GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AND CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT

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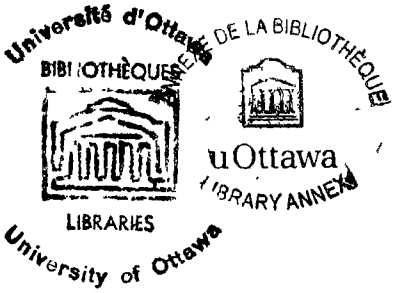

Ottawa, Canada, 1964

FOREWORD

The problems, duties and heartaches that have resulted from various positions concerning education of children have been many. Yet the great importance of this question demands constant vigilance and effort in order that justice and rights be respected. Catholics have always held that intellectual education must not be separated from religious and moral instruction. This complete education is primarily the grave duty of the parents who are consequently strictly forbidden to send their children to a non-Catholic school — even though no religion is taught there. Only the bishop has the power to dispense parents from this duty and then only if there is no positive danger of the children's perversion and no suitable Catholic school is available. This position has often been challenged — and it was challenged in the Mackenzie District where it has resulted in a compromise between the policy of the Government and the policy of the Church.

Until 1953, most of education facilities for the people of the Mackenzie District were provided by the Catholic and Anglican Missions that had been established in the north. Following the Second World War, the Dominion Government brought in legislation that resulted in education administration coming under the control of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. The writer came to

know of this legislation nearly ten years ago when he was employed by the Federal Government to work in the Education Office at Fort Smith, N.W.T. During 1956, he left Fort Smith for Ottawa to begin studies for the priesthood and this fall he will return to work in the Mackenzie District as an Oblate of Mary Immaculate. His interest in education and religion has prompted the work on this thesis. The purpose of this thesis is to follow the historical development of Government legislation in the Mackenzie District and to see to what extent this legislation has helped or hindered the development of Catholic Education in this area.

The author wishes to thank Rev. Fr. Jean Trudeau, O.M.I., under whose guidance this work was undertaken and to Mr. I. Fitzpatrick, of the Curriculum Division of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, whose aid in the development of this thesis was most valuable. Thanks are also extended to the Most Reverend Paul Piché, O.M.I., Bishop of the Mackenzie Vicariate, for his encouragement in this work; to Rev. Fr. Sylvio Lesage, O.M.I., Director of R. C. Mission, Fort McMurray, Alberta; Mr. Norman Byrne, Chairman of Yellowknife Roman Catholic Separate School Board; Rev. Fr. F. Ebner, O.M.I., Director of May River R. C. Separate School; Rev. Fr. Jean Fochat, O.M.I., Director of Foyer Grandin in Fort Smith; Mrs. Strong, librarian of the Northern Affairs Library, Ottawa; and Rev.

Fr. J. Mulvihill, O.M.I., Acting Director General of the Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission in Ottawa, for their help in procuring books and material. Finally, thanks are extended to many of my colleagues at Sedes Sapientiae, who by their research, suggestions and encouragement were of great help.

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INTRODUCTION

Within the country of Canada, lies a million and a quarter square mile area of rock, muskeg and lakes which is called the Northwest Territories. This land area is usually referred to as "the north" and extends the width of the continent and from the 60th parallel to the North Pole.

The north has always looked like a tough frontier because of its cold climate. However, even in the Arctic the weather can sometimes become quite warm. At Inuvik, well north of the Arctic Circle the temperature can rise to 80 degrees on a July day. In the southern Mackenzie River area, at Fort Smith, there has been recorded a high temperature of 103 degrees. It is true that such temperatures do not last long, but during July the people leave their homes and take to the lakes for swimming, boating or fishing, much like their fellow Canadians do in the south. The winters are dark and cold, but the dry winter cold does not chill as much as the damp cold in some parts of Southern Canada. Also, new insulated type of clothing and central heating systems have taken away some of the fear people have of the cold.

Both the Indians and Eskimos belong to the Mongoloid race and possess basic Mongoloid features as straight black hair, brown eyes, high cheek bones and wide face. Though they have these similar physical features, the Indian and

Eskimo have little else in common. The Indians live within the northern forest and their whole culture is adapted to the conditions there. The Eskimos, on the other hand, have lived for centuries on the coasts of the barrenlands. These lands are located in the northern area of the Northwest Territories, and are called barren because on this land area there are no trees. They extend north of a line beginning at the mouth of the Mackenzie River and proceeding in a generally south-easterly direction to a point on the west shore of the Hudson's Bay just north of Churchill, Manitoba. The Indians live south of this tree line called the sub-Arctic and build their homes in the forest and they kill forest animals. The Eskimos live where there is no forest, and build their home on the bare Arctic land and they get their main supply of food from the Ocean.

For nearly three centuries men have gone to the north — first the explorers, then the traders and missionaries. Each of these groups of Euro-Canadian settlers had a special relationship with the aborigines people of the north. The explorers needed the Indians and Eskimos as guides and workers, and used them when they travelled the rivers or blazed new trails. Only in this way could they be sure of getting to their destination with safety. The fur traders hunted out the natives to buy furs from them in exchange for their own merchandise. The missionary went

amongst the Indians and Eskimos to convert them to a true belief in God and to prepare them for the new changing society they would find around them.

Until 1875, the Northwest Territories were administered from Fort Garry (Winnipeg), Manitoba, by the Lieutenant-Governor and his North-West Council. However, the adoption of the Northwest Territories Act of 1875 provided that the Territories be administered by a resident Lieutenant-Governor assisted by a council and invested with both executive and legislative powers.

One third of the total area of Canada lies north of the provinces. This vast area is divided into two districts, the Eastern Arctic and the Mackenzie District. The Mackenzie District is that part of the Northwest Territories west of the longitude line 100 degrees.

The form of Government which is administering the Mackenzie District was set up under the Northwest Territories Act of 1951. This act provided for the appointment of a Commissioner, with residence in Ottawa, as director of the Northern Administration Branch of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. The council is composed of nine members: four are elected from constituencies in the Mackenzie District, while the remaining five members are appointed by the Federal Government. This Council has been delegated certain legislative powers roughly analogous to

those enjoyed by a provincial legislature. It has enacted a body of law, known as ordinances, including provision for the establishment of local municipalities and school districts. As a consequence of this legislation the towns of Yellowknife and Hay River have been incorporated and three school districts have been established: two in Yellowknife and one in Hay River. These towns and school districts conduct their own affairs in much the same manner as do municipalities and school districts in southern Canada.

Except for those areas legally incorporated as towns, Federal Civil Servants still administer the Mackenzie District on behalf of the Northwest Territories Council. The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories is also the Deputy Minister of the Federal Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and it is chiefly employees of this Federal Department that provide Territorial services in the north. By agreement between the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and the Council of the Northwest Territories, the Education Division of the Northern Administration Branch of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources operates the school system.[1]

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1 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Teach in Canada's Northland, Ottawa, mimeographed, p. 6.

Prior to 1946, the only school facilities in the Mackenzie District, other than the Public School in Yellowknife, were provided by the Anglican and Catholic Churches.[2] The Churches have been working in educating the Indians and Eskimos in Canada ever since the first permanent European settlements were established in Canada. The missionaries have always considered that it was their responsibility to civilize as well as Christianize the Indian people with whom they came into contact. They first went into the Mackenzie River District about the middle of the nineteenth century and the work of educating the Indian and Eskimo children commenced shortly afterwards as one of the first steps in the conversion of the aborigines of the district. The first Christian missionary to approach the Mackenzie District was a Methodist minister named James Evans. He taught the Chipewyan Indians on Lake Athabaska in the year 1842. Five years later a Catholic priest, Father Taché catechized the Indians at Fort Chipewyan and Father Henry Joseph Faraud established a permanent mission there in 1849. The first missionary priests to venture into the Mackenzie District itself were Fathers Faraud and Grandin, who went as far north as Great Slave Lake in 1852.[3] In 1858, the first

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2 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Teach in Canada's Northland, p. 6.

3 Richard Finnie, Canada Moves North, New York, MacMillan Co., 1943, p. 47.

permanent mission within the Mackenzie District was established at Fort Resolution by Father Peter Henry Grollier. During the next two years Father Grollier also established missions at Fort Rae, Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Fort Norman and Fort Good Hope. During the same period of time, the Anglican missionaries were also establishing mission centres. Archdeacon Hunter established a mission at Fort Simpson in 1858 and Reverend W. W. Kirkby had missions established in Arctic Red River and Fort McPherson.[4] These two Religious groups are still laboring in the Mackenzie District where the vast majority of the natives have become members of either the Catholic or the Anglican faith.

It may be said that wherever the missionary was located some educational work was carried on.

> In the majority of missions where they stayed, the Catholic missionaries had opened schools to instruct the Indian children in order to form them in the Christian way of living and, insofar as possible, to educate them to use the benefits of civilization.[5]

The work of the Anglican missionaries in providing opportunities for the education to the Indian children was reported as follows:

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4 Richard Finnie, Canada Moves North, p. 47.

(5) Dom Benoit, Vie de Mgr. Taché, Archevêque de St-Boniface Montréal, Librairie Beauchemin, 1904, Vol. 2, p. 424.

> These Indians receive instruction with avidity, whether in religion or other subjects; and they have taught one another to read the Gospels printed in their own language.[6]

The federal government has also often spoken about the work of the missionaries in the field of education:

> Historically the churches have had a long and fruitful association with Indian education. In fact, a century ago, the churches provided the majority of schools.[7]

And again:

> It would be unfair to deal with education of the Mackenzie District without paying tribute to the part played by the Anglican and Catholic missionaries. Great credit is due to the clergy in promoting an interest in education and in operating schools, especially before they received any government aid. Under the auspices of the Anglican Church, a boarding school was opened at Hay River in 1894 and at Aklavik in 1936, and day schools were operated at such places as Fort McPherson, Tuktoyaktuk, Fort Simpson and Fort Smith. The first boarding school in the Mackenzie District was opened at Fort Providence in 1867. Other boarding schools, under auspices of the Catholic Church were opened at Fort Resolution in 1903 and at Aklavik in 1925. The Catholic Church also established day schools at Fort Smith in 1915 and at Fort Simpson in 1925.[8]

These statements are all to the "glory" of the missionaries. They were devoted men not only to God but also

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(6) Bishop Pompas, The Diocese of Mackenzie District, quoted by S. Gould, Inasmuch, Toronto, 1917, p. 141.

7 Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Indian Affairs Branch, Indian Education, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1962, p. 9.

8 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Indian and Eskimo Education, Ottawa, [1956], mimeographed, p. 6-7.

to the natives whose rights they tried to protect in cooperation with other interested institutions.

A hundred years ago the Indians and Eskimos lived by hunting and fishing but the wanton slaughter of animals for sports or hides with modern firearms soon destroyed the supply of food for the native. Also as European settlers began to settle in the country, their interests came into conflict with those of the Indian hunters. As a result, over a period of many years, agreements were reached between Indians and Eskimos and non-natives under which the privileges and rights of both groups are protected. For the Indians, an Act was passed which embodied all the rights and agreements with the Indians and the government. The Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration administers the Indian Act. It provides social welfare services, helps Indians to find jobs, makes grants for housing, administers trust monies and aids them in establishing commercial enterprises such as fishing co-operatives. Education of Indians of the Northwest Territories, however, is under the care of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

Within the Mackenzie District there were no treaties aimed to set up Indian Reservations as had been done in Southern Canada. Most of the land in the Mackenzie is not valuable enough to attract many settlers so the Indian and

Eskimo still have vast hunting grounds. There is no need for individual land ownership in so large a district with so small a population. Even today, when Euro-Canadian citizens outnumber the native citizens, two to one, the Indian and Eskimo population still live in their own settlements and are able to roam over large areas of unused land.

Even though the Mackenzie District has no reservations, the government policies towards Indian education was much the same as for reservations outside of the Mackenzie. Nearly one hundred years ago the first residential school was established at Fort Providence in the Mackenzie District. By 1948, four other Indian Residential Schools were being operated by the Anglican and Catholic authorities, two at Aklavik, one at Hay River and one at Fort Resolution. The curriculum of courses was not as rigid in these schools since their aim was to develop an educational program suited to the particular needs of the students themselves. Special attention was given to manual training and social and hygienic practices of the Euro-Canadian besides the regular primary school subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic. A typical curriculum was outlined by Alfred Harrison as it was seen by him in 1905:

> The girls are taught how to sew and how to make their own clothes, as well as how to read and write; whilst the boys, who are also trained in these academic, if elementary, exercises, acquire a variety of crafts which will be useful — in fact, indispensable — to them in after life. They learn, for

> example, how to grow vegetables and how to fish; and, as the Arctic fisherman has entirely to rely on his own hands and head, they are instructed in net-making and boat building, not to mention house-building. I may add that many of these children are a credit to the good Fathers who cheerfully give up their lives and money to this work.[9]

The big disadvantage to the Educational system in the Mackenzie District up to 1940 was that so few of the native population were able to obtain an education. There were neither the facilities nor the means of providing education for all the native children of the north. The government assisted the Church authorities with grants of money and school supplies but they were not sufficient to supply adequate residential or educational facilities for all the native children. In a survey conducted in the Mackenzie District in 1944, it was reported that

> According to the official census returns of 1941, there were in the North West Territories 1,007 Indian children between the ages of five and fourteen years, inclusive. Moreover, according to the same census, there were in the North West Territories 443 Eskimo children between the ages of five and fourteen inclusive. This makes a total of 1,450 native children of school age in the North West Territories. Only 170 of these were receiving schooling from the denominational schools in 1943-4.[10]

Since 1949, a great development has taken place with regard to Education in the Mackenzie District. A gradual

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9 Richard Finnie, Canada Moves North, p. 55.

10 Andrew Moore, Survey of Education in the Mackenzie District, reprinted from the Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Toronto, Vol. 11, No. 1, February, 1945.

consolidation of various types of schools under one authority began in 1954. In 1955, schools formerly operated by the Indian Affairs Branch were transferred to the Department of Northern Affairs. Then, in 1956, all mission school teachers became Federal School employees and the mission schools were consolidated with the Federal Government school system. Today the entire Mackenzie school system (with the exception of schools operated by school boards in organized school districts) come under the administration of the Educational Division of the Northern Administration Branch of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. It is responsible to the Government of the Northwest Territories and to the Federal Government for the educational program for the Northwest Territories in much the same way as a provincial department of education acts for a province in other parts of Canada.[11]

It would not be fair to write merely on the education of the native population of the Mackenzie District when most of the people living there are not natives. However, the education of white children do not present as much of a problem because nearly all of the Euro-Canadian population live in urban centres where local day schools provide them

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11 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, "Education in Northern Canada," in Canadian Education and Research, June, 1963.

with sufficient means to attain an education. Most of these towns have developed because of the natural resources found in the surrounding areas. Yellowknife became a bustling town in the wilderness due to the discovery of some of the richest gold ore in Canada and at present there are three gold mines in operation. Hay River is the centre of a big fish industry which brings an annual gross income of about one and a half million dollars. Such reserves of natural resources as these do draw a great number of white people to the area so that large and modern communities do develop. In two of these white centres, Yellowknife and Hay River, the Catholic population have united to establish Catholic Separate Schools. These schools are operated and regulated almost in the same way as are the Catholic schools in Southern Canada.

This thesis deals with a history of the progress of education, particularly Catholic education in the Mackenzie District. The first chapter of this thesis is concerned with the people of the Mackenzie District. There are three ethnic components of the population: Indian, Eskimo and Euro-Canadian. Both the Eskimo and Indian have the same racial origin but they differ in culture, language and physical appearance. The Indians live within the northern forests and their whole culture is adapted to conditions there, while the Eskimos live on the coasts of the barren lands.

In temperament too, their characteristics are very different. The Eskimo has a very open friendly manner and a cheerful optimistic nature, while the Indian seems to be quiet, withdrawn and suspicious of others. Today the aborigines of the north are a minority group and are faced with the problem of learning to live in a new Euro-Canadian environment.

Most of the white Euro-Canadian population is concerned with the exploitation of the natural resources and they live in the urban centres of Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Hay River and Inuvik. In the remainder of the north there is only a handful of white residents and for very few of these is the area a permanent home. Though the newly established white population shares the north with the native peoples, the two groups remain distinct in many ways and are learning only slowly from one another.[12]

Chapters two and three outline the efforts of the Catholic missionary and of the government officials toward the establishment of proper educational facilities for the children of the three ethnic groups of the Mackenzie District. These chapters deal with Government legislation and activities with regard to education and how this has

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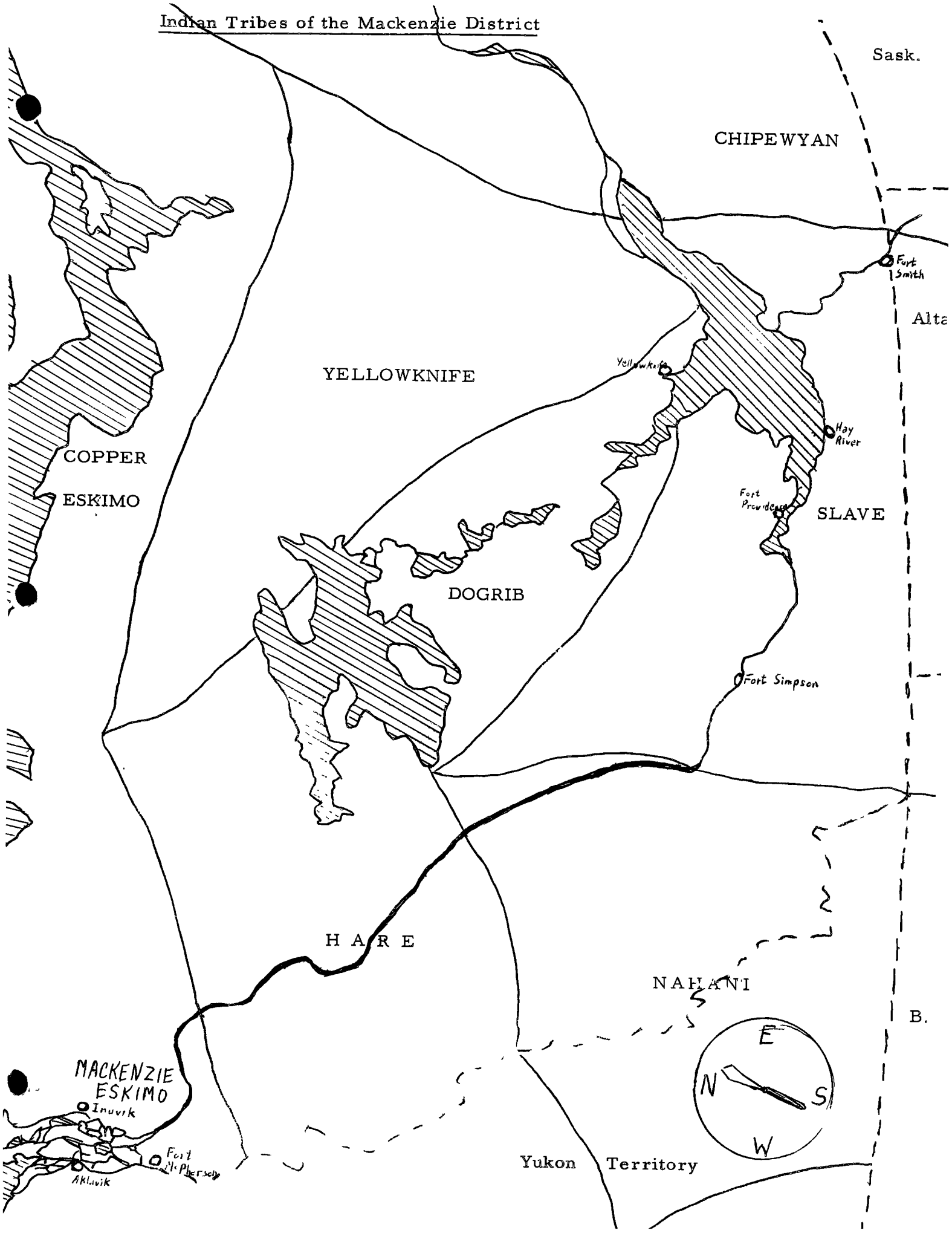
12 Jacob Fried, "White-Dominant Settlements in the Canadian Northwest Territories," in Anthropologica, Ottawa, Vol. V, No. 1, 1963, p. 65.

resulted in a system of Government-operated Federal Day Schools and Government-owned but Church-operated student residences. They are also concerned with the development, organization and purpose of the Separate Schools at Yellowknife and Hay River and of the Grandin Home Juniorate and the new Grandin College that have been established at Fort Smith. This thesis will discuss the way in which the Catholic Church and the government are attempting to adopt appropriate educational measures to help the natives acquire the learning and skill that will help them become self-respecting and self-supporting Canadian citizens.


Indian Tribes of the Mackenzie District
Sask.
CHIPEWYAN
Fort Smith
Alta
YELLOWKNIFE
Yellowknife
Hay River
COPPER ESKIMO
Fort Providence
SLAVE
DOGRIB
Fort Simpson
HARE
NAHANI
B.
MACKENZIE ESKIMO
Inuvik
Fort McPherson
Aklavik
E
N
S
W
Yukon Territory

CHAPTER I

THE PEOPLE OF THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT

1. The Indians

a. Name, Population and Distribution of the Tribes

The first human inhabitants of Canada were the Indians. Scientists believe that wars or famine, some fifteen thousand years ago, probably forced a small band of Asian people to cross the Bering Strait in search of safety or food.[1] The fifty miles of water separating the two continents of Asia and North America either froze over providing a bridge between Siberia and Alaska for the crossover, or adventurers crossed over the strait in boats to find the North American continent and to make their home in the new land. Scientists also have sufficient evidence to form a belief that these first American residents, probably in following the migration of wildlife, gradually wandered south and settled in what is now called the United States and Southern Canada. The present inhabitants of the Mackenzie District were probably the last of the Indian tribes to drift from Asia across the Bering Strait into the New World before Europeans began sailing across the ocean to come to

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1 Eileen Jenness, Indian Tribes of Canada, Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1933, p. 1.

America. This conjecture is based on the fact that the Mackenzie District Indians are the only Indians to speak dialects of the Athapaskan language.[2] This language preserves definite traces of Asiatic origin, having a tonal system that gives it a slightly sing-song character and many words are similar to the languages that today prevail throughout China, Siam and Tibet. There is no knowledge to be gathered from the Indians themselves of their origin or early movements because of the long span of time involved and also because they had no knowledge of writing to record their activities before the arrival of the European settlers.[3]

In appearance the average Athapaskan Indian is in no way remarkable. His stature is moderate and his build rather slender. His face is of a tan color and usually oval shaped; his hair is straight and black and his cheekbones are slightly prominent. His dark eyes often reveal traces of the Mongolian fold.[4]

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2 Eileen Jenness, Indian Tribes of Canada, p. 87.

3 W. C. Bethune, Editor, Canada's Western Northland, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1937, p. 50.

4 Ibidem, p. 52. Note: Mongolian is one of the five principal races in the world. It is an Asiatic race belonging to the yellow-skinned straight-haired type of mankind. The Mongolian fold is a fold of the eye-lid that makes the eye appear slanted.

The six Indian tribes living within the Mackenzie District are distributed as follows:[5] In the southeast part of the district live 700 members of the two thousand member Chipewyan Indian tribe. The other members of the tribe live in the Eastern Arctic region. Directly north of the Great Bear Lake live the Yellowknife Indians, a tribe closely related to the Chipewyan Indians. This tribe received its name from the fact that its tools and weapons were made from nuggets of gold-colored native copper. In the forest area surrounding Great Slave Lake, lives the largest tribe of the Mackenzie District — the sixteen hundred member tribe of the Slave Indians. Most of the Slave Indians continue to earn their living as they did in the past, by hunting the woodland cariboo and the moose, and by fishing in Great Slave Lake. North of the Slave Indians, occupying the area between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake resides the nine hundred member tribe of the Dogrib Indians. North of Great Bear Lake live the Hare Indians — a tribe whose subsistence consists mainly of killing hare whence their name arrives. Within the mountainous area near the Yukon border live the eight hundred members of the Nahani Indian tribe. The Indians of the Nahani tribe are primarily hunters of big game animals and since they live in a somewhat isolated and

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5 See Appendix 2 for more detailed description of the Indian tribes.

mountainous area they mix little with anyone outside of their own tribe.[6]

b. Main Elements of Indian Culture

Before the coming of the Euro-Canadians into the Mackenzie District the Indian was quite self-sufficient. He lived in the northern forests where he could find wood for fuel, shelter, and the snowshoes and toboggans on which he would travel in winter, and also where he could obtain bark for the canoe that would carry him over the innumerable lakes and streams in summer.

The Indian of the Mackenzie District got his food by hunting and fishing in a land where game was often scarce. Life was undoubtedly a struggle for existence and the Indian had to get all the types of food available in order to obtain enough food to live. The hunter snared wild animals and then killed them with bow and arrow or spear. The Indian also picked berries for food or fish in the lakes when he was unable to hunt and kill caribou or other game for his food. For fishing he used either nets made of twisted willow bark or caribou raw-hide, or he used a bone fish-hook

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6 Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Traditional Linguistic and Cultural Affiliation of Canadian Indian Bands, Ottawa, 1963, mimeographed, p. 15. See also: Map above.

which he would troll from a canoe in summer or jig through a hole in the ice in the winter.[7]

The Indian was most ingenious in using everything that he brought home from a hunt. The woman would treat caribou or moose hide to make light and warm garments and sometimes she would decorate the clothing with shells and painted designs. The summer home of the Indian was small and made from animal skins. In the winter he generally lived in a small rectangular hut of birch bark or logs. His tools were made of bone, stone or copper and his canoe would be made of birch bark or animal skins stretched over a wooden framework. His belongings would be few and light since he led a nomadic life, hunting and fishing wherever the game was most plentiful.

c. The Athapaskan Indian
Political and Social Organizations

The Indian political and social life was exceedingly simple. He would usually go with a band of Indians and acknowledge the leadership of one of the band, usually the more experienced and successful hunter or warrior.[8] The leader had little power for he could not impose sanctions or

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7 W. C. Bethune, Canada's Western Northland, p. 55.

8 Douglas Leechman, Native Tribes of Canada, Toronto, W. J. Gage & Co., 1950, p. 221.

make laws. His recognition was principally one of prestige. There was only one leader in a band but he could easily fall from his place of leadership to be replaced by some new hero. Disputes were few within each band of Indians, the ties of kinship generally sufficed to maintain harmony within the band. Differences of opinion were often settled by an informal council of hunters which will make a judgement and order compensation or a settlement in some other way.

Women seemed to have a hard life in the social structure of the Indian community. The man was considered "the hunter" while the wife would usually have to do the hard work in connection with the hunt. She would carry the packs, prepare the hides for clothing or tents and take care of the family. If the husband was a capable hunter, he might have several wives to share in the work of tanning and sewing the skins he brought in from his hunting and in carrying his possessions. Men would often fight to gain a wife and the woman had to follow and work for the victor.[9] Sometimes the Indian woman who had a female child would kill her or let her die, saying it was better for her to die without having known the hard work, hunger and pains she would have to suffer if she was allowed to grow up.[10] Also the desertion of

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9 W. G. Bethune, Canada's Western Northland, p. 56.

10 Douglas Leechman, Native Tribes of Canada, p. 221.

the infirm or aged of both sexes was frequent within several of the native groups who found it difficult to obtain sufficient food or sufficient time to take care of them.[11]

Recreation among the Athapaskan Indians was very limited. Medicine men sometimes entertained with various tricks and the Indians had a few very simple games. Their main diversions were dancing or gambling. Their social gatherings were usually festivals or annual feasts for the dead and lunar feasts on the date of each new moon. Singing was reserved mainly for mourning the dead.[12] Nearly all of their social functions had some practical or religious purpose.

d. Religious Beliefs of the Indian

The Indians had little time to develop or spend on any formalized type of religion. Yet, magical practices were common in their life. Their religion could be classed in the group called "animism" for they believed that the forest and all natural objects were inhabited by spirits and the people observed many taboos to avoid giving offence to

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11 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada, Ottawa, National Museum of Canada, 1934, p. 386, 393 and 395.

12 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Peoples of the Northwest Territories, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1960, p. 9.

these spirits.[13] Youths fasted and prayed that they might receive help from these spirits in their hunting. Some of the tribes would make sacrifices to the spirits or use magical charms believing that they could bring good fortune on a hunt. Almost every tribe had medicine men whom the natives believed could foretell what would happen or inflict or cure diseases.[14] The Slave Indian would not shoot a wolf, because he thought that the spirit of his grandmother might be in the wolf and he did not want to kill the spirit of his grandmother. He also believed that if he were to shoot a moose, his gun would never shoot straight again. Pierre Berton writes that some of these beliefs were yet present in 1956.

> When the priests aren't about, medicine men still chant over the sick, waving charms made of ducks' heads and beaver and occasionally mink skins sprinkled with water.[15]

The Indians had a variety of beliefs about what happened after death. Some anticipated a happy hunting ground far beyond some distant lake or stream where they would rejoin friends and kin. Others believed in reincarnation. They generally accepted death without horror or apprehension,

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13 Douglas Leechman, Native Tribes of Canada, p. 224.

14 Eileen Jenness, Indian Tribes of Canada, p. 98.

15 Pierre Berton, The Mysterious North, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1956, p. 322.

accepting it as the natural end of life. Actually they were usually so preoccupied with the present that they gave little attention to the future.[16]

2. The Eskimos

a. Name and Culture of the Eskimo Groups

The Eskimos can be grouped into tribes in the same way as the Indians though this is less frequently done. The same close relationship exists: the family is the social unit, and several families frequently unite to form a temporary group for greater security and for mutual assistance. There are two distinct groups of Eskimos within the Mackenzie District. The Mackenzie Eskimo is grouped in the area around the delta of the Mackenzie River while the Copper Eskimo makes his home near the Arctic coast around the Coronation Gulf.[17]

The Eskimos depend mainly on sea mammals for food. In the summer, seals, walrus and whales are harpooned from kayaks, and in the winter, seals are hunted both at their breathing holes in the ice and at the ice flows. The most important land animal to the Eskimo is the caribou. They

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16 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Peoples of the Northwest Territories, p. 9.

17 See Appendix 2, parts G and H.

are driven into ambushes and there they are killed. Fishing is also a significant occupation, and berries and birds also supply the Eskimo with food.

The total number of Eskimos in the Mackenzie District would be approximately twenty-seven hundred members.[18] The physical appearance of the Eskimo shows even more evidence than the Indian that he is part of the Mongolian race. In all possibility, the Eskimo came to the North American continent the same way as the Indian had preceded him. Researchers believe that the Eskimo also came from Asia across the Bering Strait but probably not more than three or four thousand years ago. Their peculiar customs and mode of life have so many links with the customs of many of the Athapaskan Indian tribes that one suspects not merely borrowing on both sides, but the derivation of their cultures from the same or kindred sources in past ages.[19]

The Eskimo first became widely known from the accounts of the British naval expeditions a hundred years ago. When they were first discovered they had already developed a most remarkable culture. They were often called "the raw flesh-eaters" because they would eat their meat or fish raw.

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18 Received from Mr. Leamy, Statistician of Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, by phone March 16, 1964.

19 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada, p. 405.

Their tools and weapons were simple yet extensive enough to cover any need. Spears, harpoons and bow and arrow were used as weapons and they were sufficient to kill sea or land animals. These animals provided other things as well as food. The blubber was the main source of fuel and was burnt in soapstone lamps to give both heat and light. Sealskins were used for boat covers, tents, summer clothing and boots. Ivory from walrus and baleen from whales were important materials for weapons and implements and whale bone provided sled runners. The home of the Eskimo was a skin tent in the summer and a hut or snow house in the winter. In the summer, goods were transported by water in the umiak boat. The umiak, like the small kayak, was made of skin stretched over a bone or driftwood framework, and would sometimes be built large enough to carry as many as thirty people with their possessions. In the winter these boats were put away and the Eskimo would use dog-teams for transport over the snow-covered land and ice-covered sea.

b. The Social and Political Organization of the Eskimos

The social organization of the Eskimo was based upon the family. Everyone in the Eskimo family had his special tasks and duties to perform in the home. The head of the family was expected to fish and hunt to provide food and skins for clothing. The Eskimo woman would cook, make

clothing, repair the tent or kayak and take care of the children. The young girls would help their mother in cooking, carrying water or in sewing while the young Eskimo boys would often hunt for birds or other small game close to the camp and thus help in supplying food for the family. Marriages were usually arranged by the parents. Intermarriage, polygamy, and the exchanging of wives and husbands from time to time were the custom and partners were allowed to leave each other for another partner should a marriage seem to be going unsuccessfully. The Eskimo children were generally loved very much by their parents and they were never bodily punished. The children usually responded to the treatment and were charming and cooperative rather than spoiled. In some areas where food was difficult to obtain, infanticide of female children was practised because a high population of hunters was necessary for the survival of a particular band or tribe. Raising a daughter would mean that a son could not be raised for a few years since the mothers nursed their children until they were two or three years old.[20]

The old and infirm were usually well cared for by the community but they generally found life very hard. When the old found that they had become a burden on the community

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20 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Peoples of the Northwest Territories, p. 18.

they would sometimes commit suicide or ask the group to leave them behind to die when they moved to a new hunting ground.

Leadership was not a matter of heredity. When groups of families lived together one man usually became leader owing to his strength of character, his success in hunting, or his practice of spiritual powers of a shaman.[21] His advice was sought and frequently followed but there was no compulsion and anyone was free to go his own way. Despite the lack of formal organization an Eskimo community was much more than a group of individual families. Their activities were often arranged to help one another so that, for instance, some would go inland to kill caribou for clothing while others hunted sea mammals for food and oil. In times of scarcity food was shared fully and hoarding by individuals was unthinkable. Public opinion, rather than informal laws, was the force that regulated behaviour. Lying and stealing were unknown but occasionally serious quarrels arose which resulted in bloodshed.

For entertainment, the Eskimo would participate in drum-dancing, singing and story telling. The Eskimo had a rich folklore and legends explaining natural phenomena and

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21 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Peoples of the Northwest Territories, p. 19. A shaman was a man or woman claiming to possess supernatural powers.

describing the exploits of heroic figures were handed down faithfully from generation to generation. Drum dances were also popular pastimes. The main figure was a singer who accompanied his song with beating on a drum while he danced, and the audience joined in the chorus. Other great pastimes for them were juggling, wrestling, a form of football, all which would furnish amusement for young and old.

c. Religious Beliefs of the Eskimo

The Eskimo community had religious officials who were known as shamans. Shamans were men and women who claimed, through the aid of their familiar spirits, to diagnose the causes of misfortune and sickness, to see what was happening far away, and to intervene between the lay Eskimo and the supernatural world. Some trained for this profession by apprenticing themselves to recognized practitioners, while others adduced their authority from sudden calls or visitations that came to them unheralded when they were wandering alone over their hunting-grounds. They practiced the art of divining and sometimes induce in themselves a sort of hysteria in which they would give utterances which were interpreted as oracles. The shaman would ascribe all sickness and misfortune to magical causes or to the violation of certain taboos. The religion of the Eskimo centred around whether they were pleasing or displeasing to the supernatural

beings who could help or harm them. As a result of this belief the Eskimos had many taboos in order to avoid offending the spirits. They believed that it was taboo to sew new deerskin clothing in the winter, cook caribou and seal meat together or do certain activities at certain times of the year. His religion was one of fear, in fact so much so that it hindered more than it helped them in their hard struggle to exist.[22]

3. The Euro-Canadians

The third ethnic group of people living within the Mackenzie District is the Euro-Canadian. Nearly all of the white population in this area are either employed by the government or are concerned with the exploitation of the natural resources of the district.

a. History of White Settlement

The early history of the exploration and early development of the Mackenzie District is interwoven with the early history of the fur trade. Under charter granted by Charles II on May 2, 1670, the Hudson's Bay Company was formed and became ruler of a vast and little known land area then called Rupert's Land. In 1771, Samual Hearne, an

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22 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada, p. 421-422.

officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, reached the Arctic Ocean at the mouth of the Coppermine River after a long overland journey from Churchill with a group of Chipewyan Indians. Another fur-trading company, the Northwest Company, was established in 1784 and its employees went even further northwest in order to establish trading posts. An employee of this company, Alexander Mackenzie, left their most northerly post, Fort Chipewyan, and in 1789 he became the first non-native to travel down the Mackenzie River to its delta at the Arctic Ocean. The discoveries and explorations by the fur companies explorers resulted in a great expansion of the fur trade by the two rival companies.

Trading posts were first established in the territory of the Athapaskan Indians about the year 1800 and many of the traders and their families made their home in the north country. Trading posts became centres of population and it was here that the missions and later the Northwest Mounted Police posts were established. The posts became the centres of European influence and this pattern has prevailed until very recently.

Within the Mackenzie District there were two Christian denominations at work, the Catholic Church and the Church of England. The majority of the Eskimos are professed Anglicans, while the majority of the Indians are professed Catholics. The missionary went to great lengths to

obtain converts but this was not their only concern. Both churches were interested in educating the natives and four residential schools were established in the district. Also missionaries of both churches did minister to the sick and hospitals were established at several northern centres for the native population. The missionaries also engaged in social work wherever possible. The work of the missionary has always been of great benefit to the natives in helping them to overcome the difficulties they encounter in adjusting to a new civilization. This fact is verified by the statement of Vilhjalmur Stefansson:

> Many travelers are hostile in their attitude towards missionaries, saying that they do far more harm than good in such places as China and Turkey, the interior of Africa, and the northern coast of Canada. I am not one of these. My opinion is that it would be a good thing for the Eskimos if they could be protected from our "civilization" as a whole. But if our civilization goes to them, as it is bound to do, I would be the last to say that the missionaries should not go wherever the trader and and whaler and prospector go. I think the missionaries help more than any class of persons to temper to the shorn lamb the bitter wind of our civilization.[23]

There were also a number of government workers, welfare workers, prospectors and miners who entered the Mackenzie District and they have had no great influence on the native population. It was, however, during the Second World

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23 Vilhjalmur Stefansson, The Northward Course of Empire, New York, MacMillan Co. Ltd., 1922, quoted in Richard Finnie, Canada Moves North, p. 44.

War that a great many whites entered the north. Engineers built a number of airfields and roads for military purposes and many of the natives were hired to work on these projects. The oilfield at Norman Wells, discovered in 1919, was developed and a pipeline was built to the ocean. New discoveries of gold in 1944 gave Yellowknife a big boost, the biggest boom in the north since the initial discovery of gold at Yellowknife ten years before. The Eldorado pitchblende mine at Fort Radium first gained fame as a source of radium but it became far more important during the war owing to its uranium which was needed for the release of atomic energy. The well advertised exploitation of these national resources resulted in a great deal of mineral exploration and brought a large number of prospectors into the Mackenzie District. The establishment of fishing in the Great Slave Lake and the extension of government services in the north have also resulted in the growth of centres of white population.

The recent introduction of the DEW Line and the Mid-Canada Line radar sites have brought many more white people into the north. They also brought a great deal of money and business to many previously isolated Eskimo and Indian settlements located near these installations. The engineers and technicians at these radar bases hired a large number of the native population so that in working together the native and white have learned much from each other. Many of the

natives discontinued their trap-lines and became wage earners. Their association with the whites brought them many of the white man's way of thinking and acting and their wages made them independent of the native tribe. The traders made a great deal of merchandise available to the natives including guns, tape recorders, western food and clothing and with their wage-earning capacity many of the natives buy these goods for their own use.

The opening of the Mackenzie District to settlement and use has brought about a great change in the life of the Indian and Eskimo of the North. The expansion of the fur trade took place towards the end of the eighteenth century and within a short time trading posts had spread to places as far north as the Arctic coast.

Wherever the white settlers came into contact with the Indian and Eskimo, they seemed to also bring the native a great deal of hardship and sometimes disaster. The Indian population in 1600 was estimated to be two hundred and twenty thousand but within three hundred years it had fallen to one hundred thousand.[24] The white contact with the Eskimo had a similar disastrous effect.

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24 Douglas Leechman, Native Tribes of Canada, p. 15.

b. Effects of White Settlement

The real requirements of the northern natives were extremely simple. They made and had at hand absolutely everything they needed for food, shelter and clothing. On the whole, they were content and happy. However, the traders brought trinkets, foodstuffs, and tools and weapons, and the natives were soon desiring these new materials. The rifle seemed to be a surer weapon than the bow and arrow and the fish-net was better than the spear but even these seemingly worthwhile things did bring the natives real problems. Wild game soon became diminished when the natives were able to kill them so easily. Oftentimes the animals were killed for sport or for its hide and the meat was allowed to go to waste. The native had always depended upon himself but new equipment made him dependent on the fur trader. The trader would sometimes outfit the native for hunting, trapping or fishing and then the native was forced to bring his catch to the trader and the price which the trader set would be the price that the native would have to accept. Soon the native became nothing more than an employee of the trader since the trader would supply all the equipment that the native would need and the native would then have to give up a certain amount of his catch. Sir Alexander Mackenzie in his book Observations on the Fur Trade, reports that sometimes the

wrong methods were even used to subject the natives to the trader. He wrote:

> This trading was carried on in a country very remote from all legal restraint; where there was nothing to prevent the employment of all manner of means that might lead to success. The bad conduct of the traders not only caused them to lose opportunities of making profits but also the esteem of the Indians and the respect of their employees, who were only too ready to follow their example.[25]

Even greater evils were brought to the natives by the new European settlers. It is reported that the Indians

> All alike paid the same heavy price for their contact with civilization, some even before they had actually encountered Europeans.[26]

One of the disastrous results the Indians suffered was the diseases brought by the Europeans to which the Indians were extremely susceptible. Smallpox, typhus and tuberculosis ravaged the Indians and one can only guess as to the number of deaths that they caused. Influenza also caused many deaths amongst the Indians. About three hundred Indians in the Mackenzie valley, almost ten per cent of the population, died of influenza in 1928. Although there were no accurate records kept it is believed that disease brought by

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25 Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Observations on the Fur Trade [no other data listed], quoted in Abbe C. Dugas, The Canadian West, Montreal, Librairie Beauchemin (Ltd), 1905, p. 113.

26 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada, p. 252.

the European resulted in the death of about half the Indians and two thirds of the Eskimos of the north.[27] The native population rarely, if at all, suffered from typhus, smallpox or pulmonary afflictions before the discovery of America by the Europeans, so these diseases exacted a heavier toll among the natives because they had never developed the slightest immunity.

An equally destructive menace as disease was the introduction of alcohol into aboriginal society. Brandy and whisky were some of items exchanged for furs. Concerning the Northwest Company it was written:

> During several years a crowd of other travellers ventured into the West with their merchandise, and especially with liquor, which they distributed amongst the Indians.[28]

The Indians had no alcoholic beverage in pre-European times, thus their drinking it caused very harmful effects, as they abandoned every restraint when drinking the white man's firewater.

> They do not call it drinking unless they become drunk, and do not think they have been drinking unless they fight and are hurt.[29]

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27 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada, p. 252 and 422.

28 Abbe G. Dugas, The Canadian West, p. 116.

29 N. Denys, Description and National History of the Coasts of North America, edited by W. F. Ganong, Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1908, quoted in Diamond Jenness, op. cit., p. 253.

The harmful effects were easily seen in the life of the Indian.

> Whisky and brandy destroyed the self-respect of the Indians, weakened every family and tribal tie, and made them, willing or unwilling, the slaves of the trading-posts where liquor was dispensed to them by the keg. Even the fur traders recognized its evils and gladly supported the government when it finally prohibited all sale to the Indians under penalty of a heavy fine.[30]

It is regrettable that these undesirable influences were working against the Indians at this period. As Diamond Jenness states,

> Disease and alcohol demoralized and destroyed the Indians just when they needed all their energy and courage to cope with the new conditions that suddenly came into existence around them.[31]

The opening of the Mackenzie District to settlement of the Euro-Canadian fur-trader did bring harmful effects to the native population but it also brought many good effects on their lives. First, there were many European commodities that did help to lessen the hardships and dangers that Indians faced in their daily life. There were metal tools, guns, medicines, and clothing that did go to improve the natives lot in life. Many of the early traders, too, were much more than a trader and natives came to him for advice, assistance and medical care. The trader also introduced them slowly to

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30 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada, p. 253-254.

31 Ibidem, p. 254.

a new way of life and thus prepared the native for the modern civilization which inevitably was going to become a part of their life. Whether they knew it or not, the fur traders were the first teachers of the Indian and Eskimo and their pioneering did help to adapt the native to a more modern way of living.

The early fur trader must also be given credit for the exploration and the peaceful settlement of the Mackenzie District. Their trail-blazing work made it possible for other men to settle and work among the native population. Among the first non-trader Euro-Canadian men to settle in the Mackenzie were the Catholic and Anglican missionaries. The Hudson's Bay Company greatly assisted the missionary in getting established in his work. This company did not directly sponsor any missionary but they would carry missionaries of all faiths free of charge in the company brigades, give them a house to live in until the mission was built and provide them with an interpreter. This helped the missionary to bring the Christian faith to the native and nearly all of them quickly transferred their allegiance to one or other of the Christian churches. This fur trading company also often provided school facilities and free transportation for those people interested in educating the native,

thus doing their best in helping and encouraging the education of the Indian and Eskimo.[32]

c. Education for the Native Children

A great many people who work with the native population are of the opinion that the natives would be far better off had the white men stayed away from the native settlements. They are probably right. However, whether it is for better or worse, the new civilization has thrust itself upon the native and he must be trained to make the best out of this circumstance. Traders, missionaries and government officials have submerged the native culture and many of their ancient patterns of thinking and living have vanished or are vanishing. The natives are now exposed to new cultural influences and their lives, together with the environment in which they live, have changed or are changing. This has resulted in a situation where the native is caught between two cultures and he can neither earn a good living by hunting, fishing or trapping nor can he earn sufficient wages within the white social-economic structure. This state of affairs is causing considerable suffering for the native and to try to help these people, the government and the churches are both working together to try to achieve an educational program that will give the natives the necessary

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32 Hudson's Bay Co., Shirlee A. Smith, Librarian, Received by mail February 10, 1964.

education to compete with the white person for wage employment. Their aim is to raise the standard of living and furnish the native with the skills and education to enable them to integrate fully in society. If the government and the churches can attain this aim the white man will have made considerable progress in erasing the harm he unwittingly brought to the native.

The Canadian Constitution made the Indian and Eskimo wards of the Dominion Government and provisions for the native population are listed in the Indian Act. This act provides for the establishment of schools and this the government did by first providing day schools for the natives. These day schools were conducted under the auspices of one of the religious denominations in the Northwest. However, these schools were unable to produce satisfactory results. Formal education in the classroom was something new to the native and he was unable to attain the habits and attitudes to encourage them to regular attendance at classes. Indian parents, too, did not understand the purpose nor realise the importance of education and often would not allow their children permission to go to school. Also, the Indians belonged to a nomadic race and children, particularly in the Mackenzie District, would often go with their parents to hunt, fish or pick berries and as a result they would miss school.

The missionaries, in seeking a solution to the problem of teaching Indian children, came to the conclusion that it would be easier to civilize and Christianize the Indian children if they were removed from the pagan milieu and placed in a residential type of school. The advantages of this type of school were the assured regular attendance at class, isolation from the retrograding influences of the settlement or the home, and the continual influence of the missionaries and teachers. The government also was able to see that the day school system was unsuccessful and in 1880, the Deputy Superintendent General of the Department of Indian Affairs, described the type of educational institution which he had in mind that would give the Indians the required education:

> The Indian youth, to enable him to cope successfully with his brother of white origin, must be dissociated free from the prejudicial influences by which he is surrounded on the reserve of his band. And the necessity for the establishment more generally of institutions, whereat Indian children, besides being instructed in the usual branches of education, will be lodged, fed, clothed, kept separate from home influences, taught trades and instructed in agriculture, is every year becoming more apparent.[33]

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33 Elmer Jamieson, Indian Education in Canada, an M.A. thesis submitted to the History Department, McMaster University, Hamilton, May 15, 1922 [no page number on microfilm copy].

This statement indicates that some of the government officials were becoming aware of the need of a residential type of school for the Indians.

The government allowed grants for the operation of Residential schools and four such schools were established in the Mackenzie District. These schools provided children who were from isolated locations to come into one place and there be educated. These schools proved to be very successful as these schools not only provided education facilities but also provided opportunity for athletics or sports. There were also teacher-counsellors who not only assisted students with their studies but also helped them to adjust emotionally and socially to school life.

Even today in the Mackenzie District there is a problem of bringing children together for schooling. It would be impossible to have a school in every settlement; so the solution was to bring children together into native residential schools. As a result, large residences have been built by the government at Fort Smith, Inuvik, Fort McPherson and Fort Simpson so to make possible the education of a large number of children. These residences are operated by the Anglican and Catholic Church authorities. The children residing in the residences attend Federal Day Schools operated by the government. Altogether, these residences provide boarding facilities for a thousand students, thus giving

them the opportunity of gaining the knowledge and training that is necessary to allow them to find a place in our civilised world.

CHAPTER II

LEGISLATION AFFECTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT

1. History of Legislation

One of the first buildings which new settlers would build when coming to Canada from Europe was the school. The first of these were established and administered by local authorities. Later, however, government bodies began to help by giving grants or any other assistance that might be required. In order to control the government bodies from assuming too much power over education and in order to set out the work and privileges of the government, laws were passed to protect the rights of local citizens and provide them with guides on how to furnish their children with a suitable education.

a. Educational Policy of the Government up to Confederation

It was during the 1840s that a system of government-controlled primary education was set in operation in Upper Canada and the first public secondary schools were similarly established in the 1850s. In Lower Canada, however, among the French-speaking people, the Catholic Church continued to manage the many tasks of education as it had from the time

of New France.[1] In 1841, the parliament of United Canada decided it was time to give some rules and standards with regard to education. Parliament passed a law in 1841 to regulate the establishment of schools which preserved the rights of the people in both Upper and Lower Canada. This law stated that:

> Whenever any number of the inhabitants of any township or parish professing a religious faith different from that of the majority of the inhabitants of such township or parish, shall dissent from the regulations, arrangements or proceedings of the common school commissioners with reference to any common school in such township or parish it shall be lawful for the inhabitants so dissenting, collectively to signify such dissent in writing to the clerk of the district council — and it shall be lawful for such dissenting inhabitants to establish and maintain one or more common schools in the manner and subject to the visitation, conditions, rules, and obligations in this Act provided, with reference to the common schools.[2]

By 1850, the state provided for public primary education in the whole area of the then settled Canada. However, the state made provision that the church-managed schools could continue to operate and it gave any minority in an established district the right to establish separate schools and the right to support such schools in the same way as the common public school, that is by taxes and by government

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1 J. M. S. Careless, Canada, A Story of Challenge, Toronto, MacMillan Co., 1963, p. 162. Upper Canada is the area known today as Ontario, Lower Canada refers to Quebec.

2 Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1905, Vol. 1, Cols. 1443-1452.

grant. In 1855, a minority right law concerning education was passed wherein it was stated that:

> Every such separate school shall be entitled to share in the fund annually granted by the legislature of the province for the support of common schools according to the average number of pupils attending such school during the twelve preceding months or during the number of months that may have elapsed from the establishment of said such school as compared with the whole number of pupils attending the schools in said city, town or village.[3]

The question of educational legislation was again raised in 1864 during the Confederation discussions. On October 24, 1864, it was passed that it should be within the competence of the local legislatures to make laws respecting agriculture, education and various other enumerated subjects. However, A. T. Galt, the Minister of Finance, spoke for placing restrictions on the local legislatures respecting education in order to safeguard the interests of the minority groups. Mr. Galt drew notice to the question of minority rights and preached the idea that these rights must be respected. On October 25, 1864, a motion by D'Arcy McGee was passed ruling that education would be within the competence of the local legislatures

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3 Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1905, Vol. 1, Cols. 1443-1452.

> saving the rights and privileges which the Protestant or Catholic minority in both Canada's may possess as to their Denominational schools, at the time when the (union) goes into operation.[4]

These words were added to the legislation on education mainly to preserve the rights and interests of the English Protestant minority in Quebec and the French Roman Catholic minority in Ontario, but in no way was this legislation limited to effect only these two provinces.

b. Legislation on Education from Confederation to 1875

In 1867, the Dominion of Canada was formed and consisted of the four provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The conditions of union and the regulations by which the new Dominion was to be governed were all listed in the Canadian Constitution which is called the British North America Act. When this act was written it included a section on education which aimed to preserve in the provinces those minority rights which were enjoyed in the same area prior to the union. Section 93 of this act reads as follows:

> In and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education, subject and according to the following Provisions:

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4 Pope, Editor, Confederation Documents, p. 112, quoted in C. Cecil Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1946, p. 152.

> (1) Nothing in any Law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by law in the Province at the Union.
> (2) All the Powers, Privileges and Duties at the Union by Law conferred and imposed in Upper Canada on the Separate Schools and School Trustees of the Queen's Roman Catholic Subjects shall be and the same are hereby extended to the Dissentient Schools of the Queen's Protestant and Roman Catholic Subjects in Quebec.
> (3) Where in any Province a System of Separate or Dissentient Schools exists by Law at the Union or is thereafter established by the Legislature of the Province, an Appeal shall lie to the Governor-General in Council from any Act or Decision of any Provincial Authority affecting any Right or Privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic Minority of the Queen's Subjects in relation to Education.[5]

c. The North-West Territories Act of 1875

The distinctive political career of the Northwest Territories began with the passage by the Dominion Government of the North-West Territories Act of 1875. The first statutory provision relating to education in the north is found in Section 11 of this act. When this section was introduced by Prime Minister Alexander Mackenzie, it made no provision for separate school education in the Territories. The Minister of Justice, Edward Blake, urged that a provision for the establishment of Separate Schools be made and that it should confer on the population of the territories

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5 Canada, Statutes, 30 Vict., c. 3, s. 93 (1867), quoted in D. C. Masters, A Short History of Canada, Princeton, New Jersey, [Anvil Pocketbook], 1958, p. 142-143.

the same rights and privileges in regard to religious instruction as those possessed by the people of the province of Ontario.[6] This act was passed unanimously in the House of Commons and by a large majority in the Senate.[7] It read as follows:

> When, and so soon as any system of taxation shall be adopted in any district or portion of the North-West Territories, the Lieutenant Governor, by and with the consent of the Council or Assembly, as the case may be, shall pass all the necessary ordinances in respect to education; but it shall therein be always provided, that a majority of the rate-payers of any district or portion or sub-division thereof, by whatever name the same may be known, may establish such schools therein as they may think fit, and make the necessary assessment and the collection of rates therefor; and further, that the minority of the rate-payers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic separate schools shall be liable only to assessments of such rates as they may impose upon themselves in respect thereof.[8]

This legislation of 1875 gave to the Council of the Northwest Territories the right to issue the necessary ordinances in matters of education, however, with the express condition that it would always be decreed that in any school district the majority of this school district could establish their own schools that it saw fit, and in addition the minority, whether Catholic or Protestant, could establish separate schools.

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6 Canada, House of Commons, Debates, (March 12) 1875, p. 658-659.

7 Ibidem, (February 21) 1905, Vol. 1, Col. 1452.

8 Canada, Statutes, 38 Vict., c. 49, s. 11.

d. Government Policy on Catholic Education in the Northwest Territories after 1875

The school ordinances of 1884 and 1885 formally established the educational system of the Northwest Territories and provided for two classes of schools — public and separate, either being Catholic or Protestant. These ordinances were amended in 1886, in a manner to limit the establishment of a separate school district to the area of a public-school district, previously erected by the majority of rate-payers.[9] This amended provision aimed to limit the extent to which the rights conferred by the North-West Territories Act of 1875 and the Ordinances of 1875 to the minority groups of the territories could be exercised. Thus, a Catholic minority is not entitled to establish a minority separate school until the non-Catholic majority has seen fit to establish a public school district.

From 1885 to 1892, a Board of Education consisting of two Protestants and two Catholics under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant-Governor was established and it was this group that had control of the educational system of the Territories. In 1892, this Board of Education was replaced by a Council of Public Instruction. This, for all practical

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9 Northwest Territories, School Ordinances, 1884, No. 5; 1885, No. 3; 1886, No. 10, quoted in C. Cecil Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada, p. 156.

purposes, vested the control of all schools in the government employees who in turn were responsible only to the Territorial Assembly. The government employees usually tried to find out what the majority of the people wanted and needed and it more or less neglected to even recognize the rights of the minority groups. The Council of Public Instruction possessed authority, under the Ordinance of 1892 to appoint examiners of teachers, inspectors, a superintendent of education, and other officials, and to prescribe their duties; to make regulations for the conduct of schools, tre training of teachers, and the selection and prescription of text-books; and to determine all cases of appeals or complaints arising from decisions of trustees or inspector.[10]

A school ordinance in 1901, created a Department of Education, presided over by a Commissioner of Education. This Department of Education replaced the Territorial Council of Public Instruction that had existed from 1892. Under this ordinance, the minority in any public school retained the right to establish Catholic or Protestant separate schools "therein" and to assess themselves for the support

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10 Northwest Territories, School Ordinances, 1892, No. 22, ss. 6 and 7, quoted in C. Cecil Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada, p. 157.

of such schools.[11] Likewise, the minority schools possessed the same privileges and were subject to the same methods of school legislation as were the public schools. Uniformity existed as to teachers' qualifications and professional training, course of studies, text books, inspection, and departmental examinations. It gave the Board of any district the power to open school with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, and to make provision for a half-hour of religious instruction, to be given immediately before closing in the afternoon.[12]

e. Conclusion

In 1905, the Northwest Territories were divided and the area below the sixtieth parallel became the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. In introducing the legislation providing for the creation of these two provinces, the Prime Minister of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, delivered a two and a half hour speech. He commenced with a brief review of the history of the Northwest Territories and explained how the

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11 Note: This does not mean that there was double taxation but that the Separate School authorities were permitted to set their own tax rate for the operation of their schools and this tax rate did not have to be equal to that paid by the Public School supporters.

12 Northwest Territories, School Ordinances, 1901, c. 29, quoted in C. Cecil Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada, p. 158.

North-West Territories Act of 1875 remained the constitutional structure of the new provinces which Parliament was "about to crown with complete and absolute autonomy."[13] The Prime Minister, in speaking about the school legislation, presented a lengthy historical survey of the separate-school question in Canada from 1841 to 1875, when the North-West Territories Act was passed. The Prime Minister declared that the Quebec Resolutions of 1864 had become Section 93 of the British North America Act and was no longer confined to Quebec and Ontario. He reminded the House of Commons that by the North-West Territories Act of 1875, the Canadian Government had "unanimously, deliberately and with their eyes open" introduced the system of separate schools into the Northwest Territories. His words were:

> In 1875, as I have stated a moment ago, Mr. Mackenzie introduced an Act for the government of the Northwest Territories, and in this Act the parliament of Canada, which, at that time, had among its members some of the ablest men who ever sat in the Canadian parliament — Sir John Macdonald, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Blake, Sir Charles Tupper and a score of others — unanimously, deliberately and with their eyes open, introduced into the Northwest Territories the system of separate schools. And not only that, but the parliament of Canada, four times successively — in 1880, in 1885, in 1886 and in 1898 — deliberately and with their eyes open, ratified the system of separate schools in the Territories.[14]

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13 Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 1905, Vol. 1, Cols. 1421-1459.

14 Ibidem, 1905, Vol. 1, Col. 1452.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier emphasized the fact that the legislation of the North-West Territories Act gave the majority in any school district ~~could~~ the right to establish the schools that it thought fit; and in addition, the minority, whether Protestant or Catholic, could establish separate schools.

2. Development of Present Day Government School Policy

a. Introduction

The process of legislation and administration of schools in the Northwest Territories have gone through a great evolution since the establishment of the country of Canada. The first schools were built and administered by local townsmen, the district church or by the Hudson's Bay Company. Soon, however, local resources were unable to supply suitable educational facilities for the district, so government bodies began to help in giving grants or any other assistance that the local people might need. In United Canada before Confederation, the government made laws stating that the majority groups in an area could establish schools as they saw fit, and that the minority group could also establish their own schools. The North-West Territories Act of 1875 directed that the Council of the Territories control education development but at the same time preserve the rights of both minority and majority groups. A Board of Education was formed which later was renamed

Council of Public Instruction. This educational body became the Department of Education for the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan when these two areas were accepted as provinces of the Dominion of Canada. This left the Mackenzie District with no organized government body to direct the development of education until 1946, when the Federal Department of Mines and Resources established an education branch in Ottawa.

Before 1946, education was provided by the mission churches in the Mackenzie District and they were assisted by grants from the Indian Affairs Branch for providing education for the Indians and Eskimos. From 1947 to 1953, the Education Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources built and operated schools where no mission schools were located. In 1953, the Department of Mines and Resources was reorganized and renamed the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. This Department took over the schools already established by the government and started to proceed with a plan to get all the schools of the Mackenzie District under its central control.

Within the Mackenzie District there were three ethnic groups of people: the White, the Indian and the Eskimo. The responsibility of education for these groups came under three different authorities until 1953. The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories had the responsibility of providing education facilities for the Whites in the Mackenzie;

the Indians were wards of the Dominion Government and the Indian Affairs Branch established schools for them, while the Eskimos were under the direct authority of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. The mixed character of the population in the Territories, and its extreme sparseness rendered it almost impossible to provide suitable educational facilities if jurisdiction was divided up too much so it was evident that these three authorities would have to become one before any suitable educational policy could be formulated.

b. Centralization of the Administration of Education

The School Ordinance of the Northwest Territories designates education as one of the subjects which come within the legislative competence of the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. The Commissioner's power is described as follows:

> 6. (1) The Commissioner may appoint one or more persons to inquire into and to report upon the conditions existing in any portion of the Territories not erected into a school district.
> (2) Where in the opinion of the Commissioner a school or schools should be established and operated in any portion of the Territories not erected into a district, he may establish such school or schools and appoint an administrator and such other officials as are required to operate and maintain them.
> (3) The Commissioner may make arrangements with any government, corporation, or person for the

> education of children resident in any portion of the Territories not included in a district.[15]

By using the authority invested by the School Ordinance, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories set up a Sub-Committee on Education to advise the Northwest Territories Council on matters of educational concern. During 1944, a survey of education in the Mackenzie District was carried out by Dr. Andrew Moore, a school inspector from Manitoba and he found that adequate education facilities were not available to the children living within the district. He made the following recommendations concerning the organization and administration of education in the area:

> (1) It is recommended that there should be one authority in control of all education (Indian, mixed-blood, and white) which is supported by public funds in the Northwest Territories.
> (2) It is recommended that the administration of education in the Northwest Territories should be of the highly centralized type.
> (3) It is recommended that the resident director of education should have wide powers and a free hand to organize and administer the educational system of the Northwest Territories [...].
> (4) It is further recommended that an Educational Council be constituted to act in a purely advisory capacity to the Director of Education.
> (5) It is recommended that all teachers in any schools established in the Northwest Territories should be members of the Federal Civil Service [...].
> (6) It is recommended that all teachers in the Northwest Territories should hold at least first-class professional certificates [...].

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15 Canada, School Ordinance, Ch. 86, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1956, p. 738.

> (7) It is further recommended that the legislation concerning education in the Northwest Territories be thoroughly revised and brought up to date having due regard to present conditions.[16]

In tracing the development of education in the Mackenzie District during the past twenty years, it can be clearly seen that Dr. Moore's recommendations were closely followed in shaping educational policy. In 1946, the Federal Department in charge of Northern Affairs (Department of Mines and Resources) added an Education Section to its branch in Ottawa. The same year an Inspector of Schools was also appointed to be in charge of the Mackenzie District. Two years later, the Federal Government began to establish Federal Day Schools within the district as a first step in its new policy of abolishing privately operated schools and placing education under a single government authority.

Dr. Moore, in his education survey, suggested the following procedure to be followed in order to place education under a central authority:

> In the Mackenzie District it has been the practise of the Indian Affairs Branch to delegate the actual provision of educational accommodation and instruction to two religious denominations; viz., the Church of England in Canada (Anglican) and the Roman Catholic. There are no schools in the Northwest Territories operated by the Indian Affairs Branch itself. It should not, therefore, be difficult for the Indian Affairs Branch to delegate its

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16 Dr. Andrew Moore, Survey of Education in the Mackenzie District, p. 82.

> responsibility to the sole authority (of the Territorial Government).[17]

This recommendation of Dr. Moore was followed and by agreement dating February 14, 1955, between the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the responsibility for education of Indians in the Northwest Territories was passed to the Territorial Government.

The agreement between the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories in transferring of the Federal education responsibility of the Indians to the Territorial Government reads as follows:

> Whereas under authority of the Indian Act, the Minister may, subject to the authorization of the Governor in Council, enter into an Agreement with the Commissioner, providing for the education in accordance with the Indian Act of Indian children in the Northwest Territories;
>
> And Whereas it has been agreed between the parties hereto that centralization of the administration of education in the Northwest Territories will bring about increased economy and efficiency:
>
> And Whereas the Governor in Council has by Order in Council P.C. 1954-1898 dated December 1, 1954, authorized the Minister and the Commissioner to execute this Agreement.
>
> Now, therefore, this Agreement witnesseth that the Minister and the Commissioner agree as follows:

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17 Dr. Andrew Moore, Survey of Education in the Mackenzie District, p. 79.

> 1. The Commissioner agrees to
> (a) provide for the education of Indian children in the Northwest Territories in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Act and to provide facilities therefor;
> (b) provide educational facilities in accordance with paragraph (a) of a standard equal to the educational facilities available to other residents of the Northwest Territories.[18]

The Department of Mines and Resources became the Department of Resources and Development in 1950, which in turn became the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources in 1953. The schools established by the Department of Mines and Resources thus became the responsibility of the new Federal Department.

On April 1st, 1955, the Indian Day Schools, that had been transferred by the Indian Affairs Branch of the Federal Government to the Territorial Government and the Northwest Territories Commissioner, were now transferred once again to the authority of the Federal Government. By special agreement between the Government and the Commissioner, Indian and White schools were to be administered by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources which already had the responsibility for Eskimo Education. During 1956, further steps were taken to centralize and standardize the education system in the Mackenzie District. On April 1st, 1956, all mission school teachers became employees of the Federal

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18 Canada, Ordinance, Ch. 48, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1956, p. 265.

Government and on September 1st of the same year, all mission schools were integrated into the Federal Government school system. By the beginning of the school term of 1956, the complete school system, with the exception of municipal schools, was under the direction of one central administrative authority, the Education Division of the Federal Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. This educational system now embodies a large network of ethnically-integrated schools throughout the district and maintains overall control of the education system including curriculum, administration and supervision.

c. The Federal School

Today within the Mackenzie District there is no such thing as a school especially built and operated for the education of either Indian or Eskimo children. With the exception of the municipal schools, all the schools in this district are being operated by the Federal Government for all children indiscriminately of age, race or religion. The last mission-operated school was transferred to government authority in 1960, and where mission schools had been located, there are now operating non-denominational Federal schools. In 1947, the Federal Government opened its first school in the Mackenzie District, a one classroom school at Tuktoyaktuk within the Arctic Circle and from that time the

development of Federal Schools in the north has been rapid. During 1963, from its modest beginnings in 1947, the Federal Government school system had grown into an organization that employed 168 teachers in 27 Federal Day schools that have a total capacity for educating 3,340 pupils.[19]

1. Provision for Religion in the Federal Day School

Most of the Federal Day Schools in the Mackenzie District can be considered to be "neutral" schools. Children of different religious faiths attend the schools and they are given a non-denominational type of education. There is, however, a provision that the teacher of a Federal Day School may be Catholic if the majority of the population is Catholic. The School Ordinance of the Northwest Territories allows:

> 98. (1) No religious instruction except as hereinafter provided shall be permitted in the school of any district from the opening of such school until one-half hour previous to its closing in the afternoon after which time such instruction permitted or desired by the board may be given.
>
> 99. (1) Any child shall have the privilege of leaving the school at the time at which religious instruction is commenced.[20]

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19 Figures are from Enrolment form consolidation and classification — from Director, Northern Administration Branch, Ottawa. Table 2 Appendix 3.

20 Canada, School Ordinance, Ch. 86, p. 760-761.

Thus in Federal schools religious instruction can be given, but in all other aspects the schools could be considered to be neutral since religious emblems cannot be displayed nor can religious topics be discussed outside of religion class. One reason, given by the government authorities, for maintaining the neutral status of the schools was given as follows:

> The teacher and the pupil will look to the church for the teaching of spiritual development and in offering general religious guidance. This arrangement places religious education in the hands of those most able to give it. It also ensures that the child receives his religious education from the church of his, and his family's choice. The teacher, therefore, need not feel the pressures of providing religious instruction which, in trying to be acceptable to all, satisfies none. The active role of the church also leaves the teacher free to use his time on a curriculum heavily burdened by the necessity of moving through two cultures and possibly two languages.[21]

In some of the larger schools, the government has aided the church in seeing that the children do receive some instruction in their faith by placing government-built hostels under the operation of the church authorities. This arrangement has come about by special agreement between the government and the churches. Federal Schools were built to replace the Mission Residential Schools already providing

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21 R. A. J. Phillips, Chief, Arctic Division, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, "The Opening Door," in North, Vol. VII, No. 6 (November-December, 1960), p. 2.

education for the native children, and hostels were built close to these schools to give residence to the pupils going to the Federal School. The church authorities act as managers of these hostels for the Federal Government. A further discussion of the church-operated hostel will be seen in Chapter III of this thesis.

On April 1st, 1957, the Mission school teachers in the Mackenzie District became Federal School Employees and in September of the same year the mission schools were transferred to the administration of the Federal Government. In the same year, the Education Division drew up plans to erect their first school and hostel in the distfict. This school unit, located at Fort Smith, was completed in September, 1958. However, since this was opened, there have been church-operated hostels established at Fort Simpson, Fort McPherson and Inuvik. The hostel at Fort McPherson is operated by the Anglican Church while both Anglican and Catholic Churches have hostels at Fort Simpson and Inuvik.

ii. Government Policy at Fort Smith School

During the first year of operation of the new Fort Smith Federal Day School, the pupil attendance was two hundred and eighty-six pupils, two hundred and thirty-nine of

whom were of the Catholic Faith.[22] All the school children of the school were grouped together into one school and the forty-seven non-Catholic students were distributed to six of the fifteen classrooms of the school. There were also several non-Catholic teachers employed by the government to teach at the Fort Smith school. This was completely contrary to the assurances given by the government authorities to Bishop Trocellier when the centralized school system was organized.[23] Bishop Trocellier was led to believe that the new school at Fort Smith would be Catholic in character. He did agree that in the elementary classes in which the non-Catholics would be grouped, preferences would be given to lay teachers and that Catholic readers would not be imposed on these non-Catholic pupils, but he did not believe that non-Catholic students would be grouped with Catholic students and these mixed classes would be considered neutral.[24]

Many of the Catholic citizens of Fort Smith believed that the policy of the government authorities for a neutralized and integrated school was against the rights of the Indians as guaranteed by the Indian Act and also a violation

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22 Fort Smith, School Attendance Report, December, 1957.

23 Letter of Bishop Trocellier to Rev. P. Piché, General Superintendent, Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission, November 18, 1957.

24 Letter of Rev. P. Piché to Mr. R. G. Robertson, Deputy Minister of Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa, November 25, 1957.

of the rights of the Catholics of the district. Sister Sarrasin, s.g.m., who was President of the Mackenzie District Education Association, wrote to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources expressing the fears of the group that Fort Smith school was not being operated according to Federal Indian education policies and practises or according to Catholic educational principles. In reply to this letter, the Hon. Jean Lesage wrote Sister Sarrasin the following reply:

> I should state most emphatically that there is no conflict at present between the laws of the Church and the laws of Canada and the Northwest Territories; that it is not my aim or the aim of anybody else to combine the schools of the Northwest Territories into a large neutral unit; that the fears you express about the future of Catholic education in the Territories are without any foundation whatsoever.[25]

Despite the assurances given to Bishop Trocellier and Sister Sarrasin by the government authorities, it was soon evident that the government did propose to make the school at Fort Smith a neutral school. During its first year of operation, nearly half the classrooms had Catholics and non-Catholics taught in the same classroom and there were two non-Catholic teachers. Also during 1957, Mr. J. V. Jacobson, the Chief of the Education Division of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, made the following statement:

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25 Letter of Hon. Jean Lesage to Sister Sarrasin, s.g.m., December 6, 1955.

> At Fort Smith, in any classroom where Protestant children are being taught, no religious emblems will be displayed, non-denominational readers will be used and the teachers will not wear religious habits.[26]

This statement was recognized by Catholics as taking away their lawful rights as a majority and they felt that they could not tolerate the elimination of their rights to have a Catholic education for their children. The Catholic parents banded together at Fort Smith and at a meeting called to clarify and discuss the organization of the new school that was being built and the controversy which it caused, they resolved that:

> (1) The new Federal school in Fort Smith should not be administered in such a manner that would not affect the right to Catholic education of the Catholic majority of the population as represented by approximately ninety per-cent of the children attending the new school.
>
> (2) This same organization of the new school should be such that it does not in any way force the non-Catholic minority to accept a type of education which is against their principles since respect for the basic rights of minority groups is a principle of our democracy.
>
> However, it is also RESOLVED that the non-Catholic minority group does not have the right to force upon the Catholic Majority group a neutral school which deviates from Catholic beliefs concerning education.[27]

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26 Letter of Rev. P. Piché to Mr. R. G. Robertson, November 11, 1957.

27 Letter of Mr. Roy M. Koch, Chairman of the meeting, to Hon. D. S. Harkness, Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, August 2, 1957.

The chairman of the meeting, Mr. Roy Koch, sent a letter to the new Conservative Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources expressing the resolutions of the Catholic parents in the attempt to obtain a more just legislation for the Catholic population of the Fort Smith area.

Bishop Trocellier was also quite concerned that Catholic students at Fort Smith were obliged to attend "neutral" classrooms and perhaps be taught by non-Catholic teachers. He did recognize the fact that the non-Catholics should not be forced to attend a Catholic school, and he believed they should have their own school. In Fort Smith there were two school buildings, the new Federal Day School and the former four-room Federal Day School. Bishop Trocellier suggested that the non-Catholic pupils be allowed to use the former school for the non-Catholic section of the Federal Day School and allow the Catholics to use the new school. However, this proposal was refused for the government said this might lead to racial segregation since there would be no pupil of Indian ancestry in the non-Catholic section of the school. On December 12th, 1957, the Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs wrote to Bishop Trocellier and explained that the type of school that was organized at Fort Smith was the best the government could provide in making it suitable for all the citizens concerned. He wrote:

> During negotiations with the Churches regarding the new programme special arrangements were worked out to meet the special need of certain communities. In the case of Aklavik and Fort Simpson the number of children of each faith made it possible to have schools with separate Catholic and Protestant wings for grades one to nine, and mixed grades only in grades ten to twelve. Fort Smith required a different interim solution because of the small number of Protestants at present. — I hope that by 1961 we can have the "two wing" arrangement for Grades one to nine that we are establishing at Fort Simpson and Aklavik. Four years is a very short term for the best compromise that many heads have been able to work out to meet a temporary problem![28]

The number of Protestant pupils have not as yet been sufficient to warrant a separate wing for their education, so at present it is this semi-denominational education that exists at Fort Smith. Some of the classrooms at the Fort Smith Federal Day School today are composed of Catholic pupils solely and these are taught by Catholic teachers while other classrooms have Catholic and non-Catholic pupils mixed together in the same classroom. A half hour before the closing of school, religion is taught in the classrooms at Fort Smith and the non-Catholics may leave the classroom during this time if they so do desire. This present system was finally worked out after much negotiation between the Church and the government. On December 22, 1957, Bishop Trocellier was in Montreal and Mr. R. G. Robertson phoned the Bishop and many of the difficulties with regard to the

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28 Letter of Mr. R. G. Robertson to Rt. Rev. J. M. Trocellier, December 12, 1957.

Fort Smith school were cleared up.[29] Special arrangements were made with regard to the organization and administration of the Fort Smith Federal Day School and they were as follows:

> (11) As the majority of the children in Grades one to nine inclusive are Roman Catholic the teachers of academic subjects will be of that faith. Teachers of non-academic subjects (such as home economics, wood-working, etc.,) will also be Roman Catholic if it is possible to secure qualified teachers of those subjects of the Roman Catholic faith.
>
> (12) Paragraph (1) does not apply in relation to one of the non-high school grade rooms of the high school building. Since there are at present only two high school classrooms and the children of the Roman Catholic faith constitute the majority of those rooms the teachers of the two high school rooms (Grades 10 - 12) will both be of the Roman Catholic faith. The matter will be further considered if, at any time, children of the Roman Catholic faith should cease to constitute the majority.
>
> (13) Where there are two or more classrooms for a single grade, the Protestant children will be assigned to one room and the other room or rooms will be solidly Roman Catholic.
>
> (14) In academic classrooms where all the children are Roman Catholic, religious emblems may be displayed, Roman Catholic readers may be used for instruction purposes, and members of religious orders, wearing religious habit, may teach.
>
> (15) In rooms where there are both Roman Catholic and Protestant children, as an interim solution, denominational religious emblems may not be displayed, non-denominational readers will be used for instruction, and lay teachers will be employed. Roman Catholic readers may be used as supplementary readers for Roman Catholic children.
>
> (16) The arrangements set out in paragraph (15) are temporary measures in effect until there are enough Protestant children in attendance in any of the grades one to nine inclusive to warrant the

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29 Letter of Mr. R. G. Robertson to Most Rev. J. M. Trocellier, December 23, 1957 — Copy for Father Piché.

> establishment of separate classrooms. When the total number of children in grades one to nine inclusive is sufficient to warrant it, a separate wing will be built to accommodate them.[30]

iii. The Fort Simpson Combined School

The transfer of the responsibility of education from church authority to government authority was often a long and sometimes a difficult process. In Fort Simpson, for example, the movement towards an undenominational school owned and operated by the Government started in 1949 and only ten years later was the present educational system satisfactorily established. The negotiations between government and church authorities resulted in a combined school unit in which Catholics and non-Catholics were grouped together in one school unit but each denomination being taught in their own classrooms.

Fort Simpson is built on a long and narrow island, located about one hundred and fifty miles down the Mackenzie River from Great Slave Lake. The island is two and a quarter miles long and three-fifths of a mile wide, with an area of some six hundred and fifty acres.[31] About eighty per cent

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30 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Organization and Administration, Fort Smith Federal Day School, Ottawa, mimeographed, p. 2, Numbers (11) to (16) complete.

31 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, An Anthropological Survey of Communities in the Mackenzie-Slave Lake Region of Canada (by Ronald Cohen), Ottawa, mimeographed, June, 1962, p. 19.

of the six hundred people living in Fort Simpson are natives and they earn their living from white employment and by hunting, fishing and trapping. The Catholic Mission at Fort Simpson first opened a school with eleven pupils in attendance in September, 1918. The school, St. Margaret's, operated for over thirty years with an average of nineteen pupils a year registered in attendance.[32] On October 11, 1949, the Federal Government opened a neutral school for the non-Catholic population of the Fort Simpson District. During the next seven years the two one-room school units, the Federal Day School and St. Margaret's Catholic School were both in operation at Fort Simpson.

The Department of Northern Affairs was reorganized in 1953 and a new Superintendent of Schools, Mr. J. V. Jacobson was appointed to guide the development of education in the Mackenzie District. During the summer of 1954, Hon. J. Lesage, Minister of Northern Affairs submitted the government with plans to increase schools facilities in the Mackenzie. Within the framework of these plans for increased education facilities in the Mackenzie District were these plans for the education of the children at Fort Simpson:

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32 Father S. Lesage, O.M.I., Sacred Heart Mission, mimeographed, 1958, p. 30 and 113.

> (1) The erection of a Catholic Hostel to be operated under Catholic auspices.
> (2) The erection of day classrooms in two wings for the education of Catholics and Protestants separately.
> These wings would have separate authorities, yet be run as a unit, and be what is known as a combined school.[33]

In April 1955, the government authorities announced that the pupils of St. Margaret's School would be permitted to have classes in a one classroom addition of the Federal Day School. This announcement was made by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories who wrote the following to the Director of the Fort Simpson mission:

> We have provided funds in the 1955-1956 estimates to construct a one-room addition to the present Federal Day School at Fort Simpson to accommodate the children of the St. Margaret's Roman Catholic School at that point.[34]

and

> Roman Catholic children will attend in a separate wing of the new Federal Day School. The assistant principal will be in complete charge of his wing in so far as its organization and discipline are concerned.[35]

On July 9, 1956, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories authorized the following regulation with regard

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33 Father S. Lesage, O.M.I., Sacred Heart Mission, p. 124.

34 Letter of Mr. R. G. Robertson to Father Lesage, April 7th, 1955, quoted in Father S. Lesage, op. cit., p. 146.

35 Letter of Mr. R. G. Robertson to Father Lesage, September 5th, 1955, quoted in Father S. Lesage, op. cit., p. 146.

to the "combined schools" (like the one being established at Fort Simpson) be inserted in the school ordinance.

> 19. In this Part (b) "combined school" means a school where a part of the building in which the school is located has been allocated for the instruction of Roman Catholic children in Grades I to VIII, a part of the building has been allocated for the instruction of other children, and the remainder of the building has been allocated for the instruction and use of all children.[36]

There were a number of misunderstandings and disagreements between the Government Authorities and the Church at Fort Simpson before a suitable solution was found to this system of "combined school" in the settlement.[37] However, the combined school, with hostel operated by the Catholic and Anglican Churches, is a school unit that is operating very well today. The school is one building but the two hundred Catholic students are taught in one wing of the school by Catholic teachers and the seventy non-Catholic students are taught in their own wing of the school. Under present arrangements, a principal is appointed to be responsible for the administration and organization of the whole school while the assistant-principals have jurisdiction with the organization and discipline of the classrooms that are

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36 School Ordinance, Amendment Part 2, Ottawa, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, January, 1953, mimeographed, p. 1.

37 Complete account in Father S. Lesage, Sacred Heart Mission, p. 117-134.

designated for the education of the children of his religious faith. This system seems to satisfy both the Catholic and non-Catholic group in the community.

iv. The Federal Day School and Hostels at Inuvik

An educational organization very similar to the one at Fort Simpson has been set up for the town of Inuvik. In this town there is a one unit Federal Day School operated by the Federal Government which has also built two hostels; one operated by Anglican authorities for the residence of Anglican students and the other operated by the Catholic Church for the benefit of the Catholic students.

Inuvik is a modern well-planned town, located within the Arctic Circle, very close to the mouth of the Mackenzie River. It had its beginning less than ten years ago when government planners chose it for the site of a new town. There was a settlement already in the Arctic called Aklavik, but the government discovered that the town was sinking because the frost was coming out of its muskeg land on which the buildings were resting. During 1953, the government decided that the four hundred inhabitants of the town must be moved to a more suitable site, and this resulted with the new town of Inuvik. Actually, both Aklavik and Inuvik continue to exist. Many of the native people refuse to leave their town of Aklavik, and continue to hunt, fish, trap and

trade in that area. Inuvik, however, is a town composed primarily of Euro-Canadian, government employed white-collar workers. It is a modern town of over twelve hundred people and has modern conveniences such as water, sewage disposal, radio, telephone, good roads and a modern airport.

In 1950 there were three schools in Aklavik. The Anglican Day School had nine pupils, the Anglican Residential School enrolled one hundred and one pupils while ninety-three pupils attended the Catholic Residential School.[38] Less than fifteen years later, in 1963, the same area provided education facilities for nearly a thousand students.[39] There are one hundred and forty students educated at Aklavik and nearly eight hundred being taught at the new Federal Day School at Inuvik.

Almost all of the Indian and Eskimo children in the area around Inuvik are either Anglican or Catholic. The school is built with two wings and in one area of the school the Anglican children are taught, and in the other area of the school the Catholic students have their own classroom.

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38 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Classification of Pupils, Ottawa, March 31, 1950. See Table 1

39 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Enrolment Form, March 31, 1963. See Table 2.

d. School Districts

1. Regulations for the Establishing of a School District

School districts do not come directly under the control of the Mackenzie District education system. The only school districts now operating in the Mackenzie Districts are the Yellowknife Public School District No. 1; the Yellowknife Separate School District No. 2; and the Hay River Separate School District No. 3. The relationship between these school districts and the Education Division of Northern Affairs and National Resources is analogous to that of school boards in southern Canada and the provincial Department of Education.

The regulations for the forming of a School District are clearly laid out with the Northwest Territory School Ordinances which state that:

> Any three ratepayers residing within a portion of the Territories which does not exceed five miles in length or breadth and in which there reside at least four ratepayers and at least twelve children between the ages of five and sixteen years may petition the Commissioner to erect such portion into a district.[40]

If the conditions of the Ordinance is fulfilled then the ratepayers residing within the area can proceed with the legal steps that lead to the formation of the school district.

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40 Canada, School Ordinance, Ch. 86, p. 739.

ii. Regulations for the Establishing of a Separate School District

The School Ordinances also set the regulations for establishing separate schools and in an Ordinance to amend the School Ordinance, assented to July 16, 1960, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, by and with the advice and consent of the Council of the Territories enacted the following:

> I. The School Ordinance is amended by repealing section 32 thereof and by substituting therefor the following:
>
> "32. (1) The Protestant ratepayers or the Roman Catholic ratepayers residing within
>
> (a) a district, or
>
> (b) a portion of the Territories no part of which is in a district and which does not exceed five miles in length or breadth,
>
> may by petition to the Commissioner establish therein a separate school.
>
> (2) The ratepayers establishing a separate school under subsection (1) shall be liable only to assessments of such rates as they impose upon themselves in respect of the separate school.[41]

Thus, if the minority group want to form a separate school district and if they can fulfill the conditions of the school ordinance, then they can inform the Commissioner of their wish to form a district and continue the legal procedures necessary for the formation to be implemented. The School Ordinance also provides that:

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41 Canada, School Ordinance, Ch. 89, p. 742.

> (36) (1) After the establishment of a separate school district under the provisions of this Ordinance such separate school district and the board thereof shall possess and exercise all rights, powers and privileges and be subject to the same liabilities and method of government as is herein provided in respect of public schools districts.
>
> (2) Any person who is legally assessed or assessable for a public school district shall not be liable to assessment for any separate school established therein.[42]

The provisions of the school ordinance, not only provides, not only assures the minority right to establish their own school districts but it also guarantees the minority group that the same government grants and the right to the education tax also belong to the minority school district.

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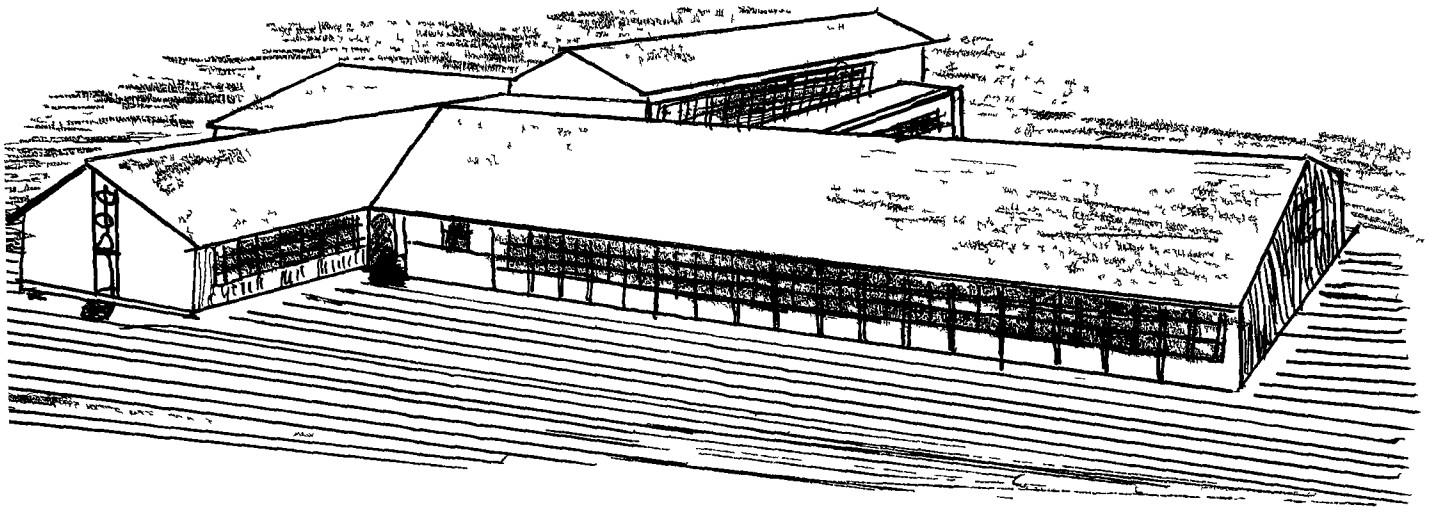
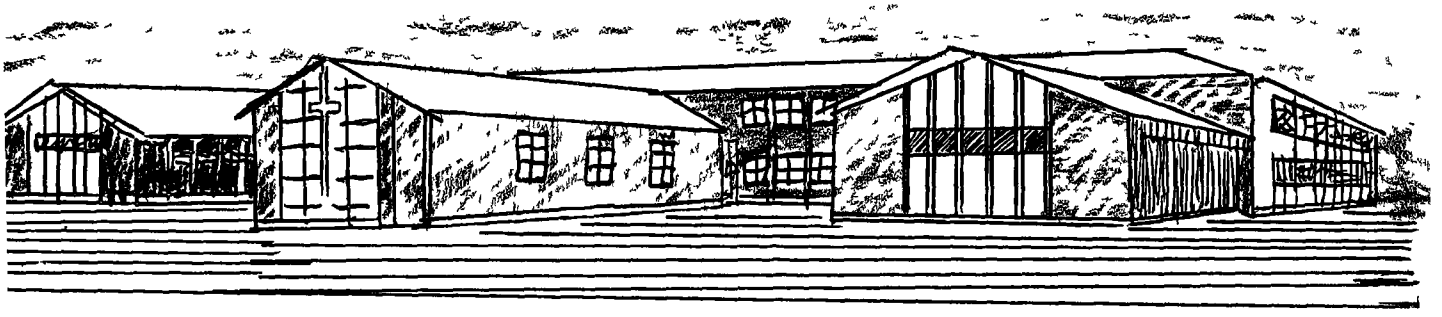
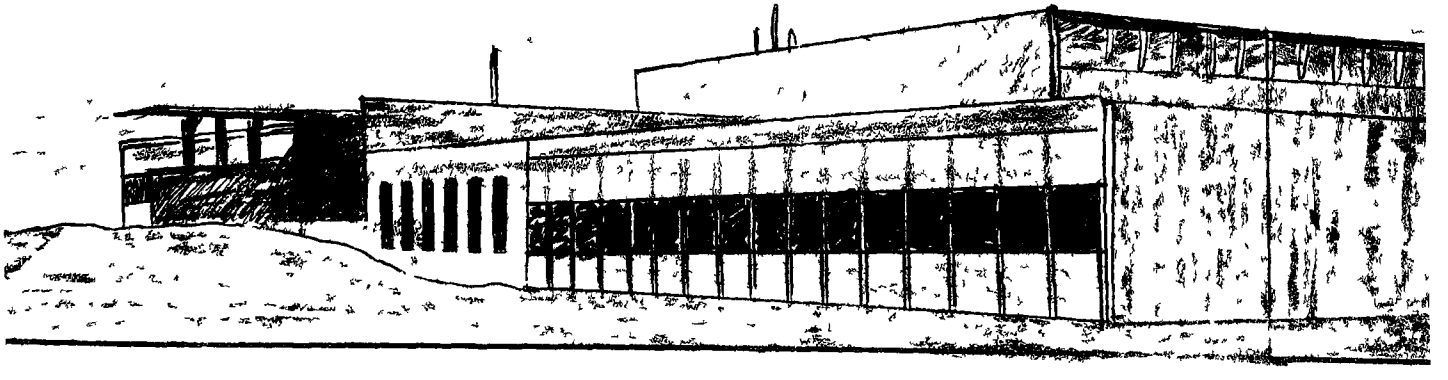
42 Canada, School Ordinance, Ch. 86, p. 742.



Typical Mackenzie District Federal Day School -- Fort Simpson, N. W. T.



The Roman Catholic Hostel at Fort Simpson, N. W. T.



St. Patrick's R. C. Separate High School, Yellowknife, N. W. T.

CHAPTER III

CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT

1. The Government-owned Church-operated Hostels

Acceptance of a close relationship between religion and education has always been emphasized by the Catholic Church and it was an educational policy to have church-operated schools in many countries of the world. If any education was to be provided for ordinary people, the Church, or some organization associated with the Church, was assumed to be the only proper agency. In Canada, too, from its early history the Catholic Church has provided schools for natives or non-natives alike. The Hudson's Bay Company recognized the service that these church schools were giving to the settlements and gave praise for the "great benefit being experienced from the benevolent and indefatiguable exertions of the Catholic mission."[1]

In the Mackenzie District the Church has played an unusually positive role in the field of education. The missionaries, almost alone, brought the knowledge of our culture to the native people. The missionaries came into the Mackenzie District about the middle of the nineteenth century and the work of educating the aborigines of the

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1 Charles E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada, Toronto, W. J. Gage & Co. Ltd., 1957, p. 303.

district was commenced shortly afterwards as one of the first steps in their conversion. The Church established residential schools at certain centres to offer boarding facilities for children who did not live in any settlement for most of the school year. However, finances and personnel did not allow the missionaries to provide education for the majority of the children. Thus the Federal Government stepped in to help and the residential schools were replaced by day schools operated by the Federal government, with pupils being maintained in government-owned hostels operated by Church authorities. The government believed this would make possible the complete integration of the education of Indians and Eskimos in the north with white children of the same area. By educating them with white children, and by having them live in residences operated by white adults, it was hoped that they could be equipped to cope satisfactorily with the impact of the white man's civilization upon their lives.

Within the Mackenzie District there are three hostels being operated by the Catholic Church for the government. In the agreements between the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Mackenzie, an obligation was placed upon the Church to operate and manage the hostels. The Church management must provide satisfactory lodging, subsistence and

clothing for each resident child and establish and conduct all activities to supplement and support the school program. The minister, in the agreement, contracted to pay the expenditures for operating the hostels. By thus bringing the native children to one centre, both the physical difficulty of children scattered over a vast area and the environmental difficulty of children moving from place to place with their parents were overcome. Also while in most areas outside of the north, the home and school work together in the development of the proper qualities of the child, in the north the home influences often prevent the native from developing as quickly as do white children in both the social and intellectual fields. Placing the children in residences, of course, has the disadvantage of drawing the child away from the home and from the affection of the parents and it does cause a weakening of child-parent relationship. However, the government has recently embarked upon a program of building small hostels in units which will hold eight students and which will be located in the student's local area and it is hoped that this will overcome the difficulty by permitting more contact between parents and children.

The Three Catholic-operated Hostels

The town of Inuvik is the largest centre in the Western Arctic, and within that town an education unit has

been built to provide lodging and education for students of the vast surrounding area. There are two hostels in operation at Inuvik which can provide accommodation for five hundred children. The hostel operated by the Anglican Church has room for three hundred children and the Catholic Church hostel provides accommodation for two hundred children. Father M. Buyant, O.M.I., the administrator of the Inuvik Catholic hostel, called Grollier Hall, reported that in 1963 a total of 164 boarders were resident at the hostel. The ethnic origins of these boarders were as follows: Eskimos, 69; Indians, 57; and White, 58.[2]

There are also two hostels close to the school at Fort Simpson which provide accommodation for the native children who have been brought in from the surrounding area. Both the Anglican and Catholic hostels were opened for the 1960 school term. The Catholic hostel is called Lapointe Hall and it provides room and board to 150 children. During the past year, this hostel has provided residence for 120 children: 106 Indians, 13 White and 1 Eskimo.[3]

A third large hostel operated by the Catholic Church and connected with the Federal Day School system in the Mackenzie District is the Breynat Hall hostel at Fort Smith.

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2 Report of Fr. M. Buyant, O.M.I., to Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission, Ottawa, December, 1963.

3 Report of Fr. Lucien Casterman, O.M.I., to Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission, Ottawa, December, 1963.

It is the only hostel at Fort Smith. Its director, Father Charles Gilles, O.M.I., reported that during 1963 there were a total of 170 boarders residing in the hostel and attending the Federal Day School close to the hostel. Of this number, 162 of Indian origin and eight White.[4]

2. The Roman Catholic Separate School

Besides the government-operated school with the church-operated hostels as a school unit there are also schools in the Mackenzie Distridt that are owned and operated by the Catholic Church. The School Ordinance provides that a separate school district can be established by the minority group of ratepayers residing within a district or a portion of the Territories no larger than five miles square. The first group of Catholics to make use of this provision within the Mackenzie District were the ratepayers residing within the municipal district of Yellowknife who banded together and voted to form their own school district. After proceeding with the necessary legal work the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories authorized the formation of Yellowknife Roman Catholic School District No. 2.

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4 Report of Fr. Charles Gilles, O.M.I., to Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission, Ottawa, December, 1963.

a. The Yellowknife Separate School

Yellowknife is a mining town of approximately thirty-five hundred people and is situated on the north shore of Great Slave Lake about six hundred and fifty air miles north of Edmonton, Alberta. The discovery of gold at Yellowknife in 1935, caused a modern community to spring up out of the otherwise barren area. The economy of Yellowknife depends mainly with the operation of three gold mines and the industries derived from it, but from its central geographical position it has also become the government centre and supply base for a large area of the Northwest Territories.[5] The town possesses every modern convenience including shopping centre, bowling alley, stores, theatre, churches, hockey and skating arena, telephone and telegraph service, highway, plus daily mail and airline service to Edmonton.[6]

A group of Yellowknife Catholic people formed the original Separate School Committee in 1951. That same year, the legal procedures for formation of a Catholic School District were implemented. During the first year of existence, the Catholic Separate School Board did not have a school so

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5 L. S. Bourne, Yellowknife, N.W.T., Ottawa, Northern Co-ordination and Research Centre, [1963], mimeographed, p. 1.

6 Yellowknife, Catholic Schools at Yellowknife, N.W.T., Yellowknife, mimeographed, p. 1.

the Public School Board was paid to educate the children of Catholic property holders. The original St. Patrick's School building, consisting of four classrooms and an auditorium, was completed in the summer of 1953.[7] The first school term opened in the fall of that year with attendance of ninety-six students from Grades one to nine inclusive. A very rapid growth in school population required a two-room addition in 1955 and a second addition was later made providing eight classrooms in all.

A new Yellowknife Separate High School was erected in 1961, with gymnasium, four classrooms, Science and Home Economics rooms and library. The present enrolment at the Elementary School is two hundred and three students and at the High School it is fifty-four.[8]

During the 1963-64 school term there were two Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario, and ten lay teachers employed at the Yellowknife Separate School. The teachers follow the program of studies that is authorized by the Alberta Department of Education. However, in 1961, St. Patrick's Separate High School introduced a new course in their curriculum known as Mining 10. This course has the

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7 Yellowknife, Catholic Schools at Yellowknife, N.W.T., p. 1.

8 Letter from Norman W. Byrne, Chairman R. C. Separate School Board, to Fr. Donald Kroetch, O.M.I., March 10, 1964.

approval of the Alberta Department of Education as well as the Education Division of the Department of Northern Affairs and is designed to give students experience which will help them to determine their aptitudes and abilities for this subject in view of further study in the field of mining. This course is the first of its kind for the High School grades in Canada and has an enrolment of fourteen students this year.[9]

b. The Hay River Separate School

The town of Hay River in the Mackenzie District that has also been formed into a municipal district, is located on the Mackenzie Highway a short distance north of the Alberta boundary on the south shore of Great Slave Lake. Its economy is largely based on the fishing and the fish-packing industry. Since the Mackenzie Highway directly connects Hay River with the city of Edmonton, Hay River has become a shipping centre for freight going by boat to settlements along the Mackenzie River and at locations around Great Slave Lake. The year round population of Hay River would be about thirteen hundred people but in the summer Hay River is a spot of great activity.

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9 Yellowknife Separate School Board, The New Mining Course, Yellowknife, mimeographed, 1963, p. 22.

The erection of the Hay River Separate School District No. 3 was officially established by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, Mr. R. Robertson, on March 30th, 1961. During the same year construction was started on St. Paul's R. C. Separate School but its completion was delayed due to a fire that caused extensive damage to the building during the construction stage. The school was officially opened in the fall of 1962 and during its first term one hundred and seventy-six pupils were enrolled in the eight classroom school.[10]

The teachers of St. Paul's Separate School follow the Alberta School Curriculum of Studies in all the twelve grades of the school. This year there is a total attendance of one hundred and eighty pupils at the school. The Grey Nuns of Montreal supply four teachers for part of the staff at the school while four lay teachers are employed by the School District to teach in the other four classrooms.

3. Grandin Home and Grandin College

The capital of the Mackenzie District, Fort Smith, has not yet been formed into a municipal district. This fact restricts the possibility of establishing a separate

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10 Letter from Fr. F. Ebner, O.M.I., Director of St. Paul's R. C. Separate School, to Fr. Donald Kroetch, O.M.I., March 12, 1964.

school district in this centre because the ordinance requires that a municipal district must be established before any school districts are allowed. However, Fort Smith does have two Catholic Education Institutions which does provide an opportunity to Indian and Eskimo boys to obtain an education in a Catholic environment.

Bishop Piché saw that there was a need in his vicariate to give Indian and Eskimo boys individual and extra help in school work in order to stay up to and compete with white students. Having come from a different environment and home life than the white child, they were handicapped in attaining any great academic standing in school. Grandin Home was built and opened on September 1st, 1960. Its purpose was to provide a Christian environment, a solid guidance and to form leaders among the Indians and Eskimos. The first year fifteen boys from grades five to eight entered the home and attended the Federal Day School. The students are helped in every way possible to keep up with the other students at the school and to also adjust to a different environment than they had been accustomed. Grandin Home operates on a ten month basis — the same period of time as the Federal Day School and there have been an average of twenty students attending the residence each year. This home for native children has been a great success and the students attending it have attained success in their studies. During

this term some of them are registered in the grade twelve course of studies.

In 1963, construction was started on the Grandin College at Fort Smith. This new building will give residence to sixty students who will attend the Federal Day School and follow their grades with the other students. The college is described as follows:

> Last April, construction commenced on the first College in the N.W.T. at Fort Smith in the Vicariate of the Mackenzie. This work has been one of the main objectives of Bishop Paul Piché, O.M.I., who is administrator of this large ecclesiastical territory. The purpose of the College will be to fill the educational gap that exists between high schools and university and to train students to assume responsability and leadership in their own community. Bishop Piché's interest in Education stems from his association with this work first at the Oblate Scholasticate of Mary Immaculate in Lebret, Saskatchewan, and afterwards, as Principal of the Indian School at Lebret. He hopes that most of the buildings will be completed for August, 1964, in time for the students to attend classes in September. It will be a four-storey building, the cellar will be used for the kitchen, refectory, gymnasium, etc. [...] The college will receive boys sixteen and over. They will be given preparatory courses for at least two years. The second stage will be a Junior College affiliated to a University.[11]

This college is now almost completely built and is schedules for opening on September 1st, 1964. This fall it will replace and provide even better educational facilities for three times the number of native young men than had been given by Grandin Home in the past.

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11 College at Fort Smith, Tel-Indianescom, Ottawa, Vol. 2, No. 5, May 30, 1963.

4. Conclusion

Section 93 of the British North America Act of 1867 has often been called the Canadian educational bill of rights. In the judgement of the Fathers of Confederation this section granted in full the educational rights of the majority to establish their own schools and protected the right of the minority group in any community to establish and maintain education facilities for its children. This section provided a legal constitutional right for the acceptance of the dual system of schools within the Dominion of Canada.[12]

Prior to 1875, the policy of the Northwest Territories on education was based on this provision of the Canadian constitution since this area did not have a separate constitution of its own. People were few in the vast area so there was little need to provide legislation for the formal establishment of schools. Whatever education that there was had been provided by the churches or by some other local authority. However, by 1875, the prairies of the Northwest Territories were becoming populated so it seemed necessary to provide a separate set of laws for these inhabitants. The North-West Territories Act of 1875 was passed and Section 11 of this act provided legislation for supplying

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12 See Appendix 1.

education for the children of the area. It empowered the local council to pass all necessary ordinances relating to education, but explicitly stated that the rights of the minority groups must be respected. The act also said that the minority of a community would have all the education rights that had been given to separate schools established in Quebec and Ontario — in other words, full rights to taxes and power to set their own educational policy.[13]

In 1884, provision was again made to protect the rights of the minority groups. This provision was:

> In accordance with the provisions of section ten of "The North-West Territories Act, 1880"[14], providing for the establishment of separate schools, it shall be lawful for any number of property holders resident within the limits of any public school district or within two or more adjoining school districts or some of whom are within the limits of an organized school district and others on adjacent land not included within such limits, to be erected into a Separate School District by proclamation of the Lieutenant-Governor with the same rights, powers, privileges, liabilities and method of government throughout as herein before provided in the case of public school districts.[15]

In 1886, a provision was given concerning the districts capable of being erected into a separate school district. It permits:

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13 See Appendix 1.

14 Section 10 of 1880 repeats s. 11 of 1875. See Appendix 1.

15 Canada, Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1884, No. 5.

> a number of the ratepayers, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, the same being a minority of the ratepayers resident within the limits of an organized school district to establish a separate school district therein.[16]

From now on the school district of the majority, whether Catholic or Protestant, was to be the Public School district and thus regulated by the rules pertaining to the Public School districts and not by the rules of Catholic or Protestant separate school districts.[17]

This provision greatly limited the extent to which the Catholic Schools could be established within the Mackenzie District. The right to petition for the erection of a separate school district was limited to the minority, and this minority had to be resident within the limits of an organized school district. In the Mackenzie, most communities have a population that is primarily Catholic. Thus, if the Catholic population was to petition for a school, it would be regulated by the laws with regard to public schools. This would defeat the purpose of Catholic education because public schools do have a restriction on religious instruction in their schools:

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16 Canada, Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1886, No. 10, s. 12.

17 In the Northwest Territories the public school district was that of the majority of this school district.

> No religious instruction such as bible reading, or reciting, or reading or reciting prayers or asking questions or giving answers from any catechism, shall be permitted in any public school in the North-West Territories from the opening of such school at nine o'clock in the forenoon, until the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon, after which time any such instruction, permitted or desired by the trustees of the district, may be given.[18]

Thus, should a Public School district be established within a community that has a population that is primarily Catholic, the school would have to be in effect a "neutral" school and except for the provision allowing religion for a half hour a day, would have to comply with the regulations of the Public School districts.

The minority groups, too, are often unable to exercise their rights in the Mackenzie District. The ordinance of 1886 made clear that a separate school district could be established only within an already existing district. Within the Mackenzie District there are a net-work of schools organized and operated by the Federal Government. These are Federal Day Schools and as such there are no districts in which they are organized. Even if a Catholic minority population did want to establish a separate school within such a community they would be prevented from doing so because there would be no previously existing school district. Thus the sections on education in the British North America Act

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18 Canada, Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1885, No. 3, s. 78.

and the North-West Territories Act are quite ineffective in the majority of cases within the communities of the Mackenzie.

There are two areas within the Mackenzie District that have a population large enough to warrant the application of the provisions of the constitutions of Canada and of the Northwest Territories. The two municipal districts of Yellowknife and Hay River have been organized and within these two districts Catholic Separate School Districts have been established. In all likelihood, as the north develops, more centres will make use of these provisions, so that when legally possible more parents will be able to make an education in a Catholic School possible for their children.

CONCLUSION

The present education system within the Mackenzie District is the product of the Federal Government's efforts to provide a better quality of education to a greater number of students. Until 1948, education within the Mackenzie District was of a denominational nature. Missionary priests or sisters or Anglican Ministers established a network of schools and with the facilities that they had at hand they would provide as good an education as they could. There was always a long period of time that the teacher and school had to initiate the students to the treasures of knowledge. This could be called the pioneer age of learning and training and for perhaps during the schools first thirty or forty years few students would get beyond the primary grades. Most native children at this stage do not see the necessity of education ~~and~~ not do they have any acquired study habits. Also, the children usually get little encouragement to go to school from their parents. This was a necessary stage in school development where teacher must improvise the best he can in order to give students an education suitable to their person, need or situation. It has been reported that:

> So far as school law and regulations were concerned in the North West Territories, no one seemed to have them very much in mind. Since there has been no professional inspection of these schools, those in charge were living up to their own conceptions of school law and regulations not because they

> had to so much as because they wished to do so. One's whole impression in this respect was most refreshing. Nowhere did anyone in charge of, or teaching in, these schools seem to have anything to hide. With the invigorating candour of the North they were most anxious to disclose all the facts and seek direction if any were available. The only official regulations seemed to be the very brief and sketchy set to be found on the inside back cover of the Daily Register supplied by the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources.[1]

As the education facilities and students' aptitude to education increased, the students, whether native or non-native, began to attain higher standards so that by 1950, a good number of them reached high school grades. However, the church-operated schools were unable to supply sufficient facilities for the majority of the students of the district. Only a small percentage of the children in the Mackenzie went to school at all so the government felt an obligation to provide education facilities to those areas that had no schools. In 1949, the government began its work of building and operating schools. These schools, of course, were of an undenominational character. The entering of the government into the field of education saw a rapid and great development of educational facilities in the Mackenzie. In 1949, some of the schools operated for only four hours a day, four days a week, and a third of the teachers did not hold teaching certificates. Classroom visitations were infrequent,

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1 Andrew Moore, Survey of Education in the Mackenzie District, p. 67.

there was no standardised curriculum, there was no vocational training program and film and library facilities were almost non-existent. Adult training programs and hospital schools were located in only three locations. There were only 117 Eskimo children attending school on a full-time basis. Ten years later the progress was reported as follows:

> More progress has been made in education in the Northwest Territories in the ten-year period between the 1949-50 academic year and the 1958-59 academic year than has been made in any other part of Canada. The number of Eskimos in schools has increased over 1,000% and the number of federal schools has increased from three schools with 1 classroom each, to a total of 51 schools with 182 classrooms. The total enrolment in all schools has increased from 1,121 pupils in 1949, to 3,928 in September, 1958. In 1949, there were 103 pupils enrolled in the junior and senior high school grades. By September 1, 1958, this enrolment had increased to 576 pupils. A gradual consolidation of the various types of schools began in 1954 and in 1955 schools formerly operated by Indian Affairs Branch were transferred to the Department of Northern Affairs. In 1956, all mission school teachers became federal employees, as part of the program of consolidation of mission schools with federal schools. By 1960, there will be only two authorities operating schools in the Northwest Territories (as compared to eight in 1949). These will be federally-operated and municipally-operated schools. All schools now offer a full five hours of instruction daily for five days a week.[2]

Such progress in the field of education would not have been possible if it had not been for the fact that the government was able to come in to administer and finance

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2 Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Northern Education, Ten Years of Progress, Ottawa, mimeographed, 1958, p. 1. Compare Tables 1 and 2.

this educational work. Although it is true, however, that the Churches with limited possibilities could not have provided as good facilities as the Federal Government, it is unfortunate that these pioneers in the field of Education were left out of education now.

The evolution of education in the Mackenzie District from church operation to government control has been a difficult and controversial battle between church authorities and the government authorities. The church holds that education should teach the whole child in the whole environment while the government is more interested in having the child attain high academic standings or usable skills. The educational system that is today in operation in the Mackenzie District is perhaps the best compromise solution to satisfy both these education viewpoints. In the ordinary Federal Day School, religion can be taught during the last half hour of each day. In the Federal Day School at Fort Smith, students are divided into classes so that where possible, only Catholics go to certain classrooms which then would be denominational in character. In some classrooms Catholics and non-Catholics do attend courses together and these are considered undenominational. The schools at Inuvik and Fort Simpson are operated with two educational wings, one for the Catholics and one for the non-Catholics and they are operated on a denominational basis. It seems that the

government is doing its best to be fair with its education policy towards Catholics and they have compromised their position of having totally undenominational schools to make them more acceptable to the Catholic population.

Until such time that an increase in population demands the establishment of Separate Schools within organized districts, Catholics should use all the facilities of education offered by the Federal Day Schools and try to provide more Catholic influence and instruction to the students outside of the school building. This is being accomplished to a great extent at the Catholic Church-operated hostels where the out of town children attending the Federal Day School reside. These children spend most of their day in Catholic surroundings, and the example of the Sisters and workers there accomplish a great deal in developing the whole child. There has also been a new college for the residence of Catholic students at Fort Smith which will give a real Christian environment and solid guidance to help form good Christian leaders among the Indians and Eskimos. In this way the Church and the government are working together towards forming the youth of today to be worthwhile citizens of tomorrow.

APPENDIX 1

A. The British North America Act, 1867
Section 93, Numbers 1 and 3

93. (1) Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the Province at the Union:

(3) Where in any Province a system of separate or dissentient schools exists by law at the Union or is thereafter established by the legislature of the Province, an appeal shall lie to the Governor General in Council from any act or decision of any Provincial authority affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education:[1]

B. The North-West Territories Act, 1875
Section 11

11. When, and so soon as any system of taxation shall be adopted in any district or portion of the North-West Territories, the Lieutenant-Governor, by and with the consent of the Council or Assembly, as the case may be, shall pass all necessary ordinances in respect to education;

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1 Statutes of Canada, 30 Vict., c. 3, s. 93 (1867), quoted in D. C. Masters, A Short History of Canada, p. 142-143.

but it shall therein be always provided, that a majority of the ratepayers of any district or portion of the North-West Territories, or any lesser portion or sub-division thereof, by whatever name the same may be known, may establish such schools therein as they may think fit, and make the necessary assessment and collection of rates therefor; and further, that the minority of the rate-payers therein, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish separate schools therein, and that, in such latter case, the rate-payers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic separate schools shall be liable only to assessment of such rates as they may impose upon themselves in respect thereof.[2]

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2 Statutes of Canada, 38 Vict., c. 49, s. 11.

APPENDIX 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIBES OF THE MACKENZIE

A. The Chipewyan

Habitat. — Edge of the woodlands.

Economy. — Migratory hunters; plundered weaker bands and tribes; learned to use copper from the Yellowknife tribe; used birch bark vessels of the Cree; used Eskimo paddles; produced very little on their own initiative.

Food. — Caribou, moose, buffalo, musk ox, small game, waterfowl, pemmican, raw meat, and flesh.

Shelter. — Skin tents.

Clothing. — Skins.

Political and Social Organization. — No tribal unity; divided into bands with leaders; the strong plundered the weak; firearms obtained as early as 1717; constant warfare against Eskimos, Yellowknife, and Dogrib Indians whom they prevented from visiting trading posts; woman and the aged had no status; recognized no deities; religion based on supernatural and witch-craft.

B. The Yellowknife

Habitat. — Edge of the woodlands.

Economy. — Migratory hunters; used copper, possibly as a consequence of contact with the Eskimos.

Food. — Caribou, moose, buffalo, small game.

Shelter. — Skin tents.

Clothing. — Skins.

Political and Social Organization. — No tribal unity; divided into bands with leaders; harassed the Dogrib, Slave, Hare; finally crushed by the Dogrib in 1823 and retreated to the Great Slave Lake area; little ceremonial life; women and aged had no status.

C. The Slave

Habitat. — Forest area surrounding the Great Slave Lake.

Economy. — Migratory hunters and fishermen; used flint pointed arrows and snares made of sinews and beaten copper; also willow bark fish-nets; hunting of caribou and moose, and catching of whitefish make up the bulk of the Slaves' economy.

Food. — Meat - caribou, moose, fish and hare; berries.

Shelter. — Skin lodges of moose hide or cabins of poles chinked with clay.

Clothing. — Skins trimmed with dyed porcupine quills and moosehair.

Political and Social Organization. — No tribal unity but part-time band leaders were chosen for their great

prowess in hunting and warfare; wives and children were treated with great kindness and men did all the hardest work; the aged and the sick were taken care of even when this caused them considerable inconvenience; religion was magical in which they tried to control good or evil by the practise of sorcery.

D. The Dogrib

Habitat. — Edge of the woodlands; temporary visits to barrenlands.

Economy. — Migratory hunters, and fishermen. Used willow bark nets and similar implements and utensils of Yellowknives and Chipewyan.

Food. — Caribou, fish.

Shelter. — Conical skin-covered tents and rectangular huts of poles and brush.

Clothing. — Skins.

Political and Social Organization. — No tribal unity; divided into bands with leaders; believed in guardian spirits and medicine men; used scaffolds for burial; women had a certain status although aged had very little; names of fathers governed by number of children.

E. The Hare

Habitat. — River valleys — often concealed for fear of the Eskimos and Yellowknife Indians who despised them for their timidity.

Economy. — Migratory hunter and fisherman. Primarily, their culture centered upon the hare which resulted in great hardship during the lean years of the seven-year cycle. Used stone and bone implements, bows, arrow, willow nets and snares.

Food. — Hare, caribou, musk ox and fish.

Shelter. — Rectangular huts of poles and brush; lean-tos.

Clothing. — Skins.

Political and Social Organization. — No tribal unity; divided into bands which were semi-leaderless; believed in guardian spirits and medicine men; held feasts to the dead and the new moon; women and aged without status.

F. The Nahanni

Habitat. — Mountainous area.

Economy. — Migratory hunters; used bows, arrows, spears, clubs, snares, baskets; canoes and toboggans drawn by women; used stone and bone implements.

Food. — Caribou, buffalo, sheep and goats.

Shelter. — Conical tents, rectangular huts; lean-tos.

Clothing. — Skins.

Political and Social Organization. — No tribal unity; divided into bands with leaders; believed in guardian spirits and medicine men; women had some status; influenced by Pacific coast Indians; learned to weave hair of mountain goat; adopted cremation; held potlatches.

C. The Mackenzie Eskimo

Habitat. — Sea Coast, and barren lands.

Economy. — Migratory hunters; fishermen. Depend on caribou, sea-mammal and fish. Used dogs for transportation. Copper, stone, ivory, bone, quartz used for implements and tools. Used spears, bow and arrows and harpoons.

Food. — Fish, reindeer, seal, whale and berries.

Shelter. — Beehive-shaped house of snow blocks or dome-shaped snow huts in winter. Skin tents in summer. In some areas houses made of stone.

Clothing. — Fur and skin - two suits, the first one worn with fur inside, the second worn with the fur out. Skin trousers and robes of skin.

Political and Social Organization. — No chief. Shaman or medicine-man. Have dances expressing exploits and

hunting expeditions. Have their burials on surface of the ground, covered with rocks.

H. The Copper Eskimo

Habitat. — Small area around Cornation Gulf, east and west of Coppermine.

Economy. — Migratory hunters and fishermen. In the winter they hunt seal, walrus and polar bear. In the spring they catch fish and hunt caribou, birds, and gather a few berries. Used knives and spears made of copper and ivory, bows and arrows, sleds, kayaks, unbarbed fish-hooks and lamps made of soapstone.

Food. — Most of the food was eaten raw because there was no fuel. Their staple food was fish and seal, walrus, bear, some birds eggs, reindeer moss from the stomach of caribou, muskrat, squirrel and ducks.

Shelter. — In winter they lived in round dome-shaped huts made of snow blocks. The soapstone lamps burn seal fat. In the summer, they lived in tents made of skins. Sometimes a stone hut was built.

Clothing. — They wore clothing made of skins, in the winter they wore two suits with the fur of one inside and the outer suit with the fur out. Some of the skins used for clothing were dehaired.

Political and Social Organization. — The wife is very important as she does all the clothes-making and cooking, the man hunts and house-builds. No chiefs. Believed in spirits and reincarnation into certain animals. The dead were buried on top of the ground and usually are covered with rocks.

Table 1.

CLASSIFICATION OF PUPILS

SCHOOLS IN THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

As of March 31, 1950

School and Type	As to Racial Origin											TOTAL
	W		HBI		I		HBE		E		NEG	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G		
Fort Braban TDS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	16	-	21
Aklavik Ang. Res.	-	-	2	2	21	25	-	-	22	29	-	101
Aklavik Ang. Day	3	2	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	9
Aklavik R.C. Res.	-	-	2	2	18	16	10	10	16	19	-	93
Discovery Yk. Mine	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Fort McPherson IDS	-	1	5	3	11	17	-	-	-	-	-	37
Fort Norman IDS	1	1	2	5	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	12
Fort Providence R.C.Res.	-	-	11	4	37	44	-	-	-	-	-	96
Fort Providence R.C.Day	-	-	4	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Fort Rae IDS	-	-	-	-	12	9	-	-	-	-	-	21
Fort Resolution TDS	1	2	4	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Fort Resolution R.C.Res.	1	1	14	5	31	30	-	-	-	-	-	82
Fort Resolution R.C.Day	-	2	5	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	13
Fort Simpson TDS	1	5	4	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	16
Fort Simpson R.C.Day	1	-	3	4	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	14
Hay River IDS	32	11	32	21	15	15	-	-	-	-	-	126
Rocher River IDS	1	2	5	7	16	8	-	-	-	-	-	39
Port Radium Day	9	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Fort Smith Public	10	16	21	16	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
Fort Smith R.C. Day	-	-	19	31	6	13	-	-	-	-	-	69
Yellowknife Public (School District No. 1)	83	89	20	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	216
TOTAL	143	145	154	146	177	188	10	10	45	64	1	1081

Key

W White	Ang. Res.	Anglican Residential School	IDS Indian Day School
HBI Half Breed Indian	Ang. Day	Anglican Day School	TDS Territorial Day School
I Indian	R.C. Res.	Roman Catholic Residential School	
HBE Half Breed Eskimo	Discovery Yk.	Discovery Yellowknife Mine School	
E Eskimo			
NEG Negro			

Table 2.

ENROLMENT FOLLOWING CONSOLIDATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS IN FULL-TIME OPERATION IN THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

As of March 31, 1963

School	Type	Cap.*	No. of Teachers	No. of classrooms			Enrolment by Status							Religion		Total Enrolment
				Regular		Spec.	Eskimo		Indian		Other					
				Elem.	H.S.		M	F	M	F	M	F		RC	Prot.	
Aklavik	FDS	150	7	5	1	1	29	30	7	20	26	28		19	121	140
Arctic Red R.	FDS	25	1	1					4	2	3	1		10	-	10
Cambridge Bay	FDS	50	2	2		3	19	14			5	5		4	37	41
Coppermine	FDS	50	2	2			26	22				5		6	47	53
Discovery	CDS	25	1	1							8	4		3	9	12
Fort Franklin	FDS	50	3	3+					27	32	1	1		61	-	61
Fort Good Hope	FDS	50	1	2					11	12	6	5		33	1	34
Fort Liard	FDS	25	1	1					11	4	3	3		15	6	21
Ft. McPherson	FDS	150	8	6	1	3	1		52	74	24	18		-	169	169
Fort Norman	FDS	50	2	2					12	11	16	10		47	2	49
Fort Providence	FDS	50	2	2		2+			15	22	11	6		54	-	54
Ft. Resolution	FDS	150	6	5*	1	2			12	14	55	60		138	3	141
Fort Simpson	FDS	350	18	11+	3+	4	1	2	86	122	36	43		222	68	290
Fort Smith	FDS	575	31	18*	7*	6			119	94	251	190		492	142	634
Gjoa Haven	FDS	30	1	1			16	15						19	12	31
Hay River	FDS	225	12	5	4	4			4	5	111	87		20	187	207
Hay River	SEP	200	8	4	3	1			15	15	65	81		165	11	176
Inuvik	FDS	675	36*	25	6	6	176	188	64	72	147	151		322	476	798
Jean Marie R.	FDS	25	1	1					5	10				15	-	15
Lac La Martre	FDS	25	1	1					15	12				27	-	27
Norman Wells	FDS	25	1	1							12	17		5	24	29
Old Crow	FDS	50	2	2					16	21	7	4		-	48	48
Pelly Bay	FDS	25	1	1			10	7						17	-	17
Rae	FDS	100	4	4		1			54	29	3	11		92	5	97
Reindeer Stn.	FDS	25	1	1			6	8						-	14	14
Snowdrift	FDS	25	1	1					16	13	2	1		32	-	32
Spence Bay	FDS	25	1	1			19	18						3	34	37
Tuktoyaktuk	FDS	100	4	4			41	37		1	5	2		26	60	86
Tungsten	CDS	50	2	2							7	11		1	17	18
Yellowknife	FDS	260	18+		5	9	6	15	22	17	66	50		81	93	176
Yellowknife	PUB	450	21	13	5	7					213	195		29	377	406
Yellowknife	SEP	200	12	6	4	3			9	10	98	99		201	15	216
TOTALS		4265	212	134	40	52	350	356	576	612	1161	1084		2159	1980	4139

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ABSTRACT

Within the Mackenzie District there are three ethnic groups of people; the White, the Indian and the Eskimo. This thesis is a history of the efforts of the Catholic missionary and of government officials toward the establishment of proper educational facilities for the children of these three ethnic groups.

The first chapter is concerned with the people of the Mackenzie District. Each of the native groups within the district had a particular way of life and culture which had to undergo certain changes when challenged by a new White-dominated society. When the Euro-Canadian White settlers began to associate with the Indian and Eskimo his contact often brought hardship and disaster. However, there were also some good effects as a result of this White contact. One of these good effects was the school by which the natives were prepared for a new way of living which European settlement thrust upon them.

The early missionaries established schools in the Mackenzie District as early as 1867. However, they neither had the finances or the personnel to provide adequate education for the whole population. In 1948, the government began to provide educational facilities for the children in areas where there were no schools. Chapter two traces the development of government policies and legislation in its program to provide a good quality of education for all the children within the Mackenzie District.

The Catholic Church has always upheld its right to assist parents in providing a suitable education for their children. The

right to establish schools according to the pupils' faith is also in conformity with the Canadian Constitution and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The third chapter deals with the parents of the Catholic Faith and how they, along with the Church authorities, asserted these rights in order to obtain a Catholic education for their children.

Today, there is an extensive educational system within the Mackenzie District. Practically the whole school-age population now attend schools operated and owned by the Federal Government. Many of these children are brought from isolated areas in the north and are given residence in Government-owned/Church-operated student hostels.

This thesis discusses the difficulties and advantages of the Mackenzie District educational system and tries to see how well the government and Church are succeeding in providing proper educational facilities which will help the children of the north acquire the learning and skill that will help them to become socially and economically successful in our complex society.