>46</sup> By 1955, the caribou population dropped to possibly 300,000, and in 1958 the caribou did not move south. The recorded kill in Saskatchewan dropped to about 4,000 in 1961.<sup>47</sup> DNR attempted to preserve the caribou supply for Aboriginals by teaching them to conserve. After finding a group of Stony Rapids area Indians with many slaughtered caribou, a DNR officer lectured them on proper use of the animals. They told him "they were very glad to have me drop in and tell them these things." Yet he felt certain that they and two priests who were with them would again feed their dogs caribou that night.<sup>48</sup> As game declined, Aboriginals relied more on food from stores.

A change in lifestyle also contributed to northern poverty and altered eating patterns. Aboriginals traditionally ate the flesh of animals they shot and caught in their traps, fish from their nets, and a variety of birds, including eagles and other birds not thought of as edible by others. A constant supply of meat kept Aboriginals alive. With the decline of trapping and the shift from bush to settlement life, access to wild meat declined and eating habits changed. Many became dependent on store-bought food. This change added to poverty since Aboriginals required cash to feed their families, especially if they wanted to continue a diet rich in meat. Decreased reliance on other natural products from their environment also made poverty more acute. Aboriginals increasingly wanted and needed many of the trappings of a Euro-Canadian lifestyle. Nations which appeared wealthy when they lived from the bounty of the land now lived in poverty.

Low incomes added to Aboriginal poverty. Early in their time in office, the CCF optimistically set out to increase fish and fur incomes, largely reserving these occupations for Aboriginals and relying on socialist forms of organization and marketing. Yet during a twelve-month period in 1945-1946, the trapper who received the most from the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service in the La Loche district took in only \$160.83. The highest earner in the La Ronge district obtained only \$299.06. At Cumberland House, Thomas Cook topped the list of thirty-seven trappers, receiving \$383.32. Many trappers earned less than \$100.<sup>49</sup> Fishermen did not fare much better. During a twelve-month period in 1946 and 1947, the Fish Board Beaver Lake

Plant paid out \$14,819.37 to fifty fishermen, with about one-half of the fishermen earning less than \$100. Lac la Ronge area fishermen did somewhat better, with 118 fishermen receiving \$45,372.67.<sup>50</sup> Average fishing incomes stood at about \$300 per year. In comparison, Saskatchewan males in 1946 had average earnings of \$1,245 and women earned an average of \$767.<sup>51</sup>

In his 1947 study of northern incomes, Malcolm Norris found average incomes of \$91.15 at Ile a la Crosse, \$102.73 at Patuanak, and \$124.48 at Beauval. Fishing and the fish plant raised incomes at Buffalo Narrows to an average of \$345.49. The 525 persons in the Cumberland House area had a total income of \$92,331, including \$51,428.85 in fur income, which came largely from an unusually good muskrat harvest. Norris saw much of the money quickly spent on liquor, horses, and household equipment. The community soon fell into dire straits, needing large-scale welfare and work programs. A. O. Aschim, a forester who visited Cumberland House in 1948, wrote "I have never visited any settlement that subsisted on so meagre and insufficient diet for properly keeping body and soul together." He blamed welfare dependence on "the absolute inability of these people to intelligently budget and purpose proper values."<sup>52</sup> In the mid 1950s, DNR employees V. F. Valentine and R. G. Young attributed poverty to Metis culture and a philosophy of life which condoned blowing money on non-essential items. At one store, Metis spending included 8.1% on tobacco and 26% on drygoods. The pair thought this was too high. Southerners also frequently lamented the amount northern Aboriginals spent on liquor.<sup>53</sup>

Poverty remained pervasive in 1958, when Miss Crawley of Social Welfare described the situation. La Loche experienced a food shortage, with government money as the only source of income. Beauval fishermen, who had taken the year's limit of fish the summer before, did not have their usual winter fishing income. DNR also expected a "crucial" situation in about two weeks at Pinehouse, one of the poorest settlements. Poor prospects for fishing and trapping at Montreal Lake and Cumberland House and unemployment at La Ronge and Uranium City added to the grim outlook.<sup>54</sup> Crawley's political masters rarely reacted with adequate short-term or long-term answers.

As time went on, the failure of CCF efforts to increase trapping and fishing incomes became increasingly obvious. In 1959-1960, of 238 Aboriginal fishermen and trappers at La Ronge, only fifty-six earned over \$1,000 from these activities, while 126 earned under \$500. Over thirteen years, La Loche trappers averaged annual trapping incomes of \$280. More than one-half of northern fishermen in 1959-1960 likely earned under \$500 from fishing, while some lost money. Trappers and fishermen sometimes lacked even the equipment needed to trap and fish, including

not having sled dogs.<sup>55</sup> In contrast, Saskatchewan males received an average of \$3,290 in 1961, while females earned \$1,974. Those working for northern mines did even better, with mine foremen receiving an average of \$6,597 and miners \$5,496.<sup>56</sup> Income discrepancies between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers made Aboriginal poverty stand out all the more.

Degrees of poverty existed. La Loche was maybe the poorest northern village. Hugh Mackay Ross, who travelled the North for the HBC, described La Loche as “poverty stricken and disease ridden” and “the hell-hole of the fur trade.”<sup>57</sup> For a number of years, the people ate largely fish for part of the year, and some did not have even that. Rampant tuberculosis worsened the suffering.<sup>58</sup>

Several northern Aboriginal communities received higher incomes than others, although poverty still dominated. Buffalo Narrows benefited from the presence of Waite’s fish plant and other fish buyers, but whites held many of the better jobs. Social problems combined with unemployment and underemployment to doom many to poverty. Earnings from the Island Falls generating dam gave Sandy Bay residents the highest income of any northern Aboriginal settlement. Yet they did not seem much better off than others. A former nurse there saw alcohol as the main “stumbling block” to improvement. Of trappers and fishermen, those in the north-east area did better than most, earning an average combined trapping and fishing income of \$1,742 for 1959-1960.<sup>59</sup>

With the failure of the CCF plan for trapping and fishing to support Aboriginals, many tried to earn wages to survive. Fighting forest fires, one of the more common jobs, provided only sporadic employment and low incomes. In a dry year with many fires, Aboriginals might find a few weeks’ or even a few months’ work on fire lines, but in other years they might obtain only a few days’ work. Of sixty-seven men from Pelican Narrows who fought fires in 1961, only four earned more than \$100. Guiding also provided little income. In 1957, 122 guides averaged a little more than \$300 per year. Only twenty-five to thirty guides worked regularly from June to September by 1963, earning about \$600. Only six of thirty-eight Aboriginal workers who participated in a study at La Ronge in 1961 worked for wages on more than a casual basis, and twenty-six earned a total of less than \$1,000. Worse situations existed elsewhere.<sup>60</sup>

Chronic poverty continued in 1960, when La Loche residents received per capita incomes of about \$175, while incomes at Cumberland House stood at about \$325. Per capita incomes at La Ronge in 1962 averaged about \$320, including transfer payments. In comparison, the average per capita Saskatchewan income already in 1958 stood at \$1,245.<sup>61</sup>

The CCF considered Aboriginals not ready for or not suited for most industrial activities.

For most of the CCF era, the Uranium City area offered the best-paying employment in northern Saskatchewan. Although thousands of white workers moved from outside to work there, already by 1951 Eldorado and other mines no longer wanted to hire Aboriginals. They claimed they had tried hiring them but found them unreliable. The CCF quite passively accepted that mining work did not suit Aboriginals, while seeing manual labour on prospecting crews as suitable work for them. It made several minor attempts to increase Aboriginal employment. In one effort, the CCF considered relocating non-Treaty Indian workers to the Uranium City area from high unemployment areas like La Loche and Beauval. Business opposed the plan, and the belief in Aboriginal unsuitability for wage employment solidified. One contractor claimed it cheaper to fly white men from Edmonton than to hire Aboriginals. He described Aboriginals as untrainable, unreliable, and dirty. As an example of unacceptable behaviour, he mentioned that an Aboriginal man had taken company food to feed his family. DNR's R. G. Young saw a "foundation" for the companies' hiring policies, saying "We know what the Metis is likely to do once he has acquired a small amount of cash - the urge for Bacchanalian revels is too great." Closing mining to Aboriginals meant the loss of the primary opportunity for employment. Mining generated income of \$89.7 million in 1958, compared to \$1.2 million from fishing and trapping combined. The industry employed over 2,000 workers in 1958, and in 1962 Eldorado alone employed 564 persons. This number included only eight northern Aboriginals. Mining employment could have virtually eliminated northern unemployment.<sup>62</sup>

Within Aboriginal communities, government, missions, stores, mink ranches, and fish plants employed some people. Twenty-four local persons held jobs at Ile a la Crosse, one of the larger communities, in 1956. Fourteen worked at the mission, one for the RCMP as a special constable, and one patrolled for DNR. At La Loche in 1958, the hospital provided two jobs and DNR employed a local patrolman. Mink ranches and Waite's fish plant gave Buffalo Narrows one of the highest rates of employment. Only five Metis men held full-time jobs at Cumberland House in 1960. One worked for the RCMP as a special constable and DNR employed two. Some communities offered no jobs for Aboriginals. As the end of the CCF era approached, likely fewer than ten percent of Aboriginal male workers held full-time jobs. Society offered women even fewer employment opportunities. Some worked as domestics for whites and as store clerks.<sup>63</sup>

Northern Aboriginal unemployment changed little. Resignation typified the CCF response to the situation by the 1960s. Aside from its interventions in trapping and fishing, it made few efforts to provide Aboriginals with permanent employment. Non-Aboriginals dominated the skilled, better-paying jobs and even the less skilled jobs, including those of caretaker and

housekeeper at outpost hospitals. DNR's A. H. MacDonald in 1960 blamed unemployment on a desire to stay on reserves, lack of skills, and "irregular work habits and lack of job responsibility." He added "The Indians believe Queen Victoria promised to look after them 'as long as the sun shines and the rivers run.'" In 1962 DNR thought the province could not solve the "employment crisis," since this required the help of all levels of government.<sup>64</sup>

Premier Woodrow Lloyd made a weak effort in 1963 to increase Aboriginal employment in government, while claiming to already employ Aboriginals "in every case possible except in those jobs where special skills were required and not available among native people." He told his cabinet colleagues to employ Aboriginals wherever possible in the North. The deputy minister of Social Welfare, J. S. White, said his department had hired several Aboriginals and that they had the same opportunity, if they had the "necessary qualifications and are personally suitable."<sup>65</sup> While the CCF said it gave Aboriginals equal employment opportunities, it did not use affirmative action programs.

In the absence of adequate welfare programs, many Aboriginals left their homes to work as migrant workers. At times, the CCF pushed them to do so. After flooding and failure of the fur crop in 1948, DNR encouraged all "movable labour" to leave Cumberland House. Under a DNR-funded project, west side workers toiled in the Big River area in 1951. A large movement of workers took place to jobs outside Saskatchewan, including to the port of Churchill, Manitoba and the Alberta sugar beet fields. In 1964 alone, the agricultural representative placed 250 northerners in the beet fields. Prejudice and cultural barriers greeted migrant workers, who often returned home for family and social reasons. V. Valentine thought migrant labour caused marriages to disintegrate. The workers often could not support their families, and their wives preferred men with better incomes.<sup>66</sup>

The inability of fishing and trapping to support Aboriginal northerners became apparent to many observers by the 1960s. Increasingly, some viewed permanent relocation to the South as a positive option. The CCF did not support or promote any large scale relocation, though, preferring to deal with unemployment and poverty with a series of short-term measures. DNR's Valentine and Young already spoke of relocation by the mid 1950s, when they visualized a voluntary program to help some move to the South to work at new trades.<sup>67</sup>

Even with welfare costs rising after 1960, the CCF remained ambivalent about relocating Aboriginals to the South. Since it had no program to train or relocate northerners, it adopted a policy of paying increasing amounts of welfare. The Center for Community Studies, which studied the North for the CCF, called for training and relocation programs. But the Center did not take a

strong stand in favour of relocation. Obstacles it identified included southern unemployment, lack of preparation of northerners for work and life in the South, and southern attitudes. The Center favoured giving Aboriginals a choice in the matter. It also called for training northerners to fill existing jobs, creating new jobs, and revamping the fishing and trapping industries. To keep Aboriginals in the North also fit with the CCF belief in their unsuitability for wage employment, which relocation of the worker would not change.<sup>68</sup>

Many of the academics who worked on the Center's study strongly disagreed with the Center and CCF position. *A Northern Dilemma*, edited by A. K. Davis, contained the research results and opinions of these scholars. The authors called for large-scale relocation to the South because fish, fur, and game could not support northerners. They favoured a two-pronged approach, which would see government lessen northern suffering while promoting movement out of the area. The report referred to northern communities as "Outdoor Custodial Institutions," which could only support a fraction of their populations. Increased education and employment programs, combined with reductions in social aid, make-work, and other programs which helped non-viable communities survive, would encourage relocation. V. Serl called for "ruthless rationality." The authors disagreed with the CCF belief in the unsuitability of Aboriginals for wage employment and blamed a lack of opportunity for unemployment and poverty. Life in the South would not be easy for relocated Aboriginals. A Center study had found that few northern Aboriginals moved to the South, and many who did lived on welfare or worked at jobs with low skill levels. The "chasm" Aboriginals had to cross in moving to the city was much greater than that faced by rural whites moving to the city. Yet the study found that those who moved to cities were much better off than those who did not.<sup>69</sup>

Neither the CCF, the Center, nor the dissenting researchers advocated a massive transfer of existing northern jobs from the white community to the Aboriginal community. Certainly, the lack of training and other preparation of most Aboriginals to assume jobs in mining, forestry, and government made a rapid change of this nature impractical. Yet few spoke of moving Aboriginals into these jobs as a long-term goal, nor did the CCF work towards this in the colonial North.

The poverty caused by the failed Aboriginal economy dramatically affected housing. Prior to moving to the settlements, many northerners lived in tents in the summer and in trapping cabins in the winter. When they moved to settlements, they built inexpensive houses, often of one or two small rooms. The CCF devoted only paltry resources to improving Aboriginal housing. More sophisticated housing programs did not appear until the 1960s and developed little under the CCF.

Much Aboriginal housing was poorly built, unfinished, and overcrowded. Houses

frequently lacked modern conveniences, paint inside or outside, and some even had dirt floors. The quantity of better housing in a community strongly correlated with the size of the white population, with Uranium City, Island Falls, Creighton, and La Ronge having the most adequate housing. Yet Uranium City's dwellings in 1955 still included fifteen tents and tent shacks and 129 houses with less than three rooms. Uranium City's housing and services improved rapidly in the following years. While most northerners lived in shacks, most government and mining workers lived in large, modern houses. Some Aboriginal villages, including Cumberland House, enjoyed better housing than others.<sup>70</sup>

The churches traditionally helped meet various needs in the North. Some Roman Catholic missions owned sawmills and sawed lumber for their own and the community's use. Much of this lumber helped build Aboriginal houses. An odd situation developed in 1948 and 1949 when the CCF simultaneously attacked the Roman Catholic church and tried to coerce it into providing more lumber for northern housing. New CCF policy had ended the practice of allowing schools and missions to cut lumber. Yet the Ile a la Crosse, Canoe Lake, and Beauval missions all wanted lumber. Various officials, including A. K. Quandt of DNR, decided that the missions could only obtain lumber if they cut an equal amount for local people. Quandt doubted that the missions had provided much lumber to local people in the past. He also chastised the Catholics, saying that alongside of their "magnificent structures" stood "the hovels that people call homes . . . Certainly this would indicate a lack of faith with their own parishioners." Since local people did not want an amount of lumber equal to that which the missions wanted, DNR did not allow the missions to saw any lumber in 1948. DNR stuck to the same policy the following year. After Father Remy of the Ile a la Crosse mission complained to J. H. Brockelbank about the restrictions, cabinet approved new regulations which allowed permits for churches and community buildings. Brockelbank, however, altered the rules, prohibiting Father Remy from taking more than 10,000 board feet unless the mission sawed a matching amount for others.<sup>71</sup>

The primary CCF housing program for "better homes" for Aboriginals consisted of providing a portable sawmill if enough demand existed in a community. Partial or full payment for operating and maintenance costs came from local people. This plan did not provide nearly the amount of lumber required, other building materials, or the training necessary for building good houses.<sup>72</sup>

By 1960, the CCF devoted little money or energy to deal with the horrendous northern housing conditions. A 1960-1961 study of housing in five settlements found that the average house of eighteen by twenty feet had two rooms and six occupants, while about one-third of the buildings



had only one room. No Aboriginal houses included running water or flush toilets, and “airtight” wood heaters heated many homes. An average of 8.9 people lived in the average 2.6 room house at Cumberland House. In contrast, the mean Canadian house size was 1,041 square feet in 1960.<sup>73</sup>

The CCF interest in co-operatives helped bring a modest expansion of the northern housing program beginning in 1959. Cabinet allowed DNR to guarantee a limited number of loans made by the Saskatchewan Credit Society for housing improvements. The province backed loans of \$17,000 in 1960-1961. Since the Credit Society loaned money only to Co-operative Societies, the project created local housing co-operatives and used existing co-ops, including Northern Co-operative Trading at Pinehouse and La Ronge, to handle loans and collect payments. After repeated delays by cabinet, the system of having the Credit Society provide CCF guaranteed loans did expand.<sup>74</sup>

DNR also hired a housing supervisor who gathered housing designs suitable for the North. The department estimated a need for about 1,000 new houses to eliminate overcrowding in “one-room hovels.” Pinehouse received the first CCF-built public houses in the North in 1960. The same year, the Timber Board worked at cross purposes with the new housing program, insisting on receiving its full cost for lumber. It preferred to have no involvement with the program and suggested using lumber producing co-operatives to supply lumber.<sup>75</sup>

Seeing the unmet need for improved housing, compassionate DNR staff tried several innovative solutions. Their efforts, while laudable, appeared pathetically inadequate to meet housing needs. A few times, DNR obtained “several hundred dollars” from Social Welfare to buy “some old shack” which DNR then renovated and rented to welfare recipients. The system did not work well, since they still ended up with “only a mean shack.” In 1961, Director of Northern Affairs A. H. MacDonald suggested taking the Goldfields Trust Fund of \$4,504.47 to allow DNR crews to build three or four “emergency houses.” Materials would cost from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per house, and DNR would rent out the houses, using the revenue to build more houses. In his submission to Treasury Board asking for permission to use the fund, Minister Kuziak wrote “At best the housing situation is deplorable and at its worst it is desperate. Hundreds of people are living in sub-standard shacks in slum conditions. . . . Probably the most urgent need is for housing for the aged.”<sup>76</sup>

The housing program grew in 1961-1962. Three categories of northerners could use the plan: those who could buy better housing but lacked a down payment, those who lacked income to buy better housing, and the old and infirm. Building Supervisor A. J. Feusi helped Pinehouse residents build ten houses, financed by the Credit Society. Projects also operated at La Ronge,

Beauval, Ile a la Crosse, La Loche, and Buffalo Narrows in 1962. The Pinehouse program catered to purchasers with earned incomes, allowing them ten years to repay the loans, while the other projects catered mainly to welfare cases, with Social Welfare paying the rent. The province operated three portable sawmills for residential purposes. It also trained some northerners to install electrical wiring.<sup>77</sup>

A unique housing project began in 1962 for Metis who relocated to Cole (Cold) Bay on Canoe Lake. Local workers provided much of the labour to complete twenty-two houses by 1963. Metis there received money as compensation for the creation of the RCAF Primrose Lake bombing range, money which was to help pay for the houses. The repayment plan went awry when the people received a compensation payment in 1963, but failed to pay the required \$8,000 towards the cost of the houses. Four days went by before the conservation officer learned that they had received the money. "He found everyone drunk and the money all spent."<sup>78</sup>

False hope of a major expansion in the CCF northern housing program arose in 1964. The CCF bought sawmills for La Loche and La Ronge, raising the number of its mills to six. It also prepared legislation to expand the northern housing program, approved a provisional housing board, and approved making loans to finance housing and "industrial or business enterprises." DNR received responsibility for the housing program. A. H. MacDonald spoke of a \$100,000 program for 1964, and the budget of February 1964 mentioned "broadened opportunities" for northerners. The CCF decided to go ahead with building seventy-five houses, using maximum loans of \$3,000 and \$500 grants. Yet surprisingly, it made the program conditional on receiving help from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The CCF knew that most CMHC programs did not apply to the North and should have realized that CMHC would not change its policies overnight. While CMHC agreed to give technical help and housing grants of \$400 to \$500, it refused immediate aid for the larger housing plan. As a result, the CCF drastically cut back its housing plans.<sup>79</sup>

Even with the expanded CCF housing program of the 1960s, a double standard existed between the housing the CCF built for the public and for its employees. Public housing cost about one-third that of civil servant housing. The average public house cost \$4,900 in 1964. Yet DNR spent about \$13,000 to \$16,000 per staff house at Buffalo Narrows, Pelican Narrows, and Cumberland House already in the 1950s.<sup>80</sup> DNR also insisted its employees enjoy modern conveniences, while public housing lacked water, sewer, or central heat. This double standard reinforced the colonial image established by the CCF and its departments in the North.

When the CCF's era ended, its modest efforts had dealt with only a minuscule portion of

the need for better housing. Overcrowding continued. Teachers complained about students not having adequate study conditions, missionaries feared a lack of privacy discouraged "certain Christian moral values," and medical personnel thought overcrowding and poor sanitation caused health problems. Inadequate housing was a symptom of the larger problems of low incomes and poverty. Even as some housing improved, many lacked the money to pay utilities and furnish and maintain houses.<sup>81</sup> Deplorable situations continued, like that of senior citizen Celestine McKay, who asked for help for house repairs. Because he and his wife received old age assistance, Social Welfare would not help. DNR also refused aid. Eiling Kramer, the minister of DNR, blamed Father Darche for raising false hope that the McKays and others would qualify for repair and other housing programs.<sup>82</sup>

Shortly after the CCF left office, people still lived in a settlement near Creighton called Mile 86. There, Aboriginal squatters, including senior citizens, lived in "dwellings" built "largely from material salvaged from the adjacent waste disposal ground. . . . on small islands in a swamp" used as a tailings disposal site by the mining company. The tailings had killed all vegetation, and an odor, which a sanitary officer thought was cyanide from the milling process, pervaded the "dismal place." The officer pointed out that "equally poor housing can be found in almost every northern community."<sup>83</sup> To suggest that the CCF failed to meet the housing needs of northerners does not adequately describe the situation. A more accurate statement would say that the CCF ignored the housing plight of northerners, devoting only a token effort to deal with this aspect of poverty.

Social problems accompanied chronic poverty, and those which affected children and families were among the most serious. The Department of Social Welfare held responsibility for northern child welfare and family services, even though it usually designated only one visiting staff person to handle this entire half of the province. This lack of staff added to a situation where the suffering of children and families often ran its natural course without government intervention.

A new Child Welfare Act, introduced by the CCF in 1946, replaced the former act which expected local children's aid societies to provide child welfare services. The new act gave the Minister of Social Welfare wardship of children in care and brought a shift from local to provincial responsibility. The province took over the work of all local societies by 1960. Social Welfare placed much of its trained staff in child welfare, viewing protection services as their "basic service" to prevent community problems. Child protection caseloads peaked in 1948, when over 2,100 families received services, while their number declined to approximately 550 by about 1960.<sup>84</sup> Although the CCF stressed prevention and child welfare, it did not apply this emphasis to

the North.

The new government rapidly increased southern child welfare staff, although a perennial shortage of trained personnel continued. Since Saskatchewan offered no social work training, those pursuing a professional degree studied outside the province. From 1944 to 1960, 126 staff trained under departmental sponsorship. They comprised most of the department's professional staff. Less trained social welfare workers worked at more menial tasks, including in financial aid programs.<sup>85</sup>

Child Welfare Branch did not usually provide staff for the North, letting the Welfare Services Division look after child welfare. Social Welfare still had only two workers to administer all northern programs in 1961. It admitted that many northerners received only "token service." Urgent cases sometimes brought emergency visits by social workers, who frequently apprehended large family groups. In a typical situation, drinking parents left their children with a babysitter. Days later, the caregiver tired of looking after the children and notified the RCMP or DNR, who called Social Welfare. Social Welfare applied a much looser standard of neglect in the North than in the South. It usually took children only in extreme situations, partly because removing children to the South made them "neither fish nor fowl" and unable to function in either society. Indian Affairs, which had even less social work staff than did Social Welfare, called on the province in cases of life and death on reserves. Still in 1963, many reserves received mostly "token attention."<sup>86</sup>

In addition to the low level of northern service, no department wanted financial responsibility for northern wards and child welfare services. This aggravated governmental neglect. Although legislation gave the local government, DNR, responsibility for paying, it resisted. In 1950, DNR's deputy minister, C. A. L. Hogg, wanted Social Welfare to pay or at least keep charges to a minimum. At the time, twelve wards came from the North, whose care cost the province about \$1,920 in total annual maintenance costs. Hogg particularly objected to charges for flying magistrate Lussier and social worker Burgess to northern child welfare hearings. He wanted hearings only when charges were laid for "gross neglect." Although the provincial auditor told DNR it should pay and DNR budgeted \$3,600 in 1951 to support up to fifteen wards, DNR still resisted, citing the North's lack of a large tax base and economic maturity.<sup>87</sup>

Beginning in 1945, as an option to permanently committing children to the minister, judges could make temporary committal orders for up to twelve months or return the children to their parents with supervision. One temporary order often followed another. Permanent wardship usually lasted until age twenty-one, although Social Welfare might discharge it earlier. The

department could apprehend children up to age sixteen, with court taking place within three weeks, presided over in the North by a traveling circuit judge. Judges relied heavily on the recommendations of the apprehending social worker, who usually presented the department's case in order to save money. Parents rarely hired a lawyer or called witnesses, and the judge, after listening to the social worker and his witnesses, passed judgement. Not until 1963 did an amendment to the act allow the department to pay parents' legal fees, although many likely did not know of this right. Beginning in 1946, parents sometimes voluntarily gave their children into non-ward care for up to twelve months, particularly when children needed medical care away from home.<sup>88</sup>

Society stigmatized foster care, including foster parents and the wards they cared for. Foster parenting often was truly a thankless job. Because the North had few approved foster homes, most wards went to southern homes. Foster parents received little pay. In 1946, they received sixty-five cents per day for children under age twelve and up to one dollar per day for those twelve and older. Rates remained low. The department often paid for clothing by requisition, making foster parents and children stand out in the stores. In time, December cheques included an allowance for Christmas presents, replacing the former procedure where the department provided presents.<sup>89</sup>

The CCF briefly recognized the need to keep northern children in the North. Although the Metis community of Green Lake fell outside the NAD, its milieu resembled that of various northern areas. Social Welfare opened a children's shelter there in 1947, with a capacity of about twenty-five children. After expansion, an average of forty-two children lived there by 1951. The facility closed, however, in 1951, due to difficulty attracting staff, isolation, a lack of local services, and a shift in preference to foster homes. Mildred Battel, the director of child welfare, said the institutional standards made it difficult for children to return home.<sup>90</sup> Some boarding schools, including those at Beauval and Montreal Lake, also cared for children in the North.<sup>91</sup> Neglected children sometimes found themselves placed at boarding schools, which kept them out of ward care. Yet many ended up in foster care. Metis, including many from the North, comprised about eighty percent of children in care in Prince Albert Region in 1962.<sup>92</sup>

Adoption was the department's preferred plan for permanent wards, because this brought a commitment to the children from the new parents. Treaty Indians adopted by non-Indians did not lose their treaty rights, and non-treaty persons adopted by Treaty Indians did not gain treaty status. Few persons offered to adopt older children and family groups, and placement of Indian and Metis children proved particularly difficult. By the 1960s, the department used churches,

newspapers, radio, and television to try to find homes for the children.<sup>93</sup> Many wards from the North grew up in southern foster homes because of the difficulty of finding adoption homes for Aboriginals.

Additional difficulties arose in finding foster and adoption homes for northern children because committal orders included a designation of religion as Protestant or Roman Catholic. About ninety percent of northern wards came from Roman Catholic families. Of the 825 Indian children in care in 1963-1964, 546 were Roman Catholic. The department at times overrode the court's designation due to a shortage of suitable homes. To compensate, priests sometimes gave religious instruction to Catholic children placed in non-Catholic homes. Religion remained important in society, and the department preferred to place children in homes where they would receive "a sound code of life and a Christian philosophy of living."<sup>94</sup>

Systemic neglect under the CCF system extended to northern delinquent and handicapped children, because the North lacked any treatment centres. Children, whose behaviour the foster care system could not handle, went to southern institutions. Facilities in Regina included the Boys Industrial School, Embury House, Dales House, and the Girls' Hostel, while Saskatoon had Kilburn Hall. Handicapped northern children also moved to the South. Moose Jaw's Valley View Centre opened in 1946, the first provincial training school for mentally handicapped children and adults.<sup>95</sup>

Saskatchewan's social programs expanded greatly under the CCF. It also increased northern welfare and social services, but the level of service offered to northerners remained inadequate and far below that of the South. Uncontrolled population growth, changing Aboriginal lifestyles, and the many CCF interventions helped create an untenable situation where northerners could no longer survive without state aid. Dependency on social aid grew to the point where many feared losing this, much like others fear losing their source of income. Welfare under the CCF kept northerners alive and pacified them, preventing open revolt. The CCF, which helped destroy the former northern economy, failed to devote the resources needed to provide an alternative to welfare.

The CCF tried to keep welfare payments to needy northerners at a low level, preferring to supplement these with work for wages programs. It believed working for aid would help preserve Aboriginals' self esteem and work ethic. Frustration accompanied the work projects because they did not provide a long-term solution to northern unemployment. The reliance on work for wages programs, while they were possibly preferable to welfare, failed to address the economic and social problems created by CCF interventions in the North and the lack of meaningful employment.

As the CCF era closed, third world-like poverty blanketed the North. Large Aboriginal families lived on about \$1,000 per year. The dream once held by the CCF of Aboriginals earning their living from restructured trapping and fishing industries had died.<sup>96</sup> Unlike in the early days of Joe Phelps' fervour, the CCF lacked ideas and commitment to deal with the collapse of the traditional economy, now worsened by CCF policies. Small welfare and work for wages payments kept northerners alive. While the North had enough jobs to employ the entire local work force, government and industry brought in thousands of white employees. The CCF accepted and perpetuated the myth that Aboriginals could not work at steady wage labour. Trapping and fishing, the occupations chosen by the CCF for Aboriginals, could only provide poverty-level incomes. The CCF justified its neglect of northerners by saying it did not want to take away Aboriginals' work ethic and increase dependency. Justification for the low level of welfare services also came from the common view that northern Aboriginals fell into the category of the undeserving poor, squandering their money and refusing to help themselves.

While it made child welfare a priority in the South, the CCF neglected the welfare of northern children. It committed only meagre resources to child protection and prevention services in the North. Inadequate staffing, a total absence of local treatment facilities, and a miserly attitude towards paying for services added governmental neglect to parental neglect. Northern social problems grew as dysfunction went unchecked, often damaging children the most.

In addition to welfare services, the larger category of social programs included health and education services. The need for modern health care grew as Aboriginal contact with white society increased. Without education, northerners had little chance of escaping from a life of poverty. Lacking financial resources, most northerners depended on the CCF for the provision of both of these vital services.

## **Chapter Ten**

### **DOLLARS ARE WORTH MORE THAN LIVES**

Underdevelopment characterized both the provision of medical care and education in the North during the CCF era. The CCF proved as tightfisted in these areas of social spending as in welfare spending. Southern socialists designed and controlled health and education systems, imposing, in colonial fashion, policies they thought adequate for northerners. Yet, their socialism did not include a generous sharing with some of society's poorest, and outright neglect of northerners' needs resulted.

Tommy Douglas possessed an irrepressible fervour to provide residents of Saskatchewan with socialized hospital and medical care. He and others in the CCF believed that a lack of financial resources should not deprive anyone of the benefit of medical care to preserve life and restore health. They set out to provide a basic humanitarian level of northern health care through a network of remote outpost hospitals. But after an energetic beginning, CCF enthusiasm for improving northern health services waned. Because the quality of northern health care never caught up with that in the South, northerners either did without many services or traveled to the South to obtain these.

Woodrow Lloyd, the CCF Minister of Education and Douglas' successor as premier, brought devotion and understanding to the area of educational reform. He knew education from the inside, having once worked as an educator and having served as president of the Teachers' Federation. Lloyd and the CCF strove to reorganize and improve education throughout the province. If the CCF hoped to modernize and assimilate northern Aboriginals, it needed to teach English, reduce illiteracy, and prepare northerners academically and vocationally for their new lives. Rapid educational expansion extended elementary education to most communities, aiming to enroll nearly all northern children in school. However, CCF efforts soon stalled. By 1964, government offered no northern vocational or professional education and most areas lacked secondary education.

Prior to 1944, the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches provided most northern medical care and education. On the west side, Roman Catholics operated an infirmary at the La Loche



mission and a hospital at Ile a la Crosse, and a nurse lived at Beauval. La Ronge's Anglican residential school provided a nurse, and an outpost hospital at Cumberland House cared for area people. Before the 1944 election, the Red Cross became interested in providing health care from northern outpost hospitals. Their plan had not advanced much, though. C. Piercy, sent north by the CCF to study education, saw an "urgent need for medical services" at Stony Rapids, Fond du Lac, Camsell Portage, Buffalo Narrows, Snake Lake, Sandy Beach, and Clear Lake.<sup>1</sup> Churches also provided most northern education before 1944. Anglicans operated schools in the central and eastern area of the North, including at La Ronge and Montreal Lake. Roman Catholics provided education on the west side at Ile a la Crosse, La Loche, and Beauval. Both Catholics and Anglicans educated Aboriginals at Cumberland House. Most areas had neither church hospitals nor schools, which meant many persons rarely, if ever, saw a doctor or nurse and never attended school.

Northerners needed improved medical care and educational opportunities. They suffered more from medical problems than did many other residents of the province. A lack of immunity to European diseases had earlier decimated Aboriginal populations. Although most epidemics had passed, tuberculosis continued to ravage the population. Many women died in childbirth, a high percentage of children did not survive infancy, and northerners died at an earlier age than did most Canadians. In the area of education, coming modernization made it urgent for the CCF to expand learning opportunities for northern Aboriginals. Without this, they could not cope with change.

In comparison to the North, southern Saskatchewan enjoyed superior health and education services in 1944. A partially socialized medical system operated under the former Liberal government, with a municipal doctor system and free medical service in about one-third of municipalities. Yet the province suffered from severe shortages of trained personnel, equipment, and hospital facilities. The CCF saw a need to expand health services.<sup>2</sup> An extensive system of elementary and secondary schools served the agricultural and urban areas of Saskatchewan. While the province had only one university, in Saskatoon, this offered quite a broad range of education. It did not yet include a medical school.

Confirming the primary importance health care reform held for him, Premier Douglas personally took the job of Minister of Public Health from 1944 to 1949. The CCF appointed the Health Services Survey Commission in 1944. Outside experts who served on the commission included the chairman, Dr. Henry Sigerist of Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Fred Mott, the US deputy surgeon general, and Dr. Mindel Sheps of Winnipeg. The authors of the Sigerist Report did not foresee radically improved northern health services. "The far northern part of the Province

is so sparsely populated that it will not be possible to supply it with complete medical services now," they wrote. In another CCF initiative, the Health Services Planning Commission began in 1944 to plan facilities and introduce and manage hospital insurance.<sup>3</sup>

Reform of the medical care system became one of the CCF's main goals. It initiated innovative programs during the next twenty years. Health care spending increased from six percent of the budget (\$1,852,079) in 1943-1944 to twenty percent (\$10,246,194) in 1947-1948. By 1951-1952, health spending took 51.8% of welfare, education, and health expenditures. While the CCF delayed introducing full medicare until 1962, it implemented the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan (SHSP) in 1947 as a compulsory program to provide hospital care. In another major initiative, the CCF provided an air ambulance service. It quickly implemented the free cancer treatment legislation passed by the Liberals and introduced free treatment for mental illness. Those receiving old age and blind pensions, mothers' allowances, and social aid also no longer paid for medical care. The CCF rapidly built new hospitals, and many new doctors practised in them. In major initiatives, it built a medical school in 1953 and the University Hospital in 1956, both in Saskatoon.<sup>4</sup>

In its 1933 Regina Manifesto and repeatedly thereafter, the CCF called for a full medicare program. The Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan, which began January 1, 1947, was the most socialist of the early CCF health reforms and partially met the goals of the manifesto. It required residents to pay an annual fee of five dollars per person or thirty dollars per family. In return, residents received hospital care. The medical profession liked much about the plan, which added to their income and improved the health care system. Fearing a loss of autonomy, doctors successfully opposed the aspect of the CCF plan which would have put them on salaries. By the end of 1947, SHSP covered ninety-three percent of the provincial population. SHSP did not help most northerners, since its compulsory aspect did not extend to the North. Because of financial limitations and a desire to see Ottawa contribute financially, the CCF delayed beginning full medicare. It finally implemented the Medical Care Insurance Act on July 1, 1962. The introduction of medicare caused bitter controversy and the withdrawal of services by most doctors. To settle the dispute, the CCF compromised, allowing doctors to continue with a fee for service system.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to the CCF era, the Department of Public Health provided few services in the North. Under the CCF, this department received responsibility for most northern health care, aided by DNR. Public Health's Medical Services Branch provided medical and dental care for northern indigents beginning in 1945, and the Health Services Act of 1946 allowed the Department of Social

Welfare to designate indigents.<sup>6</sup> The federal Indian Health Services (IHS) provided care in several areas with large Treaty Indian populations.

The relatively progressive medical care situation in the South did not extend to the North. Only the South had planes and personnel specifically dedicated to the air ambulance program. Instead of building modern hospitals, the CCF provided several outpost "hospitals," staffed by lone nurses. For a time, only one doctor served the entire North. All major facilities, including sanatoria to treat tuberculosis, remained in the South. Douglas' health care vision obviously did not include the North.

Additionally, the compulsory aspect of SHSP did not extend to the North for most of the CCF era, although the CCF began a non-compulsory scheme there in 1948. A situation resulted where southerners and many white northerners received coverage while most Aboriginal northerners did not. While the CCF claimed that most northerners did not want the program and could not afford it, removing the poorest segment of the population from this plan violated the spirit of the plan. The CCF claim that it respected the wishes of northerners in this matter lacked credibility, since its other northern actions demonstrated that the CCF did not mind using compulsion. Some of the neediest qualified for care as indigents, but leaving large numbers with no coverage caused severe problems. No statistics exist to document how many persons went without medical treatment. The CCF aggravated the situation in 1952, when in an apparent cost-saving measure, the Health Services Planning Commission decided that Public Health should not pay SHSP premiums for indigents, but should pay their hospital bills instead. This added additional stigma to indigency. SHSP covered only 1,355 persons in the NAD in 1953, about seventeen percent of the non-Treaty Indian population.<sup>7</sup>

Opposition to and confusion about the SHSP plan existed. In one incident, Rev. G. J. Waite of Montreal Lake, believing the plan was compulsory, sent in twenty dollars for his 1951 premium. He addressed his payment to "The Little Kremlin" in Prince Albert. J. H. Brockelbank, DNR's minister, took offence, pointing out that various government staff had shed blood defending Waite's freedom of speech. He asked Waite to stop "hurting the feelings of my staff by calling names." Still thinking the plan compulsory, the next year Waite again sent twenty dollars to "The Kremlin" in Prince Albert. Waite wrote "we don't yet have to have a permit to breathe or think or speak."<sup>8</sup>

Cabinet decided that compulsory SHSP coverage should extend to the NAD effective January 1, 1959. This decision had little to do with compassion but was spurred by financial considerations. In order for Ottawa to fully share SHSP costs, coverage had to extend to all

northerners. DNR then bought health coverage for all northerners outside Uranium City, La Ronge, and Creighton--about 8,000 persons. Collecting the fees (twenty dollars per adult, five dollars per child, or forty-five dollars per family) turned into a long nightmare for DNR. It gathered only \$14,900 of \$47,300 in 1959. Since most northerners did not have jobs, DNR could not garnishee their wages, and collecting through property taxes did not work, since many owned no property. Collections in 1962 in the La Loche area reached only 10.3%, although nearly eighty percent of residents at Sandy Bay, Molanosa, and Dore Lake paid. DNR collected only 36.3% of total levies in 1964. IHS paid Treaty Indians' SHSP coverage. Treaty Indians did not receive coverage under the medicare plan of 1962.<sup>9</sup>

The CCF created health regions in the South, but it failed to do so in the North. It did not bother to introduce legislation which would have allowed the creation of a northern health region, while it deemed these essential elsewhere. Existing regulations did not allow for health regions in unorganized areas, and a health region would also have lacked authority to levy taxes in the North.<sup>10</sup> The absence of local control over health care reinforced colonialism.

DNR's Northern Administrator in Prince Albert initially managed much of the northern medical system. He looked after SHSP, medical and hospital expenditures, medical flights, ground transportation, and non-hospital care.<sup>11</sup> Public Health cared for the North from an even greater distance. Dr. Totton, the North's part-time medical health officer, had his office in Regina. He visited the North quarterly, did some clinical work, and helped supervise outpost hospitals. A director of nursing services oversaw northern nurses, and sanitation officers occasionally visited. Public Health recognized the need to move administration north, at least to Prince Albert, but waited for Totton to retire, placing his convenience ahead of northern health needs. He finally retired in 1954 and the "Northern Health District" began. Dr. Irwin became the medical health officer, supervising northern staff, including the nursing supervisor and part-time public health inspector. They all operated from Prince Albert. The North remained an unofficial "health district."<sup>12</sup>

As its primary northern health initiative, the CCF created a network of four outpost hospitals. A Red Cross outpost hospital had already opened at Buffalo Narrows in 1947, and the CCF took this over in 1948. The new system also included the log Cumberland House hospital, which residents had helped build by about 1940. Stony Rapids and Sandy Bay received new outpost hospitals. Although largely completed by 1948, the hospital at Sandy Bay did not open until 1950. The outpost hospitals resembled infirmaries or clinics more than hospitals, since the unmodern facilities had little staff and no laboratory or x-ray equipment for many years. Their

medical staff usually consisted of one resident nurse, referred to as a “supervisor,” who provided a wide range of services. The province sent two nurses to the School of Nurse Midwifery in New York in 1945, although the College of Physicians and Surgeons did not approve, viewing the use of midwives as “regressive.” Public Health then placed its first two midwives at Cumberland House and Buffalo Narrows.<sup>13</sup>

The CCF spent little on its outpost hospitals. With its population growing rapidly, Cumberland House received a second nurse by 1948. Yet the CCF repeatedly refused to replace the small log hospital. After Treasury Branch refused Public Health’s latest request for funds to build a new hospital in the mid 1950s, G. Kinneard of Public Health wrote “things are tough all over.”<sup>14</sup> Doctors rarely visited most hospitals. Due to its nearness to Ile a la Crosse, the doctor from there did attend to the Buffalo Narrows hospital. This facility provided the largest volume of service of all outpost hospitals for much of the CCF era, leading to it receiving a nurse’s aide in 1957. After years of delay, Treasury Board approved \$36,900 for a Buffalo Narrows hospital extension in 1963.<sup>15</sup>

Northern Aboriginals quickly developed faith in and became dependent on the provincial medical system. Outpatient visits at outpost hospitals increased greatly by the 1960s. At the same time, the number of inpatient days declined because patients who required hospitalization increasingly travelled to better-equipped hospitals outside the region. Outpatient visits at Buffalo Narrows, for example, increased from 1,550 in 1952 to 4,552 in 1963. Inpatient care days, not including maternity, fell from 600 in 1953 to 251 in 1961. Similar patterns developed elsewhere.<sup>16</sup>

Given the inadequacies of the outpost hospitals, it was fortunate that Roman Catholics continued to provide their own health care on the west side. St. Joseph’s Hospital at Ile a la Crosse delivered the most extensive medical care in the North during most of the CCF era. Saskatchewan and Ottawa helped fund the hospital. The only doctor in the North for many years, Dr. P. E. Lavoie, practised there for nineteen years until he retired in 1953. Dr. K. Hoehne briefly filled in until Dr. M. W. Hoffman arrived. Hoffman remained until 1973. The church built a new, large forty-five-bed facility in 1958, administered by Oblates and operated by Grey Nuns.<sup>17</sup>

Dr. Hoffman, a devoted Roman Catholic, performed herculean tasks in a large area, partially compensating for the inadequate CCF system. His work load included caring for thirty to forty hospital patients and visiting patients in surrounding communities. Recognizing his contributions, Public Health and Indian Affairs paid his salary. Public Health tried to build a house and office for him in 1955, but Treasury Board turned down the request. The province wanted to hire another doctor to help and relieve Hoffman, who did not take a holiday from 1954 to 1960.

Approval for a second doctor finally came, effective April 1, 1959, but a series of fiascos followed. Long delays resulted while Public Health looked for a doctor. Then, over the next few years, three doctors each in turn proved unsuitable and stayed only for a short time. One remained long enough for Dr. Hoffman to take a six-week leave in 1963.<sup>18</sup>

La Loche's much smaller St. Martin's Roman Catholic Hospital also continued under the CCF. Two nurses worked there, and the doctor from Ile a la Crosse sometimes visited. The province paid some ongoing operating costs and a per diem rate for patients. Public Health became concerned about the "extraordinary" volume of service in 1954, when 3,110 inpatients and 4,914 outpatients visited the hospital. Dr. Irwin speculated that the population of about 700 had "nothing else to do, so for entertainment, 13 or 14 of them 'drop in' at the hospital, daily. Now, that we are paying for the service, this figure will probably rise." Although Dr. Irwin described the hospital as "of the worst possible design," the CCF provided no alternative.<sup>19</sup>

After the CCF's initial creation of the outpost hospital network, it added few more facilities, except for building hospitals at Uranium City and La Ronge. In 1948, northern hospitals handled about seventy-five percent of the region's medical work with outside hospitals caring for the rest. Radio communication and medical flights helped make the system work.<sup>20</sup> By the early 1950s, Buffalo Narrows, Sandy Bay, Stony Rapids, and Cumberland House each had a rating of four beds, while the church hospitals had a rating of ten beds at La Loche and twenty-two at Ile a la Crosse. In 1954, the North had one doctor at Ile a la Crosse, while the two at Uranium City served mainly local white people. The North's twelve nurses included four at Ile a la Crosse and two at La Loche.<sup>21</sup>

Nurses at the outpost hospitals dealt with various trials, including stoking wood furnaces, poor water and sewage systems, and erratic electrical supplies. Slow modernization took place, and by 1963 all four outpost hospitals had full-time electrical service and oil heat.<sup>22</sup> Outpost hospitals usually had ancillary staff of a female housekeeper and a male caretaker. The housekeeper commonly lived in the hospital with the nurse, while the caretaker lived elsewhere. Occasionally the caretaker lived in the hospital, acting as a guard for the nurse and premises. Nurses frequently felt threatened by drunken and violent community members and welcomed protection. Most of the non-medical staff worked on "labour service," since Public Health said they did not meet union agreement standards. The labour service classification deprived them of sick leave and controls on hours of work. Public Health preferred white over Aboriginal housekeepers and caretakers. Several attempts at hiring local people had failed. The Aboriginal caretaker at Cumberland House lost his job because of "a lack of mechanical ability," and the

department fired an Aboriginal housekeeper at Sandy Bay for theft. Public Health had no full-time Aboriginal employees in the North in 1963, but hired some local people for special projects and as relief help for caretakers or domestics.<sup>23</sup>

The Lake Athabasca area presented a picture of two standards of health care--one for the mining community of Uranium City and another for outlying Aboriginal communities. The Stony Rapids outpost hospital nurse and a Public Health nurse from Uranium City cared for area Metis and Treaty Indians. Indian Health Services had no nurse in the area, and Uranium City doctors did not want Indians to visit their offices because of the low fees paid by Ottawa. IHS finally hired a nurse for Uranium City in 1957, but she left by 1959. G. Kinneard, director of the province's Regional Health Services Branch, then agreed to have Public Health take over the IHS work, with reimbursement. Dr. Irwin opposed the reduction in services and the strain this put on the busy provincial nurses.<sup>24</sup> In contrast, the white population of Uranium City received a much higher level of medical service. Beginning in 1952, Eldorado operated a six-bed hospital, and Uranium City obtained a seven-bed hospital, moved there from Goldfields. A new twenty-five bed hospital opened in 1956, paid for partly by the federal and provincial governments and administered by the municipal corporation. R. F. Badgley of the U of S described it as "magnificent" with "the most modern equipment available." Although the Eldorado hospital closed, Gunnar built a seven-bed facility. Three physicians practised at Uranium City in 1959, more than in the rest of the North combined.<sup>25</sup>

Surprisingly, considering its role as the primary northern government and tourist centre, the CCF badly neglected health care in La Ronge. The CCF did not even build an outpost hospital there and only began part-time Public Health nursing services in 1950. While Indian Health posted a nurse there, she often refused to see non-Treaty patients. The Public Health nursing position became full-time in 1953. Nurse Broome covered a huge area, including Montreal Lake, Deschambault, Stanley, Foster Lake, Wollaston Lake, and Reindeer Lake. Lacking even an office, Broome first worked from her home, then out of a trailer she bought, then from the Fire Control building, and by 1957 from a rented cabin. Emergency calls interrupted planned clinics, and she carried a large workload, with residents, tourists, transients, and miners depending on her at all hours. Although a part-time nurse and IHS provided some help, Broome viewed her patients as neglected. When the badly overworked Broome asked for a ten-month leave in 1958, the lack of medical care became even more desperate. Already in 1957, Dr. Irwin described La Ronge as "our busiest centre." Yet the village had no doctor. The two doctors who had some responsibility there, Dr. Irwin of Public Health and Dr. Stoker of IHS, both lived in Prince Albert, and worked largely

as administrators. A physician finally established a private practice at La Ronge in 1958. After sixteen years of CCF neglect, the La Ronge hospital opened in 1960, built by the federal and provincial governments at a cost of \$500,000. It greatly increased services, with twenty staff and a capacity of twenty-five patients. Yet La Ronge continued with only one doctor, which limited use of the facility, including surgery.<sup>26</sup> In 1960 Badgley related that the doctor offended some Aboriginals by opposing a school lunch program, trying to clean up the reserve without devoting equal rigour to the white area, opposing the opening of a drug outlet, and allowing outsiders to watch a birth. Aboriginals wanted the doctor removed.<sup>27</sup>

The CCF provided even fewer health services in the Creighton and Denare Beach area, but residents there had the option of using doctors and hospital care in nearby Flin Flon, Manitoba. Manitoba also provided public health services to Creighton and the boundary area, receiving reimbursement from Saskatchewan and Creighton. Saskatchewan Public Health kept responsibility for Denare Beach, about fourteen miles from Creighton, although it provided little service there. While discussion took place with Manitoba about taking over the area, this lost urgency by 1964. Denare Beach's school closed, and children received public health services at school in Creighton.<sup>28</sup>

The North lacked adequate medical services, even late in the CCF era. Statistics paint a misleading picture. By 1960 the North had five physicians, one sanitary officer, about thirty-five nurses and nurses' aides, five midwives, and about 124 hospital beds, which provided 6.9 beds per 1000 persons, compared to 7.6 per 1,000 for the province. These statistics falsely suggest a reasonably high level of medical care.<sup>29</sup> But doctors lived only at Ile a la Crosse, Uranium City, and La Ronge. This left huge areas without a doctor or medical services. The large Wollaston Lake-Reindeer Lake area, with its settlements of Southend, Kinoosao, and Wollaston Lake received no hospital under the CCF. The figures on hospital beds also mislead, since outpost hospitals were more like clinics than hospitals. By 1963, building costs for the outpost hospitals since 1944 totalled about \$76,261.04, less than the cost of one fish plant built in the mid 1950s. Yet these small, understaffed facilities provided medical care for much of the North. The entire west side had no public health nurse, even though Dr. Irwin repeatedly requested a budget to hire one. This shortage particularly affected remote areas like Canoe Lake, where in 1961 about 145 non-Treaty Indians and whites lived among the Treaty Indian population. Dore Lake also still lacked regular public health services in 1964. A school had opened there in 1961, attracting about 140 people formerly scattered at Dore, Smoothstone, and other lakes.<sup>30</sup>

Scanty medical care combined with poor parenting skills and dismal living conditions to



cause a high number of infant deaths. Many died from respiratory infections or gastroenteritis. In 1958 Dr. Irwin blamed some “needless infant deaths” on inadequate medical care in “really isolated areas.” G. Kinneard, director of the Regional Health Services Branch, thought needless deaths would continue to occur. Of twenty-one infant deaths in six months in 1958, nine died “unattended.” Five of eight who died from respiratory infections had not received treatment in hospital or at an IHS station. The problem continued. From June to August 1963, twenty-two infants died. Dr. Irwin wrote “For the most part, northern Saskatchewan is an ‘underdeveloped’ country and all the methods and skills being employed elsewhere in the world, should be tried closer to home.”<sup>31</sup>

The shift to births in hospitals, where nurse/midwives delivered most babies, prevented the infant mortality rate from being much higher. Public Health required its nursing supervisor and outpost hospital supervisors to have midwifery certificates. Some midwives said that expectant Indian mothers had “very high expectations of service” when they went to hospitals for their “annual vacation.” By 1963, the percentage of northern births in hospitals stood near the provincial average, with few mothers dying in childbirth. A decline in births at the outpost hospitals took place by 1964, to seventy-seven from 104 in 1952, largely due to the referral of more difficult cases to larger hospitals. Although women did not like to go to distant hospitals, they often arrived long before the birth, causing accommodation problems. The establishment of hostels at La Ronge and Ile a la Crosse by 1960 helped alleviate the situation.<sup>32</sup>

Dual jurisdiction, where Ottawa cared for Treaty Indians and Saskatchewan for others, caused endless problems in the provision of medical care. National Health and Welfare held responsibility for Indian Health Services since 1945, but IHS did little in the North. In 1947, with much sickness among Indians, the Fish Board arranged for treatment. Even after IHS expanded its services, the province still often provided health services to Treaty Indians, for which it received small payments. Public Health felt burdened and inadequately reimbursed for services to Treaty Indians at outpost hospitals. At Stony Rapids, Indian women often arrived days or weeks before the birth of their baby, sometimes bringing along another child. Mothers also escorted sick children and stayed at the hospital. IHS refused to pay the full rate for the extra care. Eventually, IHS operated stations at La Ronge and Sturgeon Landing and a hospital at Pelican Narrows. By 1960, an IHS doctor “periodically” toured the North and IHS nurses visited some reserves.<sup>33</sup>

Public Health and IHS traded services in many areas. Problems resulted, though, because of IHS splitting northern Saskatchewan into two areas, with the Athabasca area administered from Edmonton and the rest from an IHS office within Saskatchewan. Public Health found Edmonton

particularly difficult to deal with. A Treaty party refused to x-ray some Metis in the Athabasca area in 1954, in spite of a high rate of active TB. Treaty parties elsewhere x-rayed non-Indians. Responsibility for the Athabasca area shifted to IHS in Regina by 1955, probably resulting in improved co-operation.<sup>34</sup>

Still in the 1960s, Indians suffered more from some diseases than did non-Indians, a situation aggravated by poor sanitation, housing, and diet. Indians died of measles at a rate about twenty times greater than the general population in 1964. Influenza and the often related pneumonia or upper respiratory infections often killed Indians at five to twenty times the national rate.<sup>35</sup>

The CCF focussed attention on venereal disease and tuberculosis, often speaking of the two in the same breath. It could force treatment for VD, but not for TB. In the 1940s, Northern Administrator J. J. Wheaton described these diseases as "in a very disastrous state." Although IHS offered few services, Dr. Totton thought the greatest need existed among Treaty Indians. Diagnosis and treatment of VD improved under the CCF, and cases of advanced syphilis declined in number. By 1960, Dr. Irwin, while admitting the North had a higher rate of VD than elsewhere in Saskatchewan, complained about the stereotype which said "every resident of northern Saskatchewan is suffering from venereal disease." The incidence of VD appeared to rise with increased contact with white people, particularly lower class white people as opposed to richer tourists and government workers. The North had 163 cases of gonorrhea and five of syphilis reported in 1963. Follow up with contacts appeared inadequate in 1964, with not even one follow up visit made per case.<sup>36</sup>

Tuberculosis devastated the lives of many Aboriginal northerners, continuing rampant among them after subsiding among whites. TB remained the leading killer of Indians until 1952. Treatment also disrupted lives, since the average length of stay in sanatoria stood at almost thirteen months. The Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League, not the CCF, provided most TB services, paid for with fund-raising, municipal levies, provincial and federal payments, and user fees. League sanatoria operated at Fort San, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert, and some Indians received treatment at IHS hospitals. Metis also suffered from TB, comprising twenty percent of new cases in 1950 while forming less than two percent of the population. Diagnosis efforts increased, BCG vaccinations began, and streptomycin came into general use in the early 1950s, all helping greatly. The death rate from TB among Canadian Aboriginals fell to 60.1/100,000 by 1954 from 579.1/100,000 in 1946.<sup>37</sup>

In 1950, tuberculosis killed forty NAD residents, including seventeen Metis and whites and

twenty-three Treaty Indians. Treaty Indians formed only about thirty-four percent of the region's population. The northern TB death rate stood at 400 per 100,000, compared to a provincial rate of 18.5. In 1952, Miss J. Walz, a former outpost hospital nurse, began to work for the League in an aggressive program using portable x-ray equipment. At La Loche in 1953, the project discovered twenty-three active cases. The general infection rate stood at sixty-two percent, and at eighty-nine percent in the twenty to twenty-four age range. In eighteen months Walz visited most northern settlements, tested 7,021 people, and gave BCG to 2,383 persons. Outpost hospitals also administered the vaccine, but only sporadically. At Buffalo Narrows in 1957, only one of forty-nine newborns received the vaccine. The BCG program for infants still looked shaky in 1964, partly because of varying attitudes among nurses to the vaccine.<sup>38</sup>

The League provided x-ray equipment to the outpost hospitals at Cumberland House, Sandy Bay, and Buffalo Narrows, paid for with federal grants. Even with the equipment provided free of charge, the province acted miserly. Dr. Irwin protested the League charging Public Health \$82.55 for chemicals and film at Sandy Bay, writing "This is only the beginning of what may be an expensive proposition." Most annual Treaty parties also included a doctor and x-ray equipment. The expansion of the road system allowed the use of heavier and more reliable x-ray machines located in vans. With few northerners escaping the beams, the northern TB death rate dropped to forty per 100,000 by 1960.<sup>39</sup> DNR, as the municipal government for much the NAD, paid substantial sanatoria levies to the league. In a typical situation, it paid \$25,000 for 1957. As the disease declined, northern patient days in sanatoria fell from 25,169 in 1956, to 7,083 days in 1963.<sup>40</sup>

Extended stays in southern sanatoria disrupted lives. Northern patients not only needed to adjust to institutional life but also to life in the South, since all sanatoria were in the South. Northerners feared treatment, partly because many early patients who went south died. Fears eased as the treatment success rate improved. Northerners frequently "eloped," fleeing for home. One young girl, with advanced TB, broke her hip jumping from a second storey window. In July 1959, four patients "eloped." The same month, three received disciplinary discharges, including a man who refused to keep a cast on his tubercular ankle, an insolent young woman, and an elderly drunk. Robin F. Badgley wrote that, at the first admission, sanatoria gave Indians a "warm welcome," but on readmission patients received "severe treatment." One sanatorium director said to a returning Indian "'Well you black bastard, you're back are you.'" <sup>41</sup> While the law did not provide for forced detention, compulsion took place, including using the RCMP to return runaways and treating some in locked mental wards. In 1961, with the Prince Albert Sanatorium scheduled to close, it seemed

the elopement problem might worsen, since patients needed to go even farther from home for treatment. These difficulties resulted in higher expenses and reduced efficacy of treatment.<sup>42</sup>

Much credit for reducing northern tuberculosis belongs to the Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League. For its part, the CCF failed to lead the attack. It also did not provide a northern treatment facility in spite of the epidemic proportions of the disease there.

The CCF also did not build or fund even one northern nursing or special care home. In contrast, the South had sixty-four government supported or licensed housing projects or special care homes in 1962. Northern Aboriginals could apply for admission to southern geriatric centres and nursing homes, but few did so. The Department of Social Services admitted that selection methods gave reserve Indians little chance of admission to senior housing and homes. Many feared going to southern chronic care homes, and they viewed southern hospitals as "graveyards." In one case, an outpost hospital cared for a seventy-five year old diabetic and arthritic widower for ten days, but could not give him long-term care. Many old and ill people managed as best they could in the North, rather than move to the culturally distinct South far from their family and community.<sup>43</sup>

As a major aspect of its plan to improve health care, the CCF established the Air Ambulance Service in February, 1946. This service again demonstrated how CCF programs provided a lower level of service in the North than in the South. In the South, the service had its own planes and staff, while in the North, charter flights carried most patients, often without escorts. The southern program began with one plane based in Regina. By the late 1940s, it also operated from a Saskatoon base, using four planes staffed by pilots and nurses. The service charged a fee of twenty-five dollars plus ten dollars per passenger for in-province flights, a rate which continued unchanged in 1958.<sup>44</sup>

In the late 1940s, DNR's Northern Administrator authorized chartered medical flights, handled ground transportation, and arranged for patient care in and outside hospital in Prince Albert. Because of the distance from home, patients often stayed in Prince Albert for long periods of time. DNR expected them to pay for transportation and accommodation if they could afford to do so.<sup>45</sup>

With the air service in place, Public Health's Dr. Totton thought patients should come to the doctor, rather than the other way around. When Mrs. Baptiste Misponas in 1948 refused to get on the plane that came to take her to the hospital, the province rigidly followed this policy. While her husband asked for a doctor to visit her, A. K. Quandt said "it is to be assumed that the lady will die unless her condition changes for the better."<sup>46</sup>

The lack of a specialized northern air ambulance service jeopardized lives. While the CCF claimed that SGT planes would carry northern patients, the system did not work when Clements Bradfield gave birth at North End Montreal Lake in 1948. She became very ill, and local women attending to her could not help. Early in the morning Harold Udey drove Clement's husband, Ben, to the DNR Bittern Creek Radio Station, about fifty miles to the South, to radio for an airplane and doctor from Prince Albert. Udey later claimed that the DNR radio operator in Prince Albert said no doctor was available and gave the impression that no plane would come without advance payment. A Bradfield from Montreal Lake had not paid previous bills. Unexpectedly, a plane soon left Prince Albert bound for Ile a la Crosse, with Dr. Lavoie and Nurse Walz on board. The plane detoured via Montreal Lake. While persons on the ground heard the plane at about 10:30, low cloud prevented it from landing, and it flew on to Ile a la Crosse. Even though the cloud soon lifted, no other plane came. Clements died at about 3:00 p.m. Officials refused responsibility, in spite of complaints from Udey and Rev. G. J. Waite, who buried Mrs. Bradfield. Northern Administrator Wheaton thought it odd that no one had driven the sick woman to Prince Albert. Seemingly implying that the Bradfields were not among the deserving poor, Deputy Minister Hogg told Premier Douglas that the Bradfields had not taken advantage of work opportunities earlier that year. Udey wrote to Douglas reminding him of a recent speech he gave at La Ronge in which he said "the plane was available for all and that payment for same was not a factor." Waite, who said he had voted for the CCF, wrote "Under the Communism of the Provincial Govt. it looks as if dollars are worth more than lives." Wheaton refuted the charges of communism, blaming Liberal propaganda. Waite's second letter to Wheaton referred to Phelps as "Dictator J. (Stalin) Phelps" and to the CCF "Soviet system."<sup>47</sup>

In another incident in 1948, official business took priority over an emergency. An official and a pilot flew north in a radio-equipped Stinson, when they received a call regarding a sick Indian girl at Burnt Lake, southwest of Reindeer Lake. Not wanting to stop, they flew on to Wollaston Lake. The two finally landed at Burnt Lake the next day. Since the girl seemed too ill to sit up in the plane, they left without her.<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, the northern air ambulance service often did work. It transported 100 patients during 1949, including seventy-five carried by SGA. Hospitals admitted fifty. Fourteen died. By 1954, DNR officers, outpost hospital nurses, Dr. Hoffman, and local designates could authorize medical flights. Having Dr. Irwin in Prince Albert after 1954 also helped improve the service. Irwin "stressed that it was better to call nine planes for ambulance cases if in doubt, than to let one patient die."<sup>49</sup>

With all major medical facilities located in the South, northerners continued to travel south for treatment. Airplanes evacuated many from isolated settlements which lacked road access and in emergency situations. The air ambulance service made 199 emergency flights in the North in 1962-1963.<sup>50</sup> By the early 1960s, the service from Saskatoon also flew to Ile a la Crosse, La Ronge, and Cumberland House.<sup>51</sup> The use of commercial aircraft for medical flights continued to prove unreliable at times. DNR sometimes commandeered aircraft to fight forest fires. Pilots then refused to fly medical flights without DNR's permission.<sup>52</sup>

The CCF discriminated against northerners with its air ambulance policies. It provided a specialized service in southern Saskatchewan, which already had a highly developed hospital and road infrastructure. In contrast, the CCF did not offer a specialized service in the North. Yet the North needed the service much more, since most communities had no hospital or road access. As a result, northerners received an inferior and often inadequate level of service.

Northerners received little beyond the most basic health services from the CCF. Things like optical and dental services were viewed as luxuries. As a result, whites often obtained these services outside the region, while Aboriginals usually did without. The North had no resident optometrist by 1964, although some visited. Public Health arranged for one to see six communities in 1949, where he supplied sixty sets of glasses. Another optometrist went north in 1955, and one again in 1957, visiting twenty schools with 1,429 students. A lack of funding jeopardized the project, though. Uranium City received a much higher level of optical care. About ninety percent of its residents received service in Edmonton, and Prince Albert optometrists also visited there. Once IHS hired an ophthalmologist late in the CCF era, Treaty Indians received better care than did the Metis.<sup>53</sup>

No dentists lived in the North, other than at Uranium City, and white northerners obtained most dental services outside the region. With the movement to settlements and the accompanying change to a southern diet, Aboriginal dental health likely deteriorated after 1944. Dental care remained deplorable, causing great suffering. Dr. Hoffman did many extractions, and emergency flights carried some dental patients. In 1954, several officials, including C. S. Brown, Northern Administrator, and Dr. A. E. Chegwin, the Director of Public Health's Division of Dental Health, wanted to see a northern dental service. Ottawa had recently begun a program for Indian children, and Chegwin felt pressure to match this. The CCF refused to institute the service, although Public Health helped pay for the odd clinic, including one described as "an orgy of extractions."<sup>54</sup>

In 1955, Public Health failed to obtain \$8,500 from Budget Bureau to pay for two dentists to each provide five weeks' annual service. After the CCF refusal, the Junior Red Cross in 1957

began a five-year pilot project at Cumberland House and Ile a la Crosse, with a budget of \$15,000. At seven Cumberland House clinics, dentists performed 851 extractions and 1,577 fillings. Eight Ile a la Crosse clinics provided 927 extractions and 2,061 fillings. The program brought a great improvement in child dental health. Dr. Irwin also arranged for a Prince Albert dentist, Dr. E. J. Gaudet, to visit Sandy Bay in 1962, where in five days, he saw 158 patients and did 303 fillings and 727 extractions. Gaudet's rapid work led to controversy, but Dr. Irwin defended the quality of his dentistry. When the five-year Red Cross project ended, the CCF refused to continue or expand the program. While the Red Cross and a National Health Grant funded the program for an extra year at Cumberland House and Ile a la Crosse, children in most communities still had virtually no dental care. A. E. Chegwin, the director of the Dental Health Division, prepared to leave Public Health in 1963, but before leaving, vehemently condemned the CCF record, including its failure to implement the Sigerist report from the 1940s. He called the lack of northern dental service "discrimination with a vengeance." Chegwin made a last effort to expand the northern children's dental program, asking for a \$20,000 cost-shared program. The CCF refused the request, even though Ottawa approved \$10,000.<sup>55</sup> IHS continued to provide superior dental care, holding twice annual clinics using private dentists. In contrast to the province, IHS also located modern dental fixtures at the Beauval Residential School and La Ronge Hospital.<sup>56</sup> At the time of the CCF defeat in 1964, northern dental care remained minimal. Several officials, including Doctors Irwin and Chegwin, often had tried to improve the situation, but the CCF refused to devote money for even a modest service. The existence of two standards, where non-Aboriginals received care, while many others did not, was part of the CCF's northern colonial world.

Northerners also suffered from malnutrition. The CCF combatted dietary deficiencies by encouraging gardening and combining nutrition programs with education. Teachers gave out cod liver oil, powdered milk, and hard biscuits, although the programs remained sporadic and inadequate. For several years in the 1940s, the CCF provided \$100 per classroom for noon lunches, but, claiming abuse, the CCF took central control over purchasing. Cuts also took place. At Montreal Lake North in 1948, a teacher appealed to the Red Cross to provide school lunches after the CCF ended them. He described the people as "badly undernourished" with many bringing dry bannock and lard for lunch. By the early 1950s, the federal government, concerned about the nutrition of Indian children, helped redesign the aircrew survival rations biscuit to meet the needs of a ten-year-old boy. Finding them "reasonably acceptable to Indian School Children," government annually gave out thousands of pounds of the hard biscuits, which had a shelf life of about five years.<sup>57</sup>

Dr. Hoffman found "critical" malnutrition among children at La Loche, possibly the North's poorest community. He repeatedly failed to have DNR fund a nutrition program. At the time, the Department of Education provided only twenty-five cents per year per child for nutrition. A CCF official from Regina, Ray Woollam, visited La Loche and told Premier Lloyd about the situation. Yet an inspection by Doctor Irwin and other officials in 1962 did not confirm the complaints and found the Catholic Sisters providing hot chocolate and vitaminized biscuits to the children. A report described the children's nourishment and clothing as no worse than elsewhere in the North.<sup>58</sup>

Several studies pointed out nutritional deficiencies. A 1956 National Health and Welfare study found health defects, many of which proper nutrition could improve, in about three-quarters of subjects.<sup>59</sup> A project at Pinehouse and Pelican Narrows from 1958 to 1961 demonstrated that close supervision by a nurse or teacher could improve nutrition and hygiene. Once the study ended, problems returned, aggravated by un-modern living conditions in the settlements.<sup>60</sup> As in other areas of northern health and welfare, the CCF committed very little to improving nutrition. Parents and the community also often did not carry out this responsibility well, leaving the children to suffer.

The North also suffered from health and social problems caused by alcohol abuse. The CCF-encouraged movement of people to settlements brought a shift from occasional spree to chronic drinking. Replacing credit with a cash system also increased drinking, since traders could no longer manage customers' incomes to make them last. A movement grew among provincial and federal bureaucrats to pay for furs in monthly installments, although trappers resisted and the effort failed.<sup>61</sup>

Officials and other whites often blamed crime and other problems on Aboriginal alcohol use. Nearly all manslaughters occurred after the killer drank. V. F. Valentine wrote "aggression and hostility characterizes Metis behavior while drunk." Perhaps some drank because it made them into an "Ogimow," or big man. The Center for Community Studies thought a high level of anxiety added to excessive drinking, and that Aboriginals had not internalized the controls of white society. Less academic analyses suggested Aboriginals could not handle liquor or just liked to drink.<sup>62</sup>

The health and social problems created by drinking were aggravated by the CCF setting a double standard for the sale of liquor in the North. In colonial fashion it allowed outlets in communities with large white populations, while denying them for Aboriginal villages. Restricting access to alcohol in effect criminalized drinking for many northerners and drove determined drinkers to imbibe unsafe substitutes for alcohol. Status Indians could not legally drink in



Saskatchewan until 1960, but the law did not prohibit non-Indians from drinking. To combat bootlegging, Joe Phelps tried to open beer parlours to Indians, but cabinet rejected this. Later, Douglas and the CCF did support giving Indians the right to drink. Still after 1960, Indians could not drink on reserves, which added to the public drunkenness seen in northern towns.<sup>63</sup>

Even in white communities, the CCF preferred beer parlours and bars to liquor stores. Since liquor served by the drink cost more than at liquor stores, this raised the cost of drinking, leaving less money for essentials. The province issued licenses for beer parlours at Denare Beach and Goldfields, communities with many white residents, before 1950. Northern Administrator C. L. MacLean wanted licensed premises for the “more progressive areas,” and he thought it time to give northerners a voice. While northerners preferred a liquor store to licensed premises, he did not want them to have that choice. The CCF considered La Ronge, with its large white and tourist population, a suitable place for a beer parlour. Even though it suspected a majority opposed the outlet, the CCF allowed a new hotel to open a beer parlour and bar in 1952. In the coldest weather, a group of La Ronge men made sure that drunks ejected from the premises arrived home without freezing to death. The village received its first liquor store only in 1958.<sup>64</sup> In contrast, the CCF opposed a beer parlour for the largely Aboriginal community of Buffalo Narrows in the early 1950s, even though a petition, signed by 161 people, favoured an outlet. DNR Minister Brockelbank unrealistically wanted the local people to co-operatively control bootlegging instead. About four years later, even with church and widespread community support for the legalized sale of liquor, the hotel still could not sell beer.<sup>65</sup> Eventually, some easing of restrictions to liquor access took place, and in a few cases officials allowed local votes to determine if communities should have beverage rooms. Buffalo Narrows and Cumberland House held votes by 1962.<sup>66</sup>

The CCF policy of limiting access to liquor increased reliance on expensive illegal liquor and unsafe alternatives. Planes carried liquor into remote communities where bootleggers sold it for about ten times its normal value. Aboriginals also fermented potatoes and other things. A Sandy Bay resident later derided W. Hlady, the CCF anthropologist, for writing that their homebrewed “molly” lacked potency. He claimed Hlady himself passed out from drinking the brew. Those desperate for a drink risked their health drinking household cleaners and cosmetic products, and traders sold large quantities of vanilla extract to people who baked few cakes. Still late in the CCF era, Aboriginal communities depended largely on costly illegal liquor. Hlady estimated that Sandy Bay residents spent twenty to thirty percent of their total income on alcohol.<sup>67</sup>

Northerners received no alcohol treatment programs from the CCF. The Bureau on Alcoholism opened its first counselling and referral centre in Regina only in 1959.<sup>68</sup> The North

received even less attention. In the Uranium City area, the Alcoholism Foundation of Alberta provided a limited program.<sup>69</sup> Neglect and discrimination characterized CCF policies and actions in numerous areas of health care. While it alleviated some blatant problems, the CCF devoted insufficient resources to meet northern medical needs. Northerners received a level of service far below that in the South.

A similar situation existed in the third element of social policy, education. The CCF recognized the power of education to bring the changes it desired to the North, and it quickly implemented an aggressive program of universal, secular schooling. Education played a major part in the CCF effort to assimilate northern Aboriginals. From long experience, governments knew that taking Aboriginal children into schools offered the opportunity to more effectively mould their young minds. CCF educational expansion, along with family allowances and the restructured economy, pushed Aboriginals into settlements. J. H. Brockelbank objected to describing CCF educational efforts as "disruptive." Yet he admitted that education forced people into settlements and "changed their way of life, which was one of the intentions of the whole program." Colonial methods served the CCF when educating northerners. Administrators and teachers from outside the region designed and implemented education programs, with virtually no local consultation.<sup>70</sup>

Soon after its election, the CCF sent C. E. Piercy north to survey the educational system. He critically observed that the churches provided most education and that few communities had a school. Piercy found nineteen schools in six categories: Indian day, Indian residential, private day, private boarding, community day, and public schools under the School Act. Of 1,164 children aged six to fifteen, about 568 received no formal education, and no schools operated in eighteen settlements or areas. Since the School Act required attendance only if people lived within two-and-one-half miles of a school by a passable road, many who attended school did so voluntarily. White children often took correspondence courses, with 117 doing so in 1944. Only seven of seventeen teachers held first class certificates, while some had no qualifications.

Piercy made various recommendations. He wanted to see one large northern school unit. The system would include many new day schools and two boarding schools, one for the east and one for the west. Similarly to residential schools, education would include practical training, with those in the upper grades devoting half-time to learning work skills. Piercy also called for the CCF to survey and assess property and collect school taxes. He preferred to hire female teachers, especially where they and a nurse could share accommodation, to combat "solitude and loneliness." Teachers would receive improved housing and higher pay. They also should move at least once every three years, to keep them from adopting Aboriginal standards and losing their inspirational

value.<sup>71</sup>

Piercy's report provided the basis for CCF educational policies. In his position as education minister from 1944 to 1960, Woodrow Lloyd supported and oversaw educational reform. Piercy himself led the effort within the North to reduce the churches' role and introduce a universal, secular system. The CCF implemented his plan for one large northern administrative area, even though the vast size of the North created problems. Parts of the school unit were five hundred miles or more from others. The CCF also kept control over northern education in the South. It created the Northern Areas Branch of the Department of Education to oversee northern schooling. Piercy, the administrator of education, worked from Prince Albert. Wielding great power, he held the positions of "principal, supervisor, superintendent, chief executive officer and school board." Yet Piercy thought the North did not need his full attention, and at his request, he also became the school superintendent for Prince Albert. T. H. Waugh, who took over in 1949 with Piercy's retirement, also held much power. In the mid 1950s, he was principal for twenty-one centres and superintendent for Creighton and Uranium City. K. C. Hendsbee replaced Waugh by 1958.<sup>72</sup>

The only organized school district in the North operated at Cumberland House. It dated back to the 1930s. Elsewhere, the School Act required the election of three-person local school committees, which looked after school property and made recommendations. They held little real power. Beginning in 1949, a ten-mill education tax on assessed property helped buy fuel and pay a caretaker, but this taxation seemed to be a token effort. In 1949 operating costs for schools totalled \$82,230.65, while the tax levy stood at \$4,450 with only \$1,973.78 collected. Taxes and grants in lieu of taxes still provided only \$22,397 of expenditures of \$1,029,525 in 1964.<sup>73</sup>

Ottawa did not share the CCF aversion to church involvement in education and favoured a continuing role for the churches in educating Treaty Indians in residential schools. While Piercy wanted to see two new residential schools, he wanted government to operate these. The province thought the state could "more efficiently" educate children than the church could. The federal government also wanted to increase the number of residential schools, but would accept church involvement. Ottawa's support for the church schools largely explains the survival of Roman Catholic education in northern Saskatchewan, since the schools taught many Treaty Indians.<sup>74</sup>

Contrary to Piercy's wishes, Roman Catholic education continued to dominate the west side. Piercy's desire to build a government boarding school at Ile a la Crosse caused the church to fear closure of their day and boarding school. After L. M. Marion, the Liberal MLA, came to the church's aid, the CCF agreed to rent classroom space from the mission, pay teachers' salaries,

and help pay the students' board. Piercy also failed when he opposed paying mission teachers the full salary scale of \$1,200. The Roman Catholics built several new schools at Ile a la Crosse by 1964, where nuns and lay teachers taught about 331 pupils from kindergarten to grade eight. About 100 children, many of whom stayed in the mission's boarding facilities, came from outside the community. Roman Catholic residential education also continued in a series of schools at Beauval. Additionally, Catholics offered education at La Loche. With CCF fervor against church education easing, the Northern Advisory Committee wanted the Catholics in 1954 to operate a residential school at La Loche for the area. While the Church seemed willing, the Department of Education refused to pay a rate of one dollar per day, and the plan did not go ahead.<sup>75</sup> Buffalo Narrows, a newer community without the tradition of church education, received a succession of secular schools.<sup>76</sup>

Roman Catholic involvement with education also continued at Cumberland House in the 1960s, where the province employed two nuns and three other teachers. Voluntary religious instruction took place after school hours, taught to Catholics by a nun and Protestants by a Protestant teacher.<sup>77</sup> The CCF also allowed religious instruction elsewhere, where desired by the local people.

The Anglican presence in education practically disappeared. For a time, the Anglicans shared education with the Roman Catholics and the province at Cumberland House. Anglicans also had long operated the All Saints residential school at La Ronge. Piercy wanted to replace All Saints with a government residential school, and while this plan did not proceed, the Anglicans did not rebuild after All Saints burned in 1947. Secular education then took place at Old Gateway School. Pre-Cambrian School opened in 1958 as an integrated school, with Ottawa paying \$158,130.03 of the cost. Pre-Cambrian was the first provincial school in the North to teach home economics and shop work. New Gateway School saw construction by 1961.<sup>78</sup>

The CCF also wanted to take over educating Treaty Indian children from Indian Affairs. Ottawa usually agreed with Regina in wanting integrated education. The two governments often worked together to educate Indians, and Indian Affairs schools on reserves followed the provincial curriculum. Strong support for integrating all Indian students into the provincial system came from T. C. Douglas. In 1948 the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons also recommended educating Indian children along with other children. The new Indian Act of 1951 helped increase integration, although Roman Catholic opposition likely contributed to the new act not following the JCSHC recommendation to abolish church schools for Indians. By 1953, a federal-provincial agreement provided for integrated education at Pelican Narrows, and numerous

other agreements followed. Even Indian Senator James Gladstone opposed building schools on reserves. Many agreed that Indians needed to attend integrated schools to prepare them for the larger world. Integrated education also provided money to the province, since Indian Affairs paid tuition fees and a portion of capital costs. It paid about twenty-eight percent of northern school construction costs from 1945 to 1962. Yet in spite of the move to provincial education, most of the North's 1,311 Treaty students in 1965 attended Indian schools or the Beauval residential school. Pressure also grew against integration. As an early sign of things to come, Chief Simon Linklater of Pelican Narrows in 1955 opposed sending Indian children to boarding schools. He wanted Indian educational control and more emphasis on teaching "Indian ways of life."<sup>79</sup>

By 1948 the CCF built twelve new schools and five new teacherages and almost doubled the number of teachers. About thirty teachers taught 1,261 students in eighteen schools. In 1950-1951, ten students attended high school outside the region with government assistance. School attendance continued to rise because of the Aboriginal population explosion, pressure on parents for children to attend school, the arrival of white families attracted by mining, and Treaty Indian children attending provincial schools. During its first ten years in office the CCF provided twenty-one new schools, ranging from one-room portables to nine-room schools, and eleven new teacherages. Sixty-four teachers, including eighteen Roman Catholic sisters, twenty-seven other women, and nineteen men, taught in the North in 1954-1955. Enrollment totalled 2,213. By 1957-1958 teachers totalled 104 and students 3,137, and only five one-room schools remained. The CCF also stressed adult education and offered some night classes and basic English instruction.<sup>80</sup>

While the CCF goal of providing a modern Canadian education to the scattered northern population required increased resources, the CCF funded northern education at a lower level than in the South. Northern capital expenditures totaled \$1,188,246 from 1945 to 1962. Capital and operating costs combined, from 1946 to 1962, stood at eighty-six percent of that for Saskatchewan schools overall.<sup>81</sup> Trying to cut costs, the Department of Education rejected DNR Deputy Minister Hogg's suggestion in 1948 that they build a large hall, to use for showing motion pictures for adult education purposes, at the Cumberland House school. Hogg wanted northern schools to double as community centres.<sup>82</sup> Some areas had no teacher or school. At Cree Lake in 1952, local people expected Junior Field Officer Berezowsky, also a schoolteacher, to teach the ten school-age children.<sup>83</sup> While Kinoosao received a school in about 1952, the teacher, Frank Remarchuk, stayed in the school since the community still had no teacherage.<sup>84</sup> Schools in Aboriginal areas also had a higher ratio of students to teachers than in southern school units. In 1950-1951 teachers in "Metis Schools" taught an average of 39.3 students compared to 20.3 in other school units. This

situation improved gradually by 1964-1965 when "Metis Schools" enrolled 22.1 students per teacher, a similar ratio to that in southern schools. The CCF's strong early interest in northern education declined from 1953 to 1962. A lack of results, low northern tax funding, and weak demand from northern parents for education likely contributed to the loss of interest. By the time Douglas left provincial politics in 1961, most northerners who wanted to attend high school still needed to move to the South.<sup>85</sup>

In contrast to the situation in Aboriginal communities, white communities often had facilities more like those in the South. Uranium City received a four-room \$50,000 school in 1953, with much expansion taking place later on. The community obtained the first high school in the North in 1958. Private industry paid many of the educational costs for white students, including at Uranium City, where Gunnar and Eldorado mines opened their own schools. In exchange for exemption from land, property, and business taxes, the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company helped fund education in the Creighton area. The company first helped pay for students to attend school in Flin Flon and then turned over a new four-room school to Saskatchewan in 1950. At Island Falls, Churchill River Power Company paid the teachers who taught at the company school.<sup>86</sup>

Expanded education opportunities only slowly increased northern Aboriginal literacy and educational achievement. Many northerners still could not sign their names, and large numbers remained outside school. At Buffalo Narrows in 1951-1952, only fifty-seven percent of the eligible children aged six to fifteen attended school. Most students did not progress as the system expected, with some needing four years to complete grade one. Erratic attendance, not speaking English well, and a lack of kindergartens contributed to underachievement. The first kindergarten opened only in 1957. In a typical situation, of ninety-three students at Sandy Bay in 1959, twenty-three attended grade one while grades eight and nine had only two students each. Northern Aboriginal students often dropped out by grades four to six, rather than at grade eight or higher, as occurred in urban schools. In the early 1960s, only three percent of students in northern provincial schools, outside the organized areas, were in grade nine or higher, compared to twenty-five percent for the province overall. The scarcity of northern high schools certainly contributed to the small number in higher grades. Some communities, including Cumberland House, seemed to have a higher acceptance of and level of education, possibly due to a longer history of education there.<sup>87</sup>

Poor quality and inappropriate teaching hampered the success of CCF educational plans. On the average, northern teachers possessed lower qualifications than in the South. While teacher

training improved, by 1962 only thirty-two percent of teachers outside the mining areas held Professional Standard Certificates, compared to fifty-two percent in the province overall. Special training for northern teachers began in the early 1960s, when Father André Renaud offered a summer course at the U of S. Overall, though, little specialized training existed. A high rate of teacher turnover aggravated teaching problems. Inexperienced teachers often fled the North after only a short time there. In spite of some efforts to create a northern curriculum, teachers continued to inculcate southern knowledge and values. Efforts increased to reexamine the curriculum after the Center for Community Studies released a report in 1963, and a Curriculum and Text Book Committee began.<sup>88</sup>

The CCF helped standardize benefits for northern teachers. Their pay, which came from central office, included isolation bonuses of up to \$300 per year. Teachers also attended a convention in Prince Albert. Some inequalities also existed. Married men's salaries included an additional \$250, and only some received paid transportation to remote communities.<sup>89</sup>

Vocational training did not extend to the North under the CCF, although it repeatedly spoke of the need for this type of education to improve utilization of traditional resources and provide new skills to northerners as traditional occupations lost their viability. The Roman Catholics made more concrete efforts to provide vocational training than did the CCF. In 1958 Father Chamberland of the Beauval Indian School offered carpentry and motor mechanics training to five people, three of whom found jobs in the South, and also taught about ten women in "domestic science, children's care, and home making." When the priest wanted the Department of Labour to certify the school for apprenticeship training in 1959, A. H. MacDonald, Director of Northern Affairs, preferred that the CCF start its own program. Yet the Departments of Labour and Social Welfare seemed unwilling to take the lead. In 1959 Father Darche of Buffalo Narrows wanted the Young Men's Centre at Buffalo Narrows to offer trade and co-operation training. He hoped to combat the spread of social aid and help unemployed young men find work. This time, MacDonald recommended Treasury Board approve a matching grant of up to \$10,000.<sup>90</sup>

The CCF brought some persons south for training, including in the early 1960s, when young men and women attended the Canadian Vocational Training School in Saskatoon. The CVTS program proved disappointing, since only fifty-five percent of students completed a three-month course and the market did not need the semi-skilled graduates. The CCF also tried using the CVTS program to train northern farm workers, but this did not work out either. The lack of high school and vocational training in the North and the resulting movement of some students to take education in the South fit with the belief some held that the North could not provide a viable

future for Aboriginals. The CCF did not wish to move northerners to the South though. The primary reason for poor educational opportunities was the CCF's refusal to spend much on northern education.<sup>91</sup>

By the time the CCF left office in 1964, their attempt to educate northerners brought disappointing results. Many who had attended school remained illiterate, and most northerners continued life with a very low level of education. At the same time, CCF policies and actions had helped destroy the viability of the traditional economy, increasing the need for a formal education. The education system established by the CCF in the North remained inferior to that in the South, and those living in northern white communities enjoyed better educational opportunities than did those in Aboriginal communities. The CCF also failed to move responsibility for education in most communities to northerners, retaining colonial control over education in the southern centre.

The CCF consistently devoted inadequate resources to meet northern needs in the areas of welfare, health, and education. In spite of greater needs and higher service delivery costs in the North, the CCF spent less per capita on northerners than on southerners in many instances. The CCF encouraged and coerced northerners to accept its socialist vision for the North. Aboriginals were to share with each other by using socialist forms of organization while pursuing traditional economic activities. Through its resource taxation and royalty policies, the CCF also required northerners to share northern wealth with the South. Yet the CCF version of socialism did not share Saskatchewan's social programs equally with the disadvantaged of the North. CCF dreams for the northern Aboriginal economy and society did not come true. As a result, after twenty years of CCF interventions, northerners found themselves mired in hopelessness and poverty.



## Epilogue

### WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

As the second decade of the CCF era neared its end in the early 1960s, the CCF knew that its economic and social programs had not created a northern utopia. It also could see that it had not achieved its goals of modernizing, assimilating, and socializing northern Aboriginals. The northern economic malaise and social dysfunction had clearly worsened. Lacking other answers, the CCF maintained its faith in community studies and community development to lead the way into a brighter future.

By August 1963, the northern research of the Center for Community Studies, overseen by A. K. Davis, produced sixteen papers. Of these, the Center's director, W. Baker, chose *The Indians and Metis of Northern Saskatchewan: A Report on Economic and Social Development* as the official summary report. Premier Woodrow Lloyd and the CCF approved of the document, which gave them a clear direction to follow for northern programs. The report called on the CCF to take the primary role in developing the North. It suggested a twenty-three point development program. This included mining, forestry, mink ranching, agriculture, and government service--at a projected cost for the first year of more than \$1.8 million. Community development would still play a crucial role in implementing northern change. The report referred to the fur area councils, the ratepayers' associations, and co-operatives as institutional parts of the community development process. The CCF, however, had to improve its development methods. Few projects qualified as true development projects since the CCF spent most of the program budget on roads and minor infrastructure projects. While it criticized some aspects of the CCF programs, the Center told the CCF what it wanted to hear. The report absolved the CCF from most blame for northern problems, ignoring much of the negative role the CCF played in the northern colonial world. Instead, the Center blamed the HBC and the churches for colonialism, even though the CCF had long ago dethroned these old rulers. The Center flattered the CCF by depicting it as a liberating force which strove to give control to northerners. The CCF accepted the report and hoped it would guide "policy and procedures for many years to come."<sup>1</sup> It seemed that the CCF northern saga might still have a happy ending. The Center's analysis of problems and its detailed list of solutions offered

hope that, with the commitment of large monetary and manpower resources, the CCF might yet reach its goals for the North.

Yet the official report and the new northern plan soon lost credibility when Davis and many other respected senior Center researchers attacked the Center's official report. After extensively studying the North, they had developed very different ideas about what the CCF should do there. These researchers, many of whom possessed careers independent from their work for the Center, were not afraid to depict the situation with much greater detachment and impartiality than did the Center, which depended directly on CCF goodwill for its survival. The dissenters thought the CCF and the Center had a strong bias which called for "cultural pluralism" and "local self-development," and would not allow for radical new approaches to dealing with the North. The CCF goals seemed quite meaningless. Cultural pluralism contradicted active assimilationist policies, and "developing" Aboriginal communities without addressing the lack of an economic base made little sense. Davis and his cohorts claimed cultural pluralism would not work in northern Saskatchewan, condemned the CCF's community development work, and called for a large-scale movement of people from the North to the southern urban centres. The CCF, while strongly in favour of assimilating Aboriginals, drew back from actually physically moving Aboriginals into white society. It continued to support the Center's official report and the plan for tinkering with the existing northern economy and society.

W. Baker suppressed the findings Davis and the others wanted released, and they left the Center. Davis described the dissenting reports as "not very radical or 'hot'," but they criticized CCF policies and "did not fit the 'bleeding heart' approach of the economic report." Davis thought "Baker's censorship will probably wreck the Centre." While Baker tried to block those who left from publishing their findings, the CCF government, just before leaving office in 1964, agreed to publication of the report. Although greatly delayed, *A Northern Dilemma: Reference Papers*, incorporated the work of numerous scholars, primarily distinguished sociologists and anthropologists, including P. M. Worsley, Herbert C. Taylor, Henry Zentner, Philip T. Spaulding, Vernon C. Serl, Arthur K. Davis, William D. Knill, Harry B. Hawthorn, and Cecil L. French. The suppression of their work had largely succeeded, though, since their report remained obscure, while the Center's official report received promotion and saw large circulation.<sup>2</sup>

The Center for Community Studies did not recover from the controversy. An employee wrote "The Centre is still operating and will continue to do so until and if the time that Thatch- the Snatch- gets into office and decides to throw us out! However, I have even heard comments from some Liberals who claim that we are necessary, and that we will continue in existence after they

get in.”<sup>3</sup> The optimism proved unfounded, and after their 1964 election victory, the Liberals reduced funding to the Center. Thatcher thought the program wasteful and non-productive.<sup>4</sup> The Center’s record of telling the CCF what it wanted to hear also did not help it survive, and it soon closed. The CCF also never had a chance to try the recommendations made in the Center’s report.

In 1964, when Ross Thatcher and his Liberals defeated the tired twenty-year-old CCF government, the North the CCF handed over to the Liberals little resembled that which they began governing in 1944. Changing times brought some of this change, but much of it came because of CCF intervention. The CCF might have felt pride about some of its achievements. Improvements to health care had reduced infant mortality and increased life expectancy, new schools ensured that most children could learn to read and write, roads reached some villages, and most Aboriginals lived in houses arranged in rows on surveyed lots in settlements. On the other hand, all could see that the new North included a dysfunctional economy incapable of supporting the exploding Aboriginal population and a social malaise which offered northerners little hope for the future. Many of the more than 20,000 people subsisted in village slums. Families rarely trapped or fished together anymore, since these activities became men’s work. For their part, women cared for children in the settlements. Cash had largely replaced credit as the northern currency, with much of the cash coming from welfare programs.

Although major change had taken place, the CCF failed to meet its goals for the North. Modernization of the infrastructure system stalled primarily due to the CCF losing enthusiasm and not spending the money required to build modern transportation and communication systems. A lack of infrastructure profoundly diminished economic development and prosperity. Development and various related benefits remained limited, since not even large companies could operate profitably in an area without infrastructure. While some roads penetrated the North, most areas remained isolated. Uranium City, Saskatchewan’s uranium capital, relied more on links to Alberta than to Saskatchewan. Creighton, adjacent to the large mine at Flin Flon, dealt more with Manitoba than with Saskatchewan. Fish caught on Reindeer Lake and other east side lakes moved to markets through Manitoba. Most communities also lacked links to the provincial electrical and telephone systems, and no radio or television stations broadcast within the North. As part of its effort to modernize the North, the CCF had effectively toppled the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches from their traditional positions. CCF actions also reduced reliance on the HBC and other traders.

Efforts to modernize other aspects of the northern world also failed. The CCF had sought to build a new and modern economy there. Its dream for the North envisioned Aboriginals happily

and prosperously earning their livelihood from updated trapping and fishing industries, while non-Aboriginals would labour in other sectors of the economy. Instead, trapping and fishing declined in importance as fur and fish prices and production could not keep pace with the rapidly expanding population. In the area of agriculture, CCF control and ineptness ensured that this would not employ and support Aboriginals. A lack of encouragement for Aboriginals to work in forestry, mining, tourism, and government administration helped rule out these promising sources of livelihood. While the number of jobs held by whites from outside the region in these occupations could have eliminated Aboriginal unemployment had they held these positions, neither the CCF nor industry seriously tried to move Aboriginals into this work. As a result, extreme poverty dominated nearly all northern communities during the CCF era. Northerners increasingly relied on welfare instead of on the North's abundant resources. For the Aboriginal population in 1964, economic problems seemed much worse than twenty years earlier. Hope had largely disappeared.

CCF actions to modernize and improve social programs also failed to meet expectations. Social welfare services remained much as in 1944, with minimal staff sporadically serving the area from southern bases. The increasing northern need for social aid, child welfare, counselling, and preventative services often went unmet. Medical care also remained rudimentary in most areas of the North. Widely spaced outpost hospitals, usually staffed by a lone nurse, could not meet more than the most basic medical needs. Most communities had no medical personnel or facilities. The better facilities available in several northern centres could not adequately treat many patients, and northerners frequently travelled outside the region to obtain medical, optical, and dental care. While the CCF greatly expanded elementary school education, most who attended high school had to leave their home communities. The CCF provided no post-secondary education in the North.

Assimilating northern Aboriginals into Canadian society was another goal of the CCF. The party did not understand or respect Aboriginal culture, considering it not worth preserving. To aid with assimilating the Aboriginal population, the CCF speeded nucleation of the formerly migrant population into villages. By the end of the CCF era few northerners still lived in the bush. Another part of the CCF plan for assimilation involved taking over responsibility for Treaty Indians from the federal government. The CCF hoped this transfer would lead to using only one set of rules and programs for all citizens. It partially met its goal of assimilating Aboriginals, since Indians and Metis adopted many Euro-Canadian ways. Yet, twenty years of applying assimilative pressures helped create a people who could not function as whites or Aboriginals, and dependency increased.

The CCF achieved even less success in reaching its other goal of creating a northern

socialist utopia. Northerners largely ignored efforts to implant socialist ideals and forms of organization. Imposed economic programs which relied on socialist forms of organization only lasted as long as the colonial masters administered them. In the North, the CCF relied on crown corporations to impose public ownership within four of the main economic sectors - - trapping, fishing, forestry, and retail. As part of its plan to implement socialism there, the CCF strove to reduce the power of private enterprise, particularly focussing on curtailing the power of the Hudson's Bay Company. In time, the CCF turned increasingly to a modified form of co-operatives to implement its programs, although it did so with the heavy hand of compulsion and control. Northerners would "co-operate," whether they wanted to or not. In another effort to implement socialism in the North, the CCF kept strict control of almost all land. It often refused to sell residential, commercial, and agricultural property, electing either to block development or only to give leases.

CCF plans for northern socialism did not include sharing the province's wealth equally with northerners. It never seriously tried to extend socialism in the North beyond redesigning the northern economy along socialist lines. Fear existed that an equal sharing of the province's wealth with northerners would spoil the Aboriginals who would inappropriately take advantage of the generosity. The CCF offered only miserly social welfare, health, and education benefits to the poverty-stricken masses whom it considered as not yet deserving. The southern-based party showed great callousness in ignoring the plight of northern Aboriginals. While Tommy Douglas said "we will measure our success by what society does for the underprivileged, for the subnormal, for the widow, for the aged and the unwanted child," apparently CCF concern did not extend equally to northern Aboriginals.<sup>5</sup>

The preeminent place the CCF gave to socialist economic policies in its northern program contradicts its record in the South. Previous studies of the CCF have concluded that the CCF was not a strongly socialist government. Yet this examination of the CCF's northern record suggests that the CCF was devoted to socialist philosophy and policies. Possibly only the power of southern voters ensured that the CCF's socialism in the South fit within the region's predominantly free enterprise agricultural tradition. In contrast, northerners lacked the voice and electoral power to determine CCF policies for the North. Most southerners cared little what the CCF did in the northern bush. This indifference gave the CCF free rein to dictate socialist solutions for the North.

The CCF imposed its ideas and administered the North using a paternalistic and colonial apparatus. It relied on its planning mechanisms in Regina and Prince Albert to design the futures of northerners. Little genuine and meaningful consultation took place with northerners, who

lacked input into CCF plans. Colonial bureaucrats applied CCF projects in the North. Although the nature of the colonialism became somewhat more subtle as the CCF era evolved, compulsion and direction from outside continued to characterize the administration of provincial programs in the North.

Strong, forceful, directive government characterized the CCF era. The party had great confidence that it could force change, thinking that in time the objects of its wise planning would recognize the great gifts given them. Northerners found themselves powerless to repel the CCF's colonial and socialist onslaught. Southerners outnumbered northerners by nearly 100 to one in 1944, and northerners lacked effective representation in the legislature, with only two representatives. Many northern Aboriginals also lacked the necessary language and other skills to influence the CCF.

Yet the CCF northern experiment failed. The CCF did not modernize, assimilate, or socialize northerners. Failure occurred for three primary reasons. First, after a quick and energetic start under Joe Phelps, the CCF did not devote the resources needed to bring change. Its efforts lacked adequate quantities of energy, personnel, and money. While the CCF had ambitious plans for the North and northerners, in reality it neglected this half of the province and its population. Secondly, in spite of its self-image as an intelligent government, the CCF's research and planning mechanisms failed. Douglas and his colleagues never gained an adequate understanding of the North or its people. Without a plan based on realistic analysis, even well-intentioned efforts to deal with problems were little more than stabs in the dark. Finally, CCF efforts failed because the colonial government failed to involve northerners in planning and implementing changes. Although northern votes mattered little, northerners helped determine the fate of CCF plans. Resistance in various forms characterized the Aboriginal response to the CCF plans. Whether taking an active or passive form, Aboriginal resistance helped ensure that governmental goals remained unmet. Resistance gave northerners some power, if not in designing CCF plans, at least in determining the outcome of CCF projects.

Northerners endured twenty years of CCF intervention in their lives, two decades which saw the destruction of much of the traditional northern power structure, economy, and society. The CCF ensured that parish priests, bootleggers, and fur sharks no longer ran the North. In time, the day of the CCF also passed.

## **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix A**

### **University of Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on Ethics in Behavioral Science Research**

#### **Application for Approval of Research Protocol**

##### **Name of Researchers**

Research Supervisor- Bill Waiser, Professor, Department of History.

Student- David Quiring, Ph. D. candidate, Department of History.

##### **Title of Study**

"Neo-colonialism or a New Deal: Government and People in Northern Saskatchewan."

##### **Abstract**

This study examines Northern Saskatchewan during a distinct phase in its history. Between 1944 and 1971, this formerly isolated and largely ignored area underwent major changes which fundamentally altered the lives of northern residents. Due to the intervention of the CCF and Liberal governments, led by T. C. Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd, and Ross Thatcher, life for northerners in 1971 bore little resemblance to that of 1944. The CCF government, with its faith in the potential of enlightened, planned development, aggressively worked to reshape the North. The subsequent Liberal government continued and enhanced the policies of intervention. Consequently, the formerly nomadic Aboriginal population moved to permanent nucleated communities, improved health care dramatically lowered infant mortality rates and raised life expectancies, and most school-age children attended school. However, the local economy failed to provide opportunities for the burgeoning population, a welfare-based economy largely replaced the former self-sufficient hunting, trapping, and fishing lifestyle, and dysfunctionality characterized many family and community relationships. While Northern Saskatchewan also experienced national and international influences, the policies of the provincial governments did cause much of the rapid change. In spite of the initial optimism and zealous efforts of politicians and bureaucrats, in the end they often experienced frustration, disappointment, bewilderment, and defeat. At the end of their respective mandates, the pervasive northern malaise prevented both the CCF and the Liberals from viewing their record in the north with pride. Unlike the southern politicians and bureaucrats, who often just walked away, northerners inherited the effects of the interventions. In many respects, the southern planners left a legacy of economic and social devastation.

The above statement summarizes and interprets some of the conventional analysis of this time period in the north. This research reexamines this time period in the north. Much of the scholarship about this era shares the governments' sense of bewilderment and frustration. A need exists to reevaluate the events in question, with the benefit of hindsight from a distance in time and with the advantage of advances in historical method and understanding. In addition to examining archival and other written primary and secondary sources, various persons who influenced and/or experienced events in the north during this time should be interviewed. Nearly all of the provincial politicians who played a major role in the effort to reshape the north have died. However, numerous civil servants, who administered the government policies and who observed first-hand the effects of these policies, remain. Likewise, many of the northern



residents targeted for change by the government still live. The study focuses on two or three northern communities as case studies. These communities tentatively are Buffalo Narrows, Cumberland House, and possibly La Ronge or Stony Rapids/Black Lake. Interviews with long-term residents of these communities and with government employees, including conservation officers, teachers, and social workers, can offer valuable insights into the events in Northern Saskatchewan.

While the preliminary exploration of primary and secondary sources has suggested some possible hypotheses, further research is needed to help formulate the theses of this study. The research is partly descriptive in nature, and the evolution of the theses largely depends on the information gathered in the future. This does not minimize the necessity of focusing the research in order to make it manageable and specific in its findings.

### **Funding**

Funding obtained from the Messer Fund for Research in Canadian History will help to defray the travel costs for this research. Scholarship funding from the Department of History of the University of Saskatchewan also enables the research to proceed. SSHRC has granted funding for 24 months, beginning in September 1999.

### **Subjects**

The researcher proposes to interview long-term residents of the northern Saskatchewan communities indicated above and provincial government employees who designed and administered the provincial government policies for the north. The study also may include politicians, although few politicians who dealt with the North at that time remain. Some long-term residents have relocated to the southern area of Saskatchewan, and some remain in the north. Many of the government employees lived in the north on a temporary basis and now live in southern Saskatchewan or outside Saskatchewan. Interviews should take place in locations convenient for the interviewed persons. Those interviewed should be chosen with various factors in mind, which include: experience in northern Saskatchewan prior to 1971, availability, and a willingness to be interviewed. The researcher will attempt to choose persons representative of both the northern resident and public employee groups. Interviewees should represent the possible variation in age, race, gender, socio-economic status, educational status, vocational status, and community roles.

The majority of the persons interviewed will not reside on Indian Reserves nor will belong to Indian Bands. The study focuses primarily on the relationship between the provincial government of Saskatchewan and the people of the north. While some provincial policies and actions did affect Treaty Indians as well, the federal government retained primary responsibility for Treaty Indian people. Provincial government responsibility and jurisdiction extended more fully to the non-Treaty Indian population, which included large numbers of Métis and non-Native persons. When the study does include on-reserve Treaty Indians as interview subjects, the interviewer plans to exercise care to obtain permission from the Chief or Band Council to enter the reserve and conduct the interview. The Chief and/or Band Council also might offer valuable aid in choosing interview subjects. The interviewer will choose non-Treaty Indians, Métis, and non-Native subjects on the basis of their perceived relevance and potential contribution to the study. In some cases this will mean searching out community leaders and more articulate persons. Past job roles, along with availability, will form the primary basis for choosing past government employees to interview. The choice of interviewees will not follow

a rigid formula, but practical considerations and the availability of suitable persons to interview will influence the choice of interviewees.

### **Methods/Procedures**

Most of the information from the interviewees/informants should come from personal face-to-face interviews, although in some cases other methods, such as written communication, may prove necessary. The questions asked of the interviewees will vary somewhat from interview to interview. The information sought from a government employee from the Thatcher era will differ from that which an early employee of the CCF government can provide. The issues and experiences of long-term residents also will vary depending on numerous factors, and a question which may be appropriate and relevant in one interview may not be so in another situation. The questions asked of both the providers of government services and of their target population require sufficient flexibility to accommodate differences in circumstances and experiences.

A sample of some proposed questions is attached to this application, although the exploration should not be limited to these questions. The interviewees should receive freedom to answer questions as they choose and to broaden the discussion to issues which they consider relevant and important. We recognize that the list of questions is both long and potentially disturbing. In many cases, the interviewer should tailor the questions to the interview situation, as not all questions will be equally relevant in all interview situations. Should the interviewee show fatigue or emotional discomfort or distress, the interviewer should shorten and/or attempt to make the interview less threatening by eliminating or rephrasing questions.

Should the interviewee not be comfortable with using the English language, an interpreter should explain the consent form to the interviewee and likely an interpreter also should interpret throughout the interview. In cases where the technical level of the consent form appears inappropriate for the interviewee, the interviewer and/or an interpreter should clearly explain the details to the interviewee.

### **Risk or deception**

Interviewees might make a statement which may pose a risk for them in some circumstances. A fact or an opinion expressed by interviewees might create difficulties for them with other persons or organizations. All interviewees will likely be adults, and the precautions and protections outlined in this application should minimize any unforeseen negative effects of the study on the interviewees.

### **Confidentiality**

The practice of citing sources and the possibility of other researchers being able to review these sources represent important aspects of historical research. This requires the researcher to open the sources for examination, where possible. The pre-interview discussion and the consent form both will deal with the issue of confidentiality. Should the interviewees not wish to have their names connected with their statements, the researcher must respect that wish.

## **Consent**

The interviewer will discuss the consent form and the various options involved with the interviewee prior to the interview. The interviewee's signature on the form will indicate agreement with the conditions as outlined on the form.

## **Debriefing and Feedback**

Where possible, the interviewer will record the interviews on audio tape. The interviewer will also offer the interviewee the possibility of reviewing the interview. This can take the form of the interviewee listening to the audio tape or of reviewing a summary transcript of the session. In some cases, practical considerations may require a review of the audio tape, particularly in cases where the interviewer cannot readily or feasibly contact the interviewee at a later date to review a written transcript and in cases where the interviewee does not read. The interviewee can choose a third option indicating that they do not wish to review either the summary transcript or the audio tape. If the interviewee does not want to review the interview the interviewer should not attempt to force a review of the interview. A release form shall indicate the interviewee's agreement to release the transcript or the tape to the interviewer. The interviewee also will have the option of withdrawing or modifying statements made. Bill Waiser undertakes to safeguard and securely store all data collected at the University of Saskatchewan for a minimum of five years as per University requirements. The researcher should investigate the option of the eventual placement of these tapes in a Saskatchewan archival facility, and the consent form will give interviewees the option of whether or not they wish to have the audio or written record of the interview placed in an archival facility, if available. The interviewer also should ask the interviewees whether they wish to be notified of when and how they may access the results of the completed study.

## **Signatures**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head, Department of History

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Appendix B**

### **Consent Form**

**Study title-** "Neo-colonialism or a New Deal: Government and People in Northern Saskatchewan."

**Study supervisor-** Bill Waiser, Professor, Department of History, University of Saskatchewan, 9 Campus Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 5A5.  
Telephone- 306-966-5792.

**Primary researcher-** David Quiring, Ph. D. Candidate, Department of History, University of Saskatchewan.  
Home address- Box 1, Site 1, R. R. 1, Christopher Lake, Saskatchewan, S0J 0N0.  
Home telephone- 306-982-4811. E-mail- dquiring@sk.sympatico.ca

**Purpose and object of study-** I understand that this study explores Northern Saskatchewan during the time period from 1944 to 1971 and that it primarily seeks to understand the relationship between the people resident in the north and the provincial government of Saskatchewan at this time. I also understand that the study explores the nature of change and the causes of this change in this era and that the my views may form a valuable part of this research.

**Possible benefits of the study-** I am aware that the researcher hopes this study may provide residents of Northern Saskatchewan and others with a fuller understanding of the changes that occurred during this time period. He believes that an additional benefit may come if government and/or private persons can apply this understanding to help shape future actions.

**Interview procedure-** The interviewer will conduct an oral interview with me, with my consent. With my consent, the interviewer will record the interview on audio tape. Should I object to the use of audio tape, the interviewer can record the interview in writing, should I prefer this method of recording the interview. The questions asked of me will call on me to describe my experiences and knowledge of this time period in Northern Saskatchewan. The interview will likely require one to two hours of my time, although I may terminate the interview at any time. I understand that I will be given the opportunity to review and revise the summary transcript or the audio record of this interview should I wish to do so.

**Risks of the interview to the person interviewed-** The primary foreseeable risk to myself might occur if I offer information which I wish to keep private. I have the right to withhold any information and to later review the information given in the interview. I also may terminate the interview at any point without loss of access to any services at the University of Saskatchewan. I also understand that I may withdraw from the study and that I will have an opportunity to sign a transcript release form prior to any information given by myself being used. Should I withdraw from the study, all data collected from me will be deleted from the study and destroyed.

**Future use of the information from the interview-** I acknowledge that historical research commonly cites the sources of information, in the interest of credibility and for future verification of the research. The researcher may include information gathered in this interview

in a written thesis/dissertation, in other writing, and in other media forms. This information will consequently be available to others for their use and interpretation. My name may appear in connection with information I give. If I prefer, information provided by myself will be kept anonymous. The researcher and research/supervisor are responsible for the handling and storage of the interview records and tapes. B. Waiser undertakes to safeguard and securely store the research data at the University of Saskatchewan for a minimum of five years as per University requirements. I can place limitations on the future location and use of interview tapes.

**Future contact-** Should I wish to discuss this research study, I should contact the research supervisor or the researcher, as listed in this form. I also can contact the Office of Research Services at the University of Saskatchewan (telephone 966-4053) if I wish to clarify my rights as a research subject. I may contact the research supervisor or the researcher should I wish to know how to obtain a copy of the findings and publications resulting from the study.

Name of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

1. I agree to be interviewed as part of the above indicated research      Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. The audio tape will be kept by B. Waiser for a minimum of five years. After that time, I would like the audio record of this interview to be: (please choose one)

Deposited in an archival facility should this be feasible \_\_\_\_\_

Deposited in the following repository of my choice \_\_\_\_\_

Destroyed after five years or when this research is concluded \_\_\_\_\_

It does not matter to me, and I authorize the researcher to choose what to do with it \_\_\_\_\_

3. I wish to review this interview prior to its use as part of this research      Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If "Yes," I wish to review the audio tape \_\_\_\_\_ I wish to review a summary transcript \_\_\_\_\_

If "No," I waive my right to review the interview tape or summary transcript \_\_\_\_\_

4. The interviewer has explained the study and the contents of this consent form to me. I understand this explanation and the contents of this consent form, and I acknowledge the receipt of a copy of this consent form for my records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of subject of interview

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of interviewer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place of interview

## Appendix C

### Transcript and Audio Tape Release Form

Please choose and complete either section A, B, or C of this form.

**A:** I, \_\_\_\_\_, have reviewed the summary transcript of my personal interview in this study, and acknowledge that the summary transcript accurately reflects what I said in my personal interview with David Quiring. I hereby authorize the release of the audio tape to David Quiring to be used in the manner described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Release Form for my own records.

**B:** I, \_\_\_\_\_, do not wish to review a summary transcript of this interview. I have reviewed the audio tape of my personal interview in this study, and acknowledge that it accurately represents what I said in my personal interview with David Quiring. I hereby authorize the release of this audio tape to David Quiring to be used in the manner described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Release Form for my own records.

**C:** I, \_\_\_\_\_, do not wish to review a summary transcript of this interview or the audio tape of this interview. I hereby authorize the release of this audio tape to David Quiring to be used in the manner described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Release Form for my own records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Appendix D**

### **Sample Questionnaires**

#### **Sample questionnaire to be used with residents of Northern Saskatchewan**

What is your name?

What is your age?

Where were you born?

Have you lived in Northern Saskatchewan?

How long have you lived in the north?

Where have you lived in the north?

Are you married?

Do you have children, how many children, and how old are they?

Where do your children live?

If you or your children have left the North to live permanently outside the North, when was this move made? Why was this move made?

If you lived in the north prior to 1971, what changes did you witness in the north during that time? To what do you attribute these changes?

If you lived in the north in 1944, what changes did you witness from 1944 onwards? To what do you attribute these changes?

Prior to 1971, did you have contact with any provincial or federal government employees? (This could include school teachers, conservation officers, social workers, public health nurses, Indian agents, and others.)

What was your attitude and that of your community to the DNR Conservation Officer? Why?

What was your attitude and that of your community to the Welfare Worker and Social Worker? Why?

What was your attitude and that of your community to the school and the teachers? Why?

What was your attitude and that of your community to the public health nurse? Why?

Were there any other representatives of the provincial government who played an important role in your life?

What was your relationship to these and other civil servants?

What role did civil servants play in the life of your family and your community?

How would you describe the class structure of your community at that time?

By whom and how was the class structure determined?

What was the attitude of yourself and other members of your peer group to the class structure?

How would you evaluate the actions of the provincial government and federal government and their employees in your life and in the life of your community?

What contributions, if any, did these governments and their employees make to you and your community?

What harm, if any, did these governments and their employees do to you and your community?

What changes occurred in gender roles during this time, if any? Were these changes related to the government policies and/or presence? If yes, how?

What changes occurred in religious practices, traditional and other, during this time, if any? Were these changes related to the government policies and/or presence? If yes, how?

What changes occurred in relation to the Hudson's Bay Company and other merchants/buyers during this time, if any? Were these changes related to the government policies and/or presence? If yes, how?

What was your attitude toward the government and its representatives prior to 1971?

Has your attitude toward government and its representatives during the time prior to 1971 changed since 1971?

What was the attitude of your larger family and community to government's presence in your community?

Do you recall any resistance or resentment on your part or on the part of other northerners to the government policies and its employees? What was the situation or issue involved?

In your opinion, what did the provincial government do right in the north before 1971?

In your opinion, what did the provincial government do wrong in the north before 1971?

In your opinion, did the provincial government understand the needs and problems of the people of the north?

In your opinion, what might have happened in Northern Saskatchewan had the provincial government not intervened in the north after 1944?

To your knowledge, what difference was there between government services offered in northern Saskatchewan and in southern Saskatchewan? Why was that difference there? Was it justified? Was it necessary?



Were governmental services equal in the north and in the south?

In your opinion, based on your experiences in the north, what priority did the provincial government place on providing governmental services in the north.

Could or should the provincial government have provided more services and/or resources to the north?

What limits, if any, were placed on government services and/or resources to the north? If limits were there, why do you think they were there.

Do you think the provincial government had clear goals and plans for the north? If so, what were those goals and plans?

How successful do you think the government thought it was in meeting these goals?

How successful do you think the government was in meeting these goals?

Do you think the north and its people had greater and/or different problems than did the south and its people? How were the problems different?

What do you think the answers were to problems in the north?

What should the provincial government have done in the north that it did not do?

How well did the government and its employees understand the people of the north and their problems?

How dedicated were the people of southern Saskatchewan, the government of Saskatchewan, and the government's employees to helping the north?

Do you know which political parties formed the government of northern Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1971?

Do you recall the names of any provincial politicians from this time?

Did you ever meet or have any contact with any provincial politicians during this time?

Did you notice any change in government policy that could be attributed to a change in government before 1971?

Do you recall any provincial crown corporations that were active in the north, and what roles did these play in your life and the life of your community? What was your attitude and that of your community to these crown corporations at the time? Has your attitude changed since then?

Do you recall any co-operatives that were active in the north, and what roles did these play in your life and in the life of your community? What was your attitude and that of your community to these co-operatives at the time? Has your attitude changed since then?

What was your experience with the separation of some services in the north between the federal government and the provincial government? The federal government provided many of the services to Treaty Indians on reserves, while the provincial government provided services to those living off reserves. What is your opinion about this separation of services? Has your opinion changed since 1971?

Is there anything else you can tell me which you think is important about the relationship between government and its employees and the people of the north during this time and about government policies during this time?

**Sample questionnaire to be used with persons who worked as provincial government employees in Northern Saskatchewan**

What is your name?

What is your age?

Where were you born?

Do you presently or have you in the past lived in Northern Saskatchewan?

How long did you or have you lived in the north?

Where have you lived in the north?

Were you married when you lived in the north? Did your spouse also live in the north?

If you were married, what was your spouse's occupation when you lived in the north?

Did you have children when you lived in the north, how many, and how old were they?

If you or your children have left the north to live permanently outside the north, when was this move made? Why was this move made?

Did you work for the provincial government when you were in the north?

Which department or branch of government did you work for and for how long?

What was your job title and what were your work duties?

If you lived in the north prior to 1971, what changes did you witness in the north during that time? To what do you attribute these changes?

If you lived in the north prior to 1944, what changes did you witness from 1944 onwards? To what do you attribute these changes?

What is your opinion about the role of the provincial government in Northern Saskatchewan prior to 1971?

What positive benefits did the provincial government bring to the north?

What negative results came from the provincial government presence in the north?

What should the provincial government have done differently in the north, if anything?

What did the provincial government do right in the north, if anything?

What was your relationship with permanent northern residents when you lived in the north?

Did you have close friends who had not come to the north from the outside? Were these

friends native or white?

How would you describe the class structure of your community at that time?

By whom and how was the class structure determined?

What was the attitude of yourself and other members of your peer group to the class structure?

What do you think northern people thought of your presence and role in the north?

Do you recall any approval or disapproval of northern residents of your presence and role there?

Did you personally encounter or hear of any instances of resistance or resentment of northern residents to government and/or its employees? What form did this take?

How would you characterize the situation in Northern Saskatchewan at the time you were there?

Did you view the north as being an area with an unusual level of social and economic problems?

If so, where did you place the blame for these problems? With the government? With the residents of the north? Why?

Have your views about this changed since that time?

What preparation did you have for your work in the north prior to beginning work for the government in the north?

Do you think you were well prepared for your work there?

Did you receive further training to prepare you for your work after beginning work for the provincial government?

To your knowledge, what difference was there between government services offered in northern Saskatchewan and in southern Saskatchewan? Why was that difference there? Was it justified? Was it necessary?

Were governmental services equal in the north and in the south?

In your opinion, based on your experiences in the north, what priority did the provincial government place on providing governmental services in the north.

If the commitment of the provincial government was limited, what were those limits? Why were those limits there?

Do you think the provincial government had clear goals and plans for the north? If so, what were those goals and plans?

How successful do you think the government thought it was in meeting these goals?

How successful do you think the government was in meeting these goals?

What changes occurred in gender roles during this time, if any? Were these changes related to the government policies and/or presence? If yes, how?

What changes occurred in religious practices, traditional and other, during this time, if any? Were these changes related to the government policies and/or presence? If yes, how?

What changes occurred in relation to the Hudson's Bay Company and other merchants/buyers during this time, if any? Were these changes related to the government policies and/or presence? If yes, how?

If you worked in the north under both the CCF and the Liberal governments, did you notice any difference of policy or emphasis under the two governments? What were those differences and to what do you attribute them?

What was your experience with the separation of some services in the north between the federal government and the provincial government? The federal government provided many of the services to Treaty Indians on reserves, while the provincial government provided services to those living off reserves. What is your opinion about this separation of services? Has your opinion changed since 1971?

Is there anything else you can tell me about the relationship between the provincial government and the residents of the north and about the role of government in the north during this time which you consider to be important?

## Appendix E

### Comments on Collection of Oral History

The collection of information for this study included interviewing numerous people who lived in the North under the CCF and who worked for the CCF in the North. Various older oral tapes of interviews with CCF politicians also provided information. Interviews proved extremely valuable in some respects. They particularly provided a sense of the passionate dislike many northerners felt towards the CCF government, even almost forty years after the defeat of the CCF. Written sources did not convey the depth of this feeling. Interviews proved less useful in providing accurate details about various events in the North.

Differences of opinion exist about the value of oral history in helping provide an accurate image of the past. Some privilege memories about the past as being equally or more valid than those written down at or near the time events occurred. Others question the reliability and value of memories, possibly altered by faulty memory, wishful thinking, or outright dishonesty. This debate appears particularly relevant for northern Saskatchewan. A large number of the Aboriginals who formed a majority of the population there had at best a limited level of literacy and wrote little about themselves or government. On the other hand, government bureaucrats filled thousands of files with their written observations about northern Aboriginals. To look at only written sources means viewing the relationship between government and northerners through white, male, bureaucratic eyes. Yet government files have proven a surprisingly rich source of information, since they contain many candid comments and observations and also tell much about the CCF politicians and bureaucrats who worked with and within the North.

The oral history gathered in this study had limitations, particularly in establishing various details with accuracy. Many of those interviewed, both on tape and informally, had poor recollection of when things occurred. Some interviewees even said that they had a poor memory and likely could not remember much of value. Interviewees frequently confused decades and governments. Some trappers who trapped during the CCF era did not recall the CCF's compulsory marketing of beaver and muskrat. Some moved seamlessly from one time period to another, as if events in the 1940s and 1980s happened at much the same time. While this perception of events may have merits, it does not offer accurate information about a specific time. Political preferences also influenced some stories, with CCF/NDP supporters viewing events differently from Liberal supporters. Tommy Douglas enjoyed nearly universal respect among those interviewed, while few northerners had positive things to say about the party he led.

Oral history plays a much greater role than just to agree with or contradict specific details of written sources. Meeting the people who lived in the North and hearing the details of their stories adds a dimension of reality to the research experience. It helps provide a sense of what really happened in the North under the twenty years of CCF government. Oral history allows the researcher increased intimacy as an observer of this history.

The oral history encountered in this study sometimes does not agree with written sources and, in some cases, appears clearly wrong. For example, Joe Phelps, in an interview carried out by another interviewer years ago, indicated he and his wife toured the North not long after the CCF victory of 1944. He spoke about going to Uranium City and going down the Eldorado uranium mine shaft, even though neither Uranium City nor the mine existed until about eight years later. In another situation, an Aboriginal interviewee in La Ronge spoke about the prosecution of her father for an alleged trapping violation. She spoke about the large number of Aboriginal people lined up for court at La Ronge, and she left the clear impression that they were there because of violations of natural resources policies. Yet prosecution statistics for the North demonstrate extremely low numbers of prosecutions for fish, fur, and game offences. In another interview, a

former government employee spoke about going to Cumberland House shortly after the election of the CCF to investigate farming potential there, only to find the people already farming. Yet his written report from over fifty years ago, including a diary of his time there, contradicts this. In the report, he does not mention much Aboriginal farming. He also viewed establishment of farming as a project which would take much time and patience, as the people did not know the value of farming. Another example of oral and written sources disagreeing comes from Sandy Bay. Walter Hlady, the CCF anthropologist, lamented the heavy Aboriginal drinking of bought liquor and homebrewed "molly." He claimed local people drank large quantities of the latter, and he offended at least one resident by suggesting molly lacked alcohol content. This man recalls that Hlady had quite a different experience with molly while at Sandy Bay, sometimes himself passing out from drinking the brew. While oral and written sources do not always agree, and some information obtained from oral sources lacks accuracy and comprehensiveness, oral history has value. The memories of persons who lived through events can confirm or contradict other sources. They can balance archival sources, which contain primarily a record of the actions and thoughts of white male politicians and bureaucrats.

The literature about oral history in northern Saskatchewan is small. The researcher found little precedent for his efforts and learned about the pitfalls and benefits of oral history in this situation partly by trial and error. In one of the few relevant studies, Keith Goulet compares oral and written history about Sandy Bay. He concentrates largely on the history of the dam built by the Churchill River Power Company. In "Oral History as an Authentic and Credible Research Base for Curriculum: The Cree of Sandy Bay and Hydroelectric Power Development 1927-67, an Example," Goulet concludes that oral history, as given by the Cree elders of the area, provides true and credible information. He finds that other evidence confirms about forty-five percent of the oral evidence.

Other writers provide information about oral history in the context of the larger Canadian north. Julie Cruikshank, who has collected oral history in the Yukon, cautions against using positivistic methods to attempt to extract "facts" from oral history and from viewing it out of its social context. Although she points out that both oral and written histories qualify as social constructions, which change over time, she seems to move away from the relativism of post-modernism in her more recent work. A more positivistic view does allow for one interpretation of history representing the truth more accurately than another. This increases the importance of oral history, since oral history can confirm, add to, or contradict other information. Cruikshank claims that written histories represent the point of view of colonial institutions, and that they incorporate, alter, and swallow stories. Robin Ridington, in *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community*, provides another model for collecting northern Aboriginal history. He spent time with the Beaver or Dunneza Indians of north-western Canada. His research sources include sources not usually used by historians, including myths, visions, and dreams.

While archival sources provided the bulk of information for this study of northern Saskatchewan, oral history played a larger role than is apparent by looking at the endnotes. Although interviews provided relatively few details about northern events, they spoke about their feelings. More than the archival sources, interviews helped add a northern perspective to the research.

## Appendix F

### Electoral Record

Although northern electoral boundaries frequently changed since 1908, Athabasca and Cumberland constituencies usually covered northern Saskatchewan. Athabasca generally covered the north-west and far northern areas, and Cumberland the south-east area. At times, Meadow Lake constituency included part of the south-west area of the North. In 1944, northern voters elected the Liberal's L. M. Marion of Ile a la Crosse to represent Athabasca and the CCF's Leslie W. Lee of Choceland for Cumberland. The Liberals won the Athabasca constituency with 80.7% of the vote, compared to 7.4% for the CCF. Cumberland voters, who voted nine days later than the rest of the province, voted 58.7% for the CCF, compared to 39.7% for the Liberals.

Northern voters did not overwhelmingly reject the CCF. For the elections held from 1944 to 1960, the CCF won six of thirteen constituency contests, while the Liberals won five, the Social Credit one, and an Independent won one. Liberals dominated in the south-west sector of the North. The CCF won Athabasca only in 1956 and Meadow Lake in 1960. On the other hand, the CCF dominated Cumberland, with Liberals winning there only in 1948. The presence of non-Aboriginal voters likely contributed to CCF electoral success. Most Treaty Indians belonged to the Roman Catholic church which opposed the CCF, but Treaty Indians did not receive the provincial vote until 1960. The Metis, also mostly Roman Catholic, likely supported the Liberals more than the CCF. Neither the Liberals nor CCF appeared in touch with and responsive to northern Treaty Indians or Metis.

Liberal Deakin Alexander Hall represented Cumberland from 1913 until the CCF's Leslie Walter Lee defeated him in 1944. In 1948, Liberal Lorne Earl Blanchard beat the CCF's Joseph Johnson, a DNR officer. The CCF's William John Berezowsky won each election from 1952 to 1964. More left wing than his party, he looked for a rise of northern militancy to bring a reformed socialist society to the North.

Liberals represented Athabaska since 1908. Liberal Louis Marcien Marion won there in 1944, receiving 626 votes to fifty-seven for the CCF. In 1948, Marion, then running as an Independent, defeated the CCF's Axel Olsen. In 1952, Liberal James Ripley defeated the CCF's C. L. MacLean. In 1956, John James Harrop of the CCF won, and in 1960, Allan Guy, Liberal, defeated the CCF's Allan Quandt. Guy won again in 1964.

Liberal Hugh Clifford Dunfield won in Meadow Lake in 1952, and in 1956, Social Credit's Alphonse Peter Weber won. In 1960, Martin Semchuk, CCF, won, while Liberal Henry Ethelbert Coupland won in 1964.

A number of DNR employees and former employees ran for the CCF. Joseph Johnson ran in 1948, Axel Olson in 1948, C. L. MacLean in 1952, and Allan Quandt in 1960. None were elected.

A weak opposition existed during most of the long CCF era, while the government enjoyed strong partisan support in the Legislature. In the 1948 election, CCF support declined to 47.6% of the vote and it only won thirty-one seats, while the Liberals rose to nineteen seats. The CCF recovered in 1952, winning fifty-four percent of the vote, but dropped to forty-five percent in 1956, and further to 40.8% in 1960. Yet the opposition remained weak, as Liberals, Social Credit, and Conservatives often split the vote. Since Social Credit rose as a force, it likely helped the CCF stay in power. In 1956, it took twenty-one percent of the vote.

The provincial Tories remained weak during the CCF era. No Conservative won a seat in 1944, while they won one seat in 1948 with eight percent of the provincial vote. Rupert Ramsay became leader in 1944. Alvin Hamilton led from 1949 to 1957, followed by Martin Pederson.

Walter Tucker replaced William Patterson as Liberal leader in 1946, a position Tucker



held until 1953. Asmunder (Mindy) Lopston then acted as house leader until the election of Hamilton "Hammy" McDonald in 1954. Ross Thatcher replaced McDonald in 1959.

The northern area also elected federal representatives. Mackenzie Constituency included much of northern Saskatchewan, including the far-northern area. The CCF's A. M. (Sandy) Nicholson became the MP in 1940 and held the seat until 1949, when he lost to Liberal Gladstone Mansfield Ferrie. Nicholson won re-election in 1953, but again lost in 1958, this time to Conservative Stanley James Korchinski. Nicholson then switched to provincial politics, winning in Saskatoon for the CCF in 1960. He became the Minister of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation. While MP for Mackenzie and later as Minister of Social Welfare, Nicholson played an active role in northern Saskatchewan.

Prince Albert Constituency covered much of the less remote northern area, including the La Ronge district. William Lyon Mackenzie King represented the constituency until Edward LeRoy Bowerman, CCF, defeated King in 1945. A Liberal, Francis Heselton Helme, defeated Bowerman in 1949. John Diefenbaker won there as a Progressive Conservative in 1953, representing the area until 1968, when the area became part of Mackenzie Constituency.

## **Endnotes**

## Endnotes for Introduction

1. As used in this work, the term "northerners" usually refers to the residents of northern Saskatchewan. This grouping often includes both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons. At other times, "northerners" refers primarily to Aboriginal persons. The context of the usage serves to define the term.
2. John Richards and Larry Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1979), 99-106, 126-128, 177.
3. Murray Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism: The CCF in Northern Saskatchewan, 1944-1964," *Studies in Political Economy*, (Volume 16, 1985), 28. Dobbin sees a third stage, from 1960 to 1964, with the CCF opening the way for neo-colonialism and the future penetration of capital. This appears doubtful, as instead, after 1960, the CCF greatly increased the welfare state in the North, and growth of infrastructure and the penetration of outside capital remained small.
4. Saskatchewan Archives Board [SAB], Audio Tape, A 1109, John H. Brockelbank, Interview by Murray Dobbin, at Regina, Aug. 19, 1976; SAB, S-M 16, A. M. Nicholson Papers, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," Brockelbank to Premier Douglas and All Cabinet Members, Oct. 10, 1955.
5. V. F. Valentine, *The Metis of Northern Saskatchewan* (Regina: Department of Natural Resources, 1955).
6. Helen Buckley, J. E. M. Kew, John B. Hawley, "The Indians and Metis of Northern Saskatchewan: A Report on Economic and Social Development" (Centre for Community Studies, Saskatoon, 1963).
7. Arthur K. Davis, *A Northern Dilemma: Reference Papers*, Volumes 1 and 2 (Bellingham: Washington: Western Washington State College, April 1967).
8. Bill Waiser, "Writing About Northern Saskatchewan," Coates and Morrison, Eds, *The Historiography of the Provincial North* (Centre for Northern Studies, Lakehead University, 1996), 232-247.
9. Murray Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men: the Story of Jim Brady and Malcolm Norris, Metis Patriots of the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1981).
10. James B. Waldram, *As Long as the Rivers Run: Hydroelectric Development and Native Communities in Western Canada* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988).
11. Keith Goulet, "Oral History as an Authentic and Credible Research Base for Curriculum: Cree of Sandy Bay and Hydroelectric Power Development 1927-67, an Example," Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis, University of Regina, 1986.
12. L. G. Marshall, "The Development of Education in Northern Saskatchewan," Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1966; William D. Knill, "Education and Northern Canada," *The Canadian Administrator*, v. 3, no. 3 (December 1963), 9-12; Knill, "North of the 53<sup>rd</sup>," *The Saskatchewan Bulletin*, Part One, v. 30, no. 2 (Feb. 1964), 26-31; Part Two, v. 30, no. 3 (March 1964), 46-52; Part Three, v. 30, no. 4 (April 1964), 34-37.

13. Trimension Training and Consulting Group Inc., Spruce River Research, Office of Northern Affairs, *Examination of the Commercial Fishing Industry in Saskatchewan* (1999).
14. SAB, R-A1113, Audio tape, Joe Phelps interview by Murray Dobbin, 1976.

## Endnotes for Chapter One

1. Ivan Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada: A Study of the CCF-NDP in Federal and Provincial Politics* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1978), 168-170; Raymond Merle Sherdahl, "The Saskatchewan General Election of 1944," Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1966), 165-175; David E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan 1905-71* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 245.
2. Gary Teeple, "'Liberals in a hurry': socialism and the CCF-NDP," Gary Teeple, editor, *Capitalism and the national question in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 237.
3. Evelyn Eager, "The Conservatism of the Saskatchewan Electorate," Norman Ward and Duff Spafford, Editors, *Politics in Saskatchewan* (Don Mills: Longmans Canada Limited, 1968), 14; Bill Harding, "The Two Faces of Public Ownership: From the Regina Manifesto to Uranium Mining," Jim Harding, editor, *Social Policy and Social Justice: The NDP Government in Saskatchewan during the Blakeney Years* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1995), 305; Peter R. Sinclair, "The Saskatchewan CCF: Ascent to Power and the Decline of Socialism," *Canadian Historical Review*, v. 54, no. 4 (December, 1973), 419-433.
4. Terms such as "likely" or "probably" represent this writer's best guess. In the absence of firm evidence to support a stronger statement, it is preferable to use a term such as this.
5. Allen E. Blakeney, "Saskatchewan's Crown Corporations A Case Study," Philip T. Clark, Editor, "Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Conference" of The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, Saskatoon, 1953; Harding, "The Two Faces," 283; Gordon W. MacLean, *Public Enterprise in Saskatchewan* (Regina: Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan, 1981), 11; Jean Larmour, "The Douglas Government's Changing Emphasis on Public, Private, and Co-operative Development in Saskatchewan, 1944-1961," J. William Brennan, Editor, *"Building the Co-operative Commonwealth" Essays on the Democratic Tradition in Canada*, Canadian Plains Proceedings 13 (Regina: University of Regina, Plains Research Center, 1984), 176-177, 290.
6. C. H. Higginbotham, *Off the Record: The CCF in Saskatchewan* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1968), 66; John Richards and Larry Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1979), 103-105.
7. DNR, Annual Report, 1952, Intro. letter, C. A. L. Hogg to J. H. Brockelbank.
8. Lewis H. Thomas, (ed.), *The Making of a Socialist: The Recollections of T. C. Douglas* (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1982), 293, 349.
9. Richards, *Prairie Capitalism*, 139-143.
10. Larmour, "The Douglas Government's Changing Emphasis," 161-167; Thomas, *The Making of a Socialist*, 170.
11. John H. Archer, *Saskatchewan: A History* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980), 281; Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, 174-179; Thomas H. McLeod and Ian McLeod, *Tommy Douglas: The Road to Jerusalem* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1987), 181; Norman Penner, *From Protest to Power: Social Democracy in Canada 1900-Present* (Toronto: James

Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1992), 114-118.

12. Sherdahl, "The Saskatchewan General Election," 158-159, 202-204. Northerners elected the Liberal L. M. Marion of Ile a la Crosse to represent Athabasca constituency and the CCF Leslie W. Lee of Choiceland to represent Cumberland constituency.

13. V. F. Valentine, "Some Problems of the Métis of Northern Saskatchewan," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, v. 20, no. 1 (1954), 90-91. At La Loche, Buffalo Narrows, Ile a la Crosse, and Beauval, the CCF received only sixty-five votes in 1952 compared to 569 for the Liberals. The lack of the franchise for Treaty Indians until 1960 and the possibility that a high white voter turnout could outweigh Metis opposition suggests that the relatively neutral electoral record, which saw the CCF win about one-half of northern electoral contests from 1944 to 1964, may not accurately show the opposition to the CCF. Even taken at face value, the northern electoral record shows a lower level of support for the CCF than in the province overall. Had the entire province voted as did the North, the CCF would not have formed the government for much of the twenty-year time period.

14. G. Abrams, *Prince Albert: The First Century, 1866-1966* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1966); W. A. Waiser, *Saskatchewan's Playground: A History of Prince Albert National Park* (Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1989); W. A. Waiser, *The new northwest: the photographs of the Frank Crean expeditions, 1908-1909* (Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1993).

15. Saskatchewan Archives Board [SAB], R-A1113, Audio tape, J. Phelps interviewed by M. Dobbin, 1976; R-8452, Audio tape, J. L. Phelps interview by J. Larmour, June 1, 1982.

16. Ken Coates and William Morrison, *The Forgotten North: A History of Canada's Provincial Norths* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, Publishers, 1992), chapters 2 and 3.

17. Dennis Gruending, *Promises to Keep: A Political Biography of Allan Blakeney* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1990), 21; George Cadbury, "Planning in Saskatchewan," Laurier LaPierre, et al (Editorial committee), *Essays on the Left: Essays in Honour of T. C. Douglas* (Toronto/Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1971), 54-56; Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, 178-179; Richards and Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism*, 108, 129-133.

18. M. Brownstone, "The Douglas-Lloyd Governments: Innovation and Bureaucratic Adaptation," Laurier LaPierre, et al (Editorial committee), *Essays on the Left: Essays in Honour of T. C. Douglas* (Toronto/Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1971), 66, 68.

19. SAB, S-NR 1/4, DNR, 167 B3, "Northern Region, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956," Field Officers' N. Dist. Conf., Jan. 9-13, 1951.

20. Robert Tyre, *Douglas in Saskatchewan: The Story of a Socialist Experiment* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1962), 25; T. H. M. McLeod, "Public Enterprise in Saskatchewan: The Development of Public Policy and Administrative Controls," Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, 1959, 160-227.

21. SAB, R-38, Audio tape, Joseph Lee Phelps interview by Craig Oliver, April, 1965; R-A1113, Phelps interview by Dobbin.

22. The Department of Natural Resources and Industrial Development, *The Natural Resources of Saskatchewan* (1945), Foreword by J. L. Phelps.
23. SAB, S-M15, Box 2, "Canning Equipment, 1945- 1946," Correspondence with Fisheries Research Board of Canada; S-M15, Box 2, "Crown Corp. General File," Murray D. Bryce to J. L. Phelps,, Feb. 18, 1946; S-M15, Box 5, "Dominion-Provincial Conference, 1945-1946, (1)," "Provincial Natural Resources Policy In Their Relation to the Dominion Proposals;" T. H. M. McLeod, "Public Enterprise in Saskatchewan," 86; S-M15, Box 5, "Economic Advisory Board Recommendations, 1945-1946," H. F. Berry to George W. Cadbury, April 15, 1946; S-M15, Box 8, "McCabe, M. A., Lac La Ronge Plant, 1946-1947," "Radio Address By The Honourable J. L. Phelps," Jan. 1947; S-M15, Box 17, "General Correspondence, 1944-1946. (3)," Sec. of Phelps, to A. F. Barker, April 5, 1946; S-M15, Box 18, "Glycol;" S-M15, Box 18, "Sask. Industrial Development Branch, 1944- 1946," H. G. Rondlesome to H. Lewis, Nov. 1, 1945; H. W. Monahan to Phelps, Feb. 26, 1946.
24. McLeod, *Tommy Douglas*, 175.
25. Geoffrey R. Weller, "Managing Canada's north: the case of the provincial north," *Canadian Public Administration*, v. 27, no. 2 (Summer, 1984), 197- 209; Geoffrey R. Weller, "Political Disaffection in the Canadian Provincial North," *Bulletin of Canadian Studies*, v. 9, no.1 (Spring, 1985), 71-78; Coates and Morrison, *The Forgotten North*, chapters 2, 3, and 4; Robert M. Bone, "Summary and Recommendations," *Regional Socio-Economic Development* (Saskatoon: Institute for Northern Studies, University of Saskatchewan, June, 1973), 13; William Alfred Arrowsmith, "Northern Saskatchewan and the Fur Trade," Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1964, 79.
26. Murray Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism: The CCF in Northern Saskatchewan, 1944-1964," *Studies in Political Economy*, (v. 16, 1985), 16.
27. As used in this work, the term "colonialism" refers to both state and private intervention in the hinterland of northern Saskatchewan. Various colonial characteristics were present. Government played an instrumental role in creating and perpetuating colonialism. A relationship between the periphery (the North) and the centre (the South) developed. Removal of northern wealth for the benefit of the centre took place. Local people lacked control over many local affairs, while outsiders decided what happened in the colony. A colonial mechanism, including the DNR administrative structure, administered and maintained the colonial system. Additionally, racial/ethnic and linguistic distinctions characterized the colonial situation, with the larger, more powerful group located outside the region.
28. Laurie Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 202; Philip Ballantyne, et al, *The Land Alone: Aski-Puko*, (Prince Albert, 1976), 136.
29. SAB, A 1109, Audio Tape, John H. Brockelbank interview by M. Dobbin, Aug. 19, 1976.
30. SAB, S-NR 1/4, DNR, 167 B3 "Northern Region," Minutes of N. Dist.C. O. Conf. at P. A., Sask., Oct. 4- 8, 1954.

31. Morris Shumiatcher, *Welfare: Hidden Backlash* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1971), 98, 99.
32. Glenbow Archives, J. Brady Collection, M125, s. VI, f. 41, "Metis, 1952-63," P. M. Worsley, "Confidential," "A Provisional and Exploratory General Outline of the Research Aspect of Contract Program TR-1: The Study of Northern Saskatchewan," Oct. 25, 1960.
33. P. M. Worsley, "Bureaucracy and Decolonization: Democracy from the Top," Irving Louis Horowitz (ed), *The New Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 378.



## Endnotes for Chapter Two

1. Murray Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men: The Story of Jim Brady & Malcolm Norris, Metis Patriots of the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1981), 169-170; John Richards and Larry Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1979), 118; Saskatchewan Archives Board [SAB], R-A1113, Audio tape, J. Phelps interview by M. Dobbin, 1976; R-8452, Audio tape, J. L. Phelps interview by J. Larmour, 1982; S-M15, Box 17, Phelps Papers, "General Correspondence, 1944-1946 (2)," Phelps to T. C. Douglas, Sept. 5, 1944."
2. The CCF promotion of modernization, assimilation, and socialism among northern Aborigines demonstrated its general lack of concern for preserving northern society.
3. John H. Archer, *Saskatchewan: A History* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980), 272; Richards, *Prairie Capitalism*, 98 and 110; SAB, A 1008, Audio tape, "J. H. Brockelbank interview by B. Richards, 1976; A 1109, Audio tape, J. H. Brockelbank interview by M. Dobbin, 1976; R-A1113, Audio tape, Phelps interview by Dobbin, 1976; R-971, Audio tape, J. Phelps interview by B. Richards, 1976; R-8453, Audio tape, Phelps interview by Larmour, 1982; "Beaver Farming," *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, January 24, 1946.
4. Thomas H. McLeod and Ian McLeod, *Tommy Douglas: The Road to Jerusalem* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1987), 129-130; SAB, R-971, Audio tape, Phelps interview by Richards, 1976; "Another Importation," *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, February 15, 1946. The CCF wanted proven sympathizers and socialists as deputy ministers and in senior positions, and many CCF supporters held high positions. Socialist orientation often acted as a primary criteria in hiring, and nepotism and patronage existed, raising opposition in the press.
5. SAB, R-8452, Audio tape, Phelps interview by Larmour, 1982. Mr. Doakes, deputy minister when the CCF took over, did not support Phelps' ideas and asked for reassignment. L. C. Paterson became acting deputy minister, followed by H. Lewis as deputy minister, who did not satisfy Phelps.
6. SAB, S-M15, Box 17, "Game Branch, 1944-1946 (5)," B. L. Keighley to J. L. Phelps, Aug. 10, 1944 and Aug. 14, 1944; S-M15, Box 17, "Game Branch, 1944-1946 (5)," L C. Paterson to J. L. Phelps, August 18, 1944.
7. Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in Co-operation with the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan, *A Pictorial history of the Metis and Non-Status Indian in Saskatchewan*; Murray Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism: The CCF in Northern Saskatchewan, 1944-1964," *Studies in Political Economy*, (v. 16, 1985), 13; Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 188, 219; SAB, R-A1113, Audio tape, Phelps interview by Dobbin, 1976; Glenbow Archives, J. Brady Collection, M125, s. VI, f. 53, "Sask. Metis Notes, 1947-1952," M. F. Norris to W. Bryce, May 3, 1948; M125, s. III, "Correspondence, 1933-67," f. 22, "Norris, 1945-1967, (Mining and Native Rights)," Norris to Brady, Nov., 1964; W. O. Kupsch and S. D. Hanson, *Gold and other stories as told to Berry Richards* (Sask. Mining Assoc. Inc., 1986), 161. Liberal MLA John Cuelenaere and Premier Thatcher ordered Norris dismissed in 1965, after which he worked for the Friendship Centre in P. A. Norris died in 1967, following a stroke.
8. Glenbow Archives, M125, s. VII, f. 68, "Sask. Govt., 1946-1949," J. F. Gray to J. P. Brady, July 21, 1947; Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism;" 14; Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*,

195; SAB, S-NR2, DNR-ADM, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 2, "Administration Branch (W. H. Roney)," Roney to A. K. Quandt, Aug. 20, 1948.

9. Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 180-181; Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, *A pictorial history of the Métis and Non-Status Indian in Saskatchewan*; Glenbow Archives, M125, s. II, f. 8, "Personal, 1952-1962," N. Cook to Jim, Feb. 24, 1952; Norah to Jim, May 5, 1952.

10. Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 213; Glenbow Archives, M125, s. III, "Correspondence, 1933-67," f. 22, "Norris, 1945-1967, (Mining and Native Rights)," M. F. Norris to Dr. R. L. Cheesman, July 26, 1960.

11. Local people in La Ronge name a man they think killed Brady and his companion and offer details about the motivation for the alleged killings. Because of lack of substantiation and because of fears of repercussions for the persons involved, the story should be treated as a rumour.

12. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 137 C, "Northern Region," (3 files), A. K. Quandt to J. W. Churchman, Nov. 26, 1947.

13. SAB, R-907.2, J. H. Brockelbank Papers, v. II, f.12, "J. J. Wheaton, Northern Administrator," J. L. Phelps to J. J. Wheaton, March 5, 1948; S-M15, Box 5, "District Superintendents' Progress Reports, 1945-1946," Progress reports and related correspondence; S-M15, Box 16, "Fur Marketing, 1944-1946 (2)," Minister of Natural Resources to A. Cook, Sept. 21, 1945; S-M15, Box 18, "L. S. Horne, 1945," Phelps to A. G. MacAskill, Oct. 4, 1945.

14. SAB, A 1008, Audio tape, Brockelbank interview by Richards, 1976; R-971, Audio tape, Phelps interview by Richards, 1976; S-M15, Box 29, "Saltcoats Constituency, 1945-1946 (2)," J. L. Phelps, to A. H. Quandt, Nov. 27, 1944; S-M15, Box 29, "Questions, 1945-1946 (2)," Questions in the Sask. Legislature 1946 and question by Mr. Proctor, March 7, 1946.

15. Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 174; Evelyn Eager, *Saskatchewan Government: Politics and Pragmatism* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980), 57; Glenbow Archives, M125, s. VI, f 58, "1933 - 1964, Reprint from The News Optimist, North Battleford Sask. *A Fighter reenters politics: Joe Phelps will seek nomination*; Jan. 27, Jan 10, 1962.

16. SAB, A 1008, Audio Tape, Brockelbank interview by Richards, 1976.

17. Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism," 38.

18. DNR, Annual Report, 1953, 149; SAB, S-M16, A. M. Nicholson Papers, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," J. A. Collier to R. Brown, Nov. 27, 1957; SAB, S-M16, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," "Welfare and Development Policy for Northern Saskatchewan," Dec. 1957; Appendix A, "On Welfare and Development Policy for Northern Saskatchewan;" Vernon C. Serl, "Action and Reaction: An Overview of Provincial Policies and Programs in Northern Saskatchewan, Arthur K. Davis, Editor, *A Northern Dilemma: Reference Papers* (Bellingham, Washington: Western Washington State College, 1967).

19. Gary William David Abrams, *Prince Albert: The First Century 1866-1966* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1966), 353; DNR, Annual Report for 1949, 135; Dept. of Natural Resources, *The new north: Saskatchewan's northern development program, 1945-1948* (Regina:

Department of Natural Resources, 1948, 18; *Progress report from your government: a survey of Saskatchewan government activity* (Regina: Bureau of Publications, 1948), 35; SAB, R-517, Northern Health District, v. XIII, f. 10, "Various Services, 1950-1973," S. L. Skoll to Dr. A. C. Irwin, Sept. 29, 1965, and attached draft of "Proposed Reorganization of the Northern Health District," 12; "Civilization's Northern Drive Shatters Furthest Isolation: La Ronge Story Seen Revealing North's Future," *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, May 1, 1948; Serl, "Action and Reaction."

20. SAB, R-517 Dept. of Health, Comm. Health Services Br. (GR-278), (Records of Central Office, the 13 Health Regions and the Northern Health District), v. XIII- N. Health Dist., f. 9, "Organization, 1951-1971," A. C. Irwin to Dr. G. Kinneard, June 26, 1956.

21. The record does not indicate the exact year when Wheaton left. Here and elsewhere in this work, the term "about" precedes the approximate date of some events when the exact date is not known.

22. DNR, Annual Report, 1951, 149; Glenbow Archives, M125, s. II, f. 7, "Personal, 1922-1951," A. K. Quandt to "Dear Fellow Workers," April 11, 1949; SAB, S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 38, "Northern District (A. K. Quandt)," N. Dist. Field Officer Conf. beginning Jan. 31, 1949, Speech by J. W. Churchman; R-907.2, f. II 4a, "J. W. Churchman, Deputy Minister March 1948- March 1949," Churchman to C. A. L. Hogg, Sept. 17, 1948; R-907.2, f. II-12, "J. J. Wheaton, Northern Administrator," Budgets, N. Dist. and N. Admin. 1948-49; 1949-50; 1950-51; 1951-52, Nov. 29, 1947; R-907.2, f. II-12, "J. J. Wheaton, Northern Administrator," Wheaton to Hogg, "Re: Progress Report- Northern Administration District- Spring and Summer- 1948;" J. L. Phelps to Wheaton, April 5, 1948; S-NR 1/4, Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister Files, 167 B3, "Northern Region, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956," 1949 N. Dist. Field Officer's Conf. at P. A. Sask., Jan. 31- Feb. 1, Churchman, "Administration of the North;" S-NR 1/4, 230, "Northern Region- General," v. 1, 1948- December 31, 1954, J. H. Brockelbank to all N. Admin. Staff, August 1, 1949; Wheaton to R. T. Cook, March 19, 1948; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 2, "Administration Branch (W. H. Roney)," Roney to C. A. L. Hogg, Sept. 14, 1948; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 9, "The Chains of Control;" S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 38, "Northern District (A. K. Quandt)," N. Dist. Field Officer Conf. at P. A. beginning Jan. 31, 1949," Speech by Churchman; S-NR 2, C, "Personnel Files, 77," "A. K. Quandt."

23. DNR, Annual Report for 1955, 60-63; DNR Annual Report for 1957, 62.

24. DNR, Annual Report for 1959, NA 3, xvi; Glenbow Archives, M125, s. VII, f. 65, "Fisheries, 1957-1965," M. M., "Fisheries Policy - as of October, 1958," Sept. 26, 1958; SAB, S-NR 1/5, I. 20, (162R), "Consultative Committee on Northern Affairs, 1958," "Additional Information re Names proposed as possible Directors." The committee included T. K. Shoyama, B. N. Arnason, C. S. Edy, J. W. Churchman, and A. H. MacDonald.

25. DNR, Annual Report for 1965, 3.

26. SAB, A 1109, Audio Tape, Brockelbank interview by Dobbin, 1976; S-NR 1/5, I, 39, (230) "Northern Region, 1957-1959," D. D. Tansley to A. W. Johnson, "Alternative forms of organization for administration of provincial programmes in Northern Saskatchewan," Feb. 10, 1959; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 38, "Northern District (A. K. Quandt)," N. Dist. Field Officer Conf., P. A., beginning Jan. 31, 1949, Speech by J. W.

Churchman.

27. Laurie Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism," 31.

28. SAB, S-M16, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," Brief by N. Adv. Comm. on Metis of N. Sask., 1955; J. A. Collier to R. Brown, Nov. 27, 1957; "Minutes of the First Meeting of the Northern Advisory Committee," Dec. 9, 1953; "Welfare and Development Policy for Northern Saskatchewan," Dec., 1957; App. A, "On Welfare and Development Policy for Northern Saskatchewan."

29. SAB, S-NR 1/5, v. I, f. 45, (236), "Rehabilitation and Welfare, 1956-1958," M. Miller, "Welfare and Development Policy for Northern Saskatchewan," Dec., 1957.

30. SAB, S-M16, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," J. A. Collier to P. Spaulding, F. Warwick, J. Elliott, T. Phalen, R. Lavoy, P. Godt, R. Brown, Oct. 29, 1957; R. Brown to A. G. Kuziak, Jan. 7, 1958; S-M16, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," Collier to Brown, Nov. 27, 1957.

31. SAB, S-M16, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," A. G. Kuziak to Cabinet, April 22, 1958; T. J. Bentley, J. W. Erb, W. S. Lloyd, J. H. Brockelbank, and Kuziak to Cabinet, Feb. 3, 1958; S-M 16, v. VII, f. 4, "Tour of Northern Saskatchewan, 1959," M. Millar, "Some Problems and Premises of Policy for the Development of Northern Saskatchewan," Center for Community Studies Seminar, Saskatoon, Oct. 6, 1958; S-NR 1/5, v. I, f. 20, (162R), "Consultative Committee on Northern Affairs, 1958," Cabinet Memo., Cabinet Min. 8494, May 20, 1958; A. G. Kuziak to Cabinet, April 18, 1958; J. W. Churchman to Kuziak, Jan. 31, 1958; Churchman to Kuziak, March 31, 1958.

32. SAB, S-NR 1/5, v. I, f. 20, (162R) "Consultative Committee on Northern Affairs, 1958," A. H. MacDonald to A. G. Kuziak, July 17, 1958.

33. Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins*; Helen Buckley, J. E. M. Kew, John B. Hawley, "The Indians and Metis of Northern Saskatchewan: A Report on Economic and Social Development" (Saskatoon: Centre for Community Studies, 1963), 39-41, 51-52; Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism," 31; Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 209; "Municipal Government for Northern Saskatchewan" (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University, The Institute of Local Government, May 1975), 6, 8; SAB, S-NR 1/5, v. I, f. 39, (230), "Northern Region, 1957-1959," A. H. MacDonald to J. W. Churchman, Feb. 26, 1959; D. D. Tansley to A. W. Johnson, "Alternative forms of organization for administration of provincial programmes in Northern Saskatchewan," Feb. 10, 1959; Churchman to MacDonald, Feb. 16, 1959; Serl, "Action and Reaction," 64.

34. DNR, Annual Report, 1950, 146; DNR, *The new north. Saskatchewan's northern development program, 1945- 1948* (Regina: DNR), 18; L. D. Lovick, Ed., *Tommy Douglas Speaks* (Lantzville, British Columbia: Oolichan Books, 1979), 102; SAB, R-907.2, v. II f. 12, "J. J. Wheaton, Northern Administrator," Wheaton to J. L. Phelps, (2 items), Feb. 21, 1948; S-M15, Box 2, "Accounts Branch, 1945-1946;" S-NR 1/4, 167 B3, "Northern Region, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956," N. Dist. Conf., Oct. 5 - 10, 1953; S-NR 1/4, 167 B3, "Northern Region," N. Dist. and Admin. Org. Chart, Sept. 26, 1951; S-NR 1/4, f. 430, "Game and Fur Branch, E. L. Paynter, Game Commissioner," 1951 Game Br. Report to Field Officers' Conf.; S-NR 1/4, 137 C,

"Northern Region," (3 files), A. K. Quandt to J. W. Churchman, Nov. 26, 1947; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 38, "Northern District (A. K. Quandt)," Quandt to J. F. Gray, July 20, 1948; Quandt to Churchman, April 15, 1948.

35. Serl, "Action and Reaction." DNR had 344 permanent employees, including sixty-three in Fisheries, Forestry and Wildlife research and planning, and staff had risen about twenty-two percent since 1952.

36. J. E. M. Kew, *Cumberland House in 1960* (Saskatoon: Center for Community Studies, 1962); Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 212; Peter Worsley, "Bureaucracy and Decolonization: Democracy from the Top," Irving Louis Horowitz, *The New Sociology: Essays in Social Science and Social Theory in Honor of C. Wright Mills* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 388; W. A. Arrowsmith, "Northern Saskatchewan and the Fur Trade," Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1964, 126-127.

37. Kew, *Cumberland House in 1960*, 8; SAB, R-907.2, v. I, f. 2, "Cumberland House Settlement," M. Norris to J. J. Wheaton, Oct. 22, 1947, Report attached "Office of the Northern Administrator Report of an Economic and Social Survey of the Cumberland House District," Oct., 1947; S-M15, Box 2, "Accounts Branch, 1945-1946," S-NR 1/4, 235, "Cumberland House - General," v. 1, June 1948 to August 31, 1950, G. Burgess to J. S. White, Oct. 7, 1948.

38. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 230, "Northern Region," A. T. Davidson to J. W. Churchman, May 14, 1953; S-NR 1/4, f. 230, "Northern Region- General," v. 1, 1948- December 31, 1954, J. W. Churchman to A. Davidson, C. S. Brown, A. H. MacDonald, and E. L. Paynter, April 24, 1953; S-NR 1/4, f. 230, "Northern District- General," v. 2, 1954-1956, C. Salt to Brown, March 18, 1955; Brown to Salt, March 31, 1955. DNR's Chas. Salt paddled to Wollaston in 1954, remaining for about eight months. It took him time to gain the trust of the area's wary people, but he claimed to do so. Salt turned against DNR, criticizing it for collecting as much money as possible. He placed most of the blame for prosecutions on DNR and attributed infractions primarily to ignorance of the law. Although he wanted to remain, DNR sent him to Cumberland House, saying Wollaston's low population did not justify a permanent officer.

39. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 235, "Cree Lake," (2 files), J. J. Wheaton to J. W. Churchman, July 15, 1949; Churchman to C. L. MacLean, July 8, 1952; R. T. Francis to C. S. Brown, July 28, 1953; Brown to A. T. Davidson, Aug. 4, 1953.

40. SAB, R-907.3, f. 4, "Dominion Government Departments: Citizenship & Immigration (J. H. Brockelbank: Natural Resources)," "Report on the Interim Meeting SASKATCHEWAN FUR ADVISORY COMMITTEE Prince Albert- July 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>/52;" S-NR 1/4, 167 B3, "Northern Region," Minutes of N. Reg. C. O. Conf., Oct. 15-19, 1956; S-NR 1/4, f. 430, "Game and Fur Branch, General, 1951-1955," A. T. Davidson to J. W. Churchman, Oct. 4, 1956.

41. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 230, "Northern Region," N. Admin. Office to J. W. Churchman, March 25, 1953.

42. Morris Shumiatcher, *Welfare: Hidden Backlash* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1971), 99.

43. DNR, Annual Report, 1958, 75; SAB, R-907.2, v. II, f. 10b, "E. L. Paynter, Game Commissioner, September 1953- April 1955," "Recapitulation of Prosecutions Under Game

and Fur by Districts 1951-52 to 1954-55;" S-NR 1/4, f. 213, "Game and Fur, General, 1949 - 1957," Paynter to J. W. Churchman, Jan. 7, 1955; S-NR 1/4, f. 433, "Prosecution- Poaching, Illegal," Aug., 1956- Dec. 31, 1957, "Recapitulation of Prosecutions under Game and Fur by RCMP in Departmental Regions 1951-52 to 1955-56;" Recapitulation of Prosecutions Under Game and Fur by Regions 1951-52 to 1956-57;" S-NR 1/4, f. 433, "Prosecutions," April, 1954, v. 2, C. S. Brown to A. T. Davidson, July 21, 1955; Brown to N. Dist. CO s, July 21, 1955; Recap. of Prosecutions under Game and Fur by Districts, 1951-52 to 1954-55.

44. SAB, S-NR 1/4, f. 230, "Northern Region- General," v. 1, 1948- Dec. 31, 1954, E. Dodds to C. L. MacLean, Jan. 17, 1952.

45. SAB, S-NR 1/4, f. 433, "Prosecutions," B. A. Matheson to A. T. Davidson, Feb. 16, 1955; Matheson to Davidson, July 21, 1954.

46. Janet Feitz interview by author, La Ronge, 1999.

47. A. T. Davidson, "Role of Geographers in Saskatchewan," *The Canadian Geographer*, no. 4 (1954); SAB, S-NR 1/4, 112D. "Geographers" (2 files), J. W. Churchman to D. Cass-Beggs, Feb. 19, 1949; W. H. Roney to Office of the N. Exec. Asst., March 7, 1949; Churchman, to E. E. Chorneyko, Aug. 16, 1954; R. G. Young, to Prof. W. J. Talbot, Oct. 16, 1954.

48. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 167 B3, "Northern Region, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956," N. Dist. Field Officers' Conf., Jan. 9-13, 1951; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 39, "Northern Executive Assistant (R. T. Cook)," DNR Circular No. DM-1, Dec. 27, 1948.

49. DNR, Annual Report, 1953, Introductory letter from J. W. Churchman to J. H. Brockelbank, and 99; *Progress: A Survey of Saskatchewan Government Activity* (1955), 15.

50. DNR, Annual Report, 1953, 163; DNR, Annual Report, 1954, 75-76; DNR, Annual Report, 1955, 86; DNR, Annual Report, 101; DNR, Annual Report, 1961, 159-160.

51. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 230, "Northern Region - General," v. III, 1957- , A. T. Davidson to D. G. Wesley, Nov. 21, 1956; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 2, "Administration Branch (W. H. Roney)," J. W. Churchman to W. H. Roney, Sept. 27, 1948; S-NR2, (A) Subject Files- August 1944- April 1949, f. 37, "Northern Administration (J. J. Wheaton)," A. K. Quandt to Churchman, Dec. 15, 1948.

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58. SAB, S-NR 1/4, f. 113 C, "Northern Region," (3 files), C. F. Oatway to Northern Administrator, Oct. 31, 1951.
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70. Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, *A Pictorial history of the Métis and Non-Status Indian in Saskatchewan*.
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74. DNR, Annual Report, 1964, 43.
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78. SAB, S-M16, v. VII, f. 3, "Parks and Lands Branch, 1961-63," C. S. Brown to A. T. Davidson, Oct. 29, 1957; J. B. McLellan to Brown, Oct. 16, 1957; S-NR 1/5, v. I, f. 76, (411), "Buffalo Narrows. 1957-1961," L. M. Reznechenko to Attorney General of Canada, Jan. 29, 1958; Brown to Davidson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Jan. 30, 1958; Brown to Davidson, April 22, 1958.
79. SAB, R-517, v. XIII, f. 65, "Sandy Bay, 1960-1972," A. C. Irwin to Dr. G. Kinneard, Jan. 8, 1959; Attached note from (M. P.?) Edwards.



### Endnotes for Chapter 3

1. Saskatchewan Archives Board, [SAB], Dept. of Health, Comm. Health Serv. Br., v. XIII, f. 9, "Organization, 1951-1971," R. F. Badgley to Dr. M. S. Acker, May 3, 1960; "The Rat Race: What Have We Done For The Indians In Stony Rapids?" *Weekend Magazine*, June 13, 1970, 10-14. Many missionaries and priests showed great commitment to northerners. The Evangelical Church also increasingly became part of the northern scene.
2. This work primarily uses the term "Treaty Indian" to refer to the Indian people for whom Ottawa held responsibility. Treaty Indians were also status Indians, while status Indians were not necessarily Treaty Indians. Since treaties covered all of Saskatchewan, Treaty Indian and status Indian meant much the same thing within the province. The provincial government frequently used the term "Treaty Indian" when referring to status Indian people.
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4. Evangeline Lemaigre, "La Loche: Its History and Development," Unpublished essay, 1978, 15-18.
5. Richard H. Bartlett, "Indian and Native Rights in Uranium Development in Northern Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan Law Review*, v. 45, no. 1, Spec. Ed., "Uranium Development in Saskatchewan (1980/81), 31; Philip Ballantyne, et al, *The Land Alone: Aski-Puko*, (Prince Albert, 1976), 125.
6. SAB, R-907.2, II 4b, "J. W. Churchman, Deputy Minister May 1951- July 1954," J. H. Brockelbank, to Churchman, July 30, 1954; Churchman to Brockelbank, July 22, 1954; R. G. Young to Churchman, July 15, 1954.
7. SAB, S-NR 1/3, DNR, G-1-7, "Community Planning, General 1948-50," C. A. L. Hogg to L. Fortier, March 30, 1950; Fortier to Hogg, July 5, 1950; A. I. Bereskin to Hogg, Feb. 7, 1950.
8. V. F. Valentine, *The Metis of Northern Saskatchewan* (DNR, 1955), 2, 18.
9. Henry S. Sharp, "The Kinship System of the Black Lake Chipewyan," Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Duke University, 1973, 18-19; Helen Buckley, J. E. M. Kew, John B. Hawley, "The Indians and Metis of Northern Saskatchewan: A Report on Economic and Social Development" (Saskatoon: Centre for Community Studies, 1963), 5; James B. Waldram, "The 'Other Side': Ethnostatus Distinctions in Western Subarctic Native Communities," F. Laurie Barron and James B. Waldram, editors, *1885 and After: Native Society in Transition* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1986) 279-295; Robert Jarvenpa, *The Trappers of Patuanak: Toward a Spatial Ecology of Modern Hunters*, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper No. 67 (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1980), 5 and 61-62.
10. J. Helm, E. S. Rogers, and J. G. E. Smith, "Intercultural Relations and Cultural Change in the Shield and Mackenzie Borderlands," J. Helm, Vol. Ed., *Subarctic*, v. 6, W. C. Sturtevant, Gen. Ed., *Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 150, 157; M. L. Lutt, "Sociology and the Canadian Plains," R. Allen, Ed., *A Region of the*

*Mind: Interpreting the Western Canadian Plains* (Regina: Canadian Plains Studies Centre, University of Saskatchewan), 137; R. Davis and M. Zannis, *The Genocide Machine: The Pacification of the North* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1973), 9, 176; V. C. Serl, "Action and Reaction: An Overview of Provincial Policies and Programs in Northern Saskatchewan," *A Northern Dilemma A Northern Dilemma: Reference Papers*, A. K. Davis (ed.), (Bellingham, Washington: Western Washington State College, 1967), 15. Cultural genocide also may occur in the assimilation process. Cultural genocide can mean political, social, and economic disintegration. Education, language policy, resource exploitation, nucleation, and welfare programs can all contribute to cultural genocide.

11. D. French Shackleton, *Tommy Douglas* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 204; J. M. Pitsula, "The CCF Government and the Formation of the Union of Saskatchewan Indians," *Prairie Forum*, v. 19, no. 2 (Fall, 1994); L. H. Thomas, Ed., *The Making of a Socialist: The Recollections of T. C. Douglas* (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1982), 243-244.

12. Jim Pitsula, "The CCF Government in Saskatchewan and Social Aid, 1944- 1964," J. William Brennan (ed), *"Building the Co-operative Commonwealth: Essays on the Democratic Socialist Tradition in Canada"* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1985); SAB, R-A1113, Audio tape, Interview with J. Phelps, Murray Dobbin, 1976.

13. SAB, R-907.3, Brockelbank Papers, 7b, "Dominion Government Departments: Resources and Development," Brockelbank to R. H. Winters, Nov. 8, 1952.

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15. SAB, S-NR 1/4, 230, N. Region, C. S. Brown, "Northern Saskatchewan - A Special Problem," 8/3/56.

16. SAB, S-M 16, v. XV, n. 14, "Indians, 1955-64," T. J. Bentley to J. S. White, Feb. 7, 1957. This archival record does not mention Thomas' reaction or subsequent role in carrying out the plan.

17. DNR, Annual Report, 1952, 168.

18. James M. Pitsula, "The Saskatchewan CCF Government and Treaty Indians, 1944-64," *Canadian Historical Review*, v. 75, no. 1 (March, 1994), 24.

19. J. M. Pitsula, "'Educational Paternalism' Versus Autonomy: Contradictions in the Relationship Between the Saskatchewan Government and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, 1958-1964," *Prairie Forum*, v. 22, no. 1 (Spring, 1997), 47-71. By 1960, Ray Woollam worked as executive director of the Committee on Minority Groups, which replaced the Committee on Indian Affairs, and he helped co-ordinate CCF Indian and Metis policies. Sturdy chaired the committee until T. C. Douglas took over, a position he held until leaving for federal politics in 1961. Woollam favoured giving Indians the vote and liquor rights. The Committee on Minority Groups ended when replaced with the Community Development Branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs, which began on September 1, 1962. Woollam left in 1963.

20. Buckley, "The Indians and Metis," 51; W. B. Baker, "Some Observations on the Application of Community Development to the Settlements of Northern Saskatchewan," 8.
21. Glenbow Archives, Brady Coll., M125, v. VI, f. 56, "CCF 1954-1961," T. C. Douglas to my Indian Friends, May 30, 1960; Pitsula, "The CCF Government," 131; SAB, S-M 16, v. XX, f. 7, "Indians, 1958-63," Address by T. C. Douglas to Conf. of Sask. Indians, Fort Qu'Appelle, Oct. 30, 1958; Prov. Conf. of Sask. Indian Chiefs and Councillors," Fort Qu'Appelle, Oct. 30 and 31, 1958; "Tribal Chief Criticizes North School System," *Hudson Bay Post-Review*, Dec. 14, 1955.
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24. Glenbow Archives, Douglas, To my Indian Friends, May 30, 1960.
25. Pitsula, "The Saskatchewan CCF," 51; SAB, S-M 16, v. VIII, f. 1, "Planning Board, 1953-63," (1 of 2), J. S. White, to A. M. Nicholson, May 16, 1963; S-M 16, v. XIII, f. 264, "Public Assistance, Indians and Metis, 1952-64," A. M. Nicholson to J. S. White, June 11, 1963; "Treaty Indians and Northern Administration," Nov. 18, 1963; S-M 16, v. XV, f. 14, "Indians, 1955-64," M. H. Greenwood to G. J. Darychuk, Aug. 8, 1963; "Proposals by the Department of Education for the Extension of Provincial Educational Services to Treaty Indian People," 1963; "Proposals by the Department of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation for Extending Provincial Welfare Services to Registered Indians," November, 1963; "Saskatchewan Brief to the Dominion-Provincial Conference Indian Affairs," Draft, Nov., 1963.
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27. Pitsula, "The Saskatchewan CCF," 23, 51.

28. Glenbow Archives, M125, III, "Correspondence, 1933-67," 22, Norris, 1945-1967, (Mining and Native Rights), M. F. Norris to J. Brady, Feb. 15, 1962; James M. Pitsula, "The Thatcher Government in Saskatchewan and Treaty Indians, 1964-1971: The Quiet Revolution," *Saskatchewan History*, v. 48, no. 1 (Spring, 1996); Laurie Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); McLeod, *Tommy Douglas*, 139-140. Shumiatcher advised Douglas for a time, while John Sturdy, an "expert" on Indians, later became Douglas' special assistant. Their jurisdictions included both the South and the North.
  
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31. Peter Goode, Joan Champ, and Leslie Amundson, *The Montreal Lake Region: Its History and Geography* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Sentar Consultants Ltd., 1996), 40.
  
32. J. G. E. Smith, "The Ecological Basis of Chipewyan Socio-Territorial Organization," A. McFayden Clark, Ed., *Proceedings: Northern Athapaskan Conference, 1971*, v. 2, Can. Ethnol. Service Paper No. 27 (Ottawa, 1975), 389-461; Robert Jarvenpa, "The Ubiquitous Bushman: Chipewyan-White Trapper Relations of the 1930's," *Problems in the Prehistory of the North American Subarctic: The Athapaskan Question*, J. W. Helmer, et al (Eds), (Calgary: Arch. Assoc., Univ. of Calgary, 1977), 165-183; Murray Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism: The CCF in Northern Saskatchewan, 1944-1964," *Studies in Political Economy*, (v. 16, 1985); Robert M. Bone and Milford B. Green, "Jobs and Access- A Northern Dilemma," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, v. 18, no. 3 (Fall, 1983), 95; V. F. Valentine, "Some Problems of the Metis of Northern Saskatchewan," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, v. 20 (1954), 93; Valentine, *The Metis of Northern Saskatchewan*, 10-13; Valentine and R. G. Young, "The Situation of the Metis of Northern Saskatchewan in Relation to His Physical and Social Environment," *The Canadian Geographer*, no. 4 (1954), 55.
  
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to Rev. S. Cuthand, Aug. 28, 1948; LaRocque to Sturdy, No date given; Cuthand to LaRocque, Aug. 6, 1948; A. I. Bereskin to C. A. L. Hogg, Nov. 1, 1948; Bereskin to Hogg, J. J. Wheaton, and A. K. Quandt, July 15, 1948; Wheaton to J. W. Churchman, Dec. 23, 1948; Churchman to Wheaton, Dec. 14, 1948; Malcolm F. Norris to Mr. Hogg, Nov. 25, 1948; "Civilization's Northern Drive Shatters Furthest Isolation: La Ronge Story Seen Revealing North's Future," *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, May 1, 1948.

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38. N. Village of Ile a la Crosse, "Ile a la Crosse . . . Northern Saskatchewan's Best Kept Secret;" Robert Longpré, *Ile-a-la-Crosse 1776-1976: Sakitawak Bi-Centennial* (Ile a la Crosse Bi-Centennial Committee, Ile a la Crosse Local Community Authority, 1977); SAB, R-517, Dept. of Health, Comm. Health Serv. Br. v. XIII, f.22, "Policy - Sanitation, 1951 - 1965," District Sanitary Officer to Mr. Schaeffer, April 14, 1953; S-NR 1/4, DNR, 137 C, "Northern Region," (3 files), C. S. Brown to A. T. Davidson, April 22, 1957; S-NR 1/4, DNR, 231 B, "Buffalo Narrows, 1949-1957," N. Admin. to J. W. Churchman, Nov. 3, 1950; S-NR 1/4, DNR, 235, "Buffalo Narrows," Davidson to Churchman, March 1, 1957; S- NR 1/4, 235, "Ile a la Crosse," Brown to H. M. Ross, April 22, 1957; S-NR 1/4, DNR, 551 C, "Northern Region," v. 1, 1950-57, Brown to Davidson, Att.: A. I. Bereskin, April 23, 1957; Brown to Davidson, June 22, 1956; Brown to Davidson, May 7, 1957; R. G. Young to Davidson, Oct. 30, 1956.

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Census Division 18, the division included an area south of the NAD. Population estimates varied widely, as for 1951, when DNR counted a NAD population of 9,657 while figures based on the census included 11,580 persons. Saskatchewan Hospital Service Plan records possibly offered the most accurate figures, although they also sometimes included an area outside the NAD.

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## Endnotes for Chapter Four

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## Endnotes for Chapter Seven

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