

The Far Away Tribes in the Woods

The Crees of James Bay live almost as their ancestors did thousands of years ago in a wilderness in northern Quebec as large as western Europe. They spend the summers in waterside settlements. In the fall, winter and spring they live in small camps deep in the forest, hunting and trapping beaver, bear, caribou, rabbits and wild fowl. The beaver is the prize; it furnishes fur as well as food, and the James Bay pelts are the finest in the world.

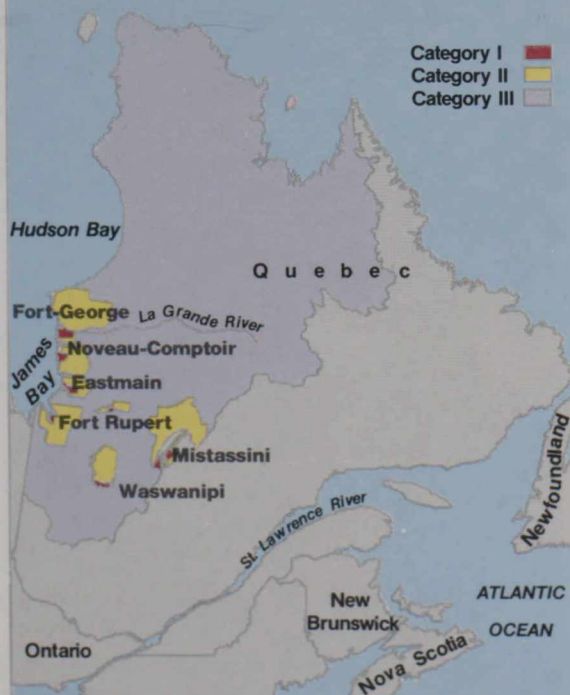
Each family head may have his own hunting area covering perhaps twelve hundred miles. His family and, sometimes, another family or two move to their camp. First they live in tents. Then they cut around two hundred of the best trees from as far as a quarter mile away. The lodge is square and squat, without windows—windows let in cold air. There is little light in a northern winter and the brightest of the sun's rays will come from above, through a hole in the roof. The insides of the logs are trimmed to present flat, white surfaces angled toward the roof hole to re-

flect the light. Moss is gathered for insulation, and a new floor of spruce boughs is laid twice a week.

Everyone works on construction. Children gather the moss, women lay the floor, and men cut the trees, often now with a gasoline-powered saw.

As many as four families may live in the lodge, each with its own corner. Each hunter feeds his own family, but there is an easy, informal sharing. When snow falls, the lodge merges into the landscape, protected from the thirty-below temperatures outside by four feet of snow.

Final agreement with the James Bay Crees and Inuit, November 1975.



The Crees and the Inuit will have control of the 5,408 square miles in Category I. The Province of Quebec will have the right to make limited use of some land for public purposes, but when such use interferes with use by the native peoples, the native people must be compensated with other land.

Mining or industrial development may take place on the 60,130 square miles of Category II lands, but native people retain exclusive hunting, fishing and trapping rights. Native people are entitled to replacement or compensation for lands taken for development.

All people will have access to Category III, which includes the bulk of the vast territory. Native people will be entitled to hunt, fish, trap and cut wood for specific needs without payment of stumpage dues. (For more on the agreement, please turn the page)