

**Civilization
makes plastic
people...**

*Michelle Quesnel interviewed
Douglas Cardinal, consultant for the
Indian Education Center.*

The Alberta Indian Education Center soon to be built around St. Albert for the Indian Association of Alberta has as its prime consultant Edmonton Architect Douglas Cardinal. In an interview on Friday, Mr. Cardinal explained the need for such a center.

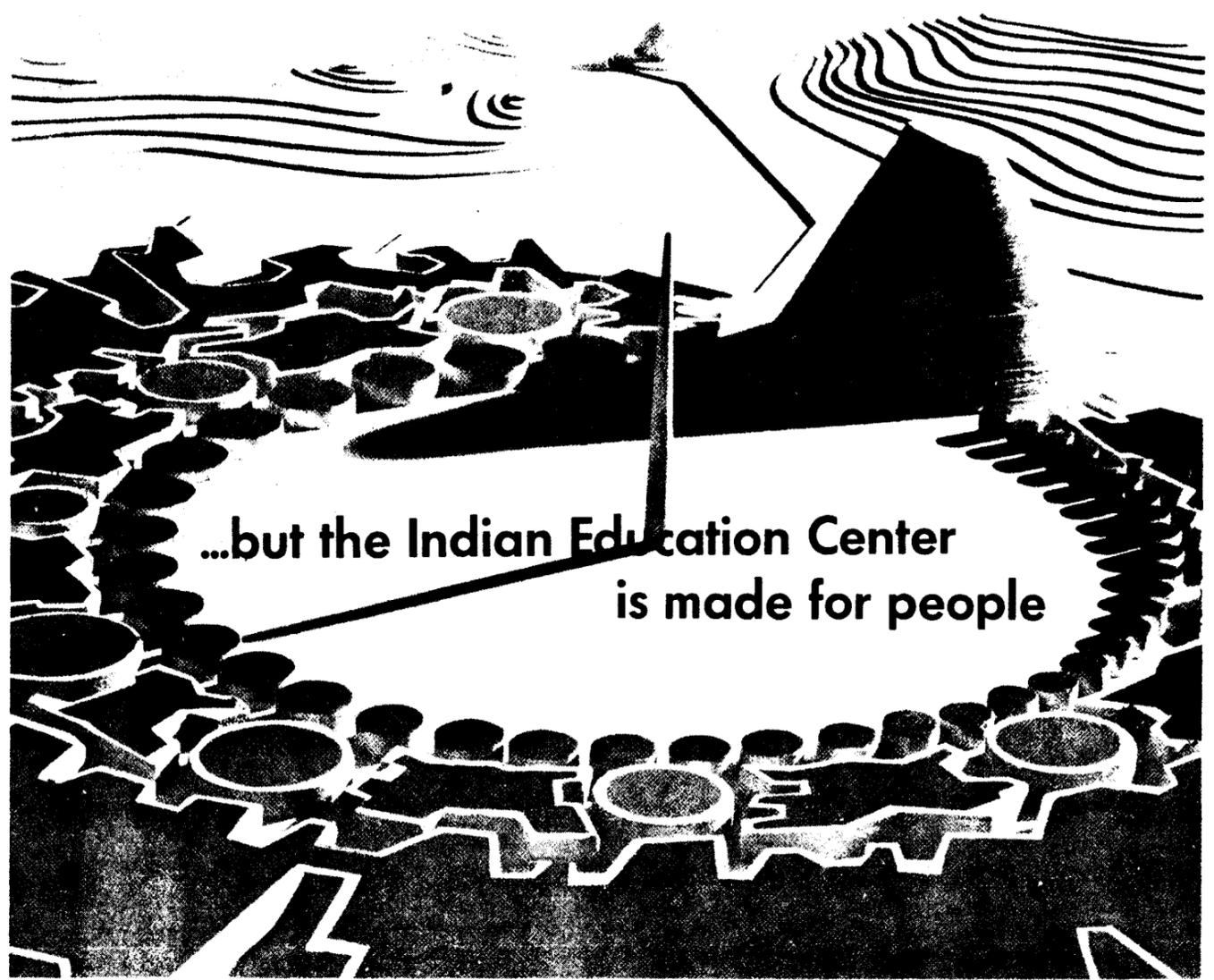
"Civilized man, or 'ego-man,' " he said, "has devised an education system which turns individuals into 'plastic people,' who fit into society like automatons. The society develops the individual's ego, only giving him credibility when he can assert himself on his environment and his fellow men.

"Ego-man has evolved, as the Indians see him, as a machine operating the nightmare of civilization with his head rather than his heart. The Indian way of knowledge is different: one spends a lifetime learning about one's inner self as an individual and about one's place in the grand design.

"The essence of the Indian approach to life is that the Indian adapts his needs to his environment, rather than forcing his environment to conform to his needs."

At the Indian Cultural Center, areas for each of Alberta's 42 Indian bands are arranged in a circle around a symbolic offering pole. The dominant culture is represented by an irregular "growth" on the outside of the circle.

Mr. Cardinal is a member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. He studied for seven years at the University of Texas--"as far away from Canada as I could get at that time"-- and is presently designing the Grande Prairie Regional College.



**...but the Indian Education Center
is made for people**

Each of Alberta's 42 bands is represented in one of the inner circles surrounding the central offering pole. The 8 language groups are represented in larger circles just

outside. The dominant culture--civilization--appears as an irregular growth on the outside of the structure.

Adjacent to our language and conference areas, the combined resources provided by recording, teaching, and communication facilities will be located.

Members of each band fluent in our language, and learned in our indigenous culture and way of life, and the more specific aspects of history, religion, and philosophy, will be our teachers.

Each participant will learn, as did our forefathers, the true meaning of our individual group membership. We will realize our own intrinsic value, the value of our group, and our own reason for being. Here, the sense of

history, of the thousands of years of being part of this land will become part of us and make us proud and confident in our new task.

Here we will develop an understanding of ourselves, and understanding of all our people and feel the necessary contribution that we as individuals can make to the dominant society, indeed the world at large. We will emerge proud, strong, and ready.

For group instruction and interaction all systems of communication will be employed. The

area will become the resource centre and instructional material centre for the language group.

Every aspect of the culture of the language group will be recorded and documented for cultural education in our future.

Also we will include museums dedicated to preserving the meaning, history and culture of our indigenous people. The wealth of knowledge and understanding gained from thousands of years of living in sympathy with nature will be recorded and documented for all our people, and the immigrant culture.

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