

Observatory are working in the fields of geophysics and terrestrial magnetism. Geologists, topographers and geographers are exploring and recording the outer semblance and the hidden secrets of this stark and solemn land.

There is nothing exclusive about this scientific programme. Indeed, nothing would give us greater satisfaction than to be able to co-ordinate our studies with those of other countries with similar problems to solve. Some progress in this direction has already been made in the exchange of knowledge and experience, particularly with the Danish administration of Greenland and with the scientists of the United States. In dealing with the North we would like in the words of L.B. Pearson, our Minister of External Affairs, to place the Canadian accent on "resources and research not on strategy and politics".

In the North, as elsewhere, it is the human problem that is of the first importance. Scientific knowledge is significant only insofar as it contributes to human welfare.

I have said that it is inevitable that the Eskimos and northern Indians will eventually be brought into the Canadian community. In spite of the fact that in some respects they are only a short distance in habit removed from the Stone Age, it would now appear that the transition will not be as difficult nor as prolonged an operation as was once expected. The Eskimos, in particular, have shown an extraordinary facility in adaptation. Not only do they readily appropriate such modern tools as the Peterhead boat and the magazine rifle but they have shown themselves to be remarkable adept in learning to handle even such complicated mechanisms as the modern aircraft engine. (It is worth noting that during the war Russian Eskimos were among the most proficient aeroplane mechanics in the hard-pressed air force of our one-time ally). Eskimos and Indians alike are adopting the clothing of civilization, although this is not invariably either an aesthetic nor a practical advantage. They are turning even too rapidly to dependence on the food and technical equipment of the white trader. Nor have the customs associated with tobacco, alcohol, games of chance and even the radio been an unmixed blessing. It has sometimes been suggested that the Eskimos were the happiest people in the world until the advance of civilization brought them white flour, smuff, measles and radio commercials.

The real problem facing the Northwest Territories and Yukon Administrations in connection with the transition of the native peoples from this nomadic, hunting and essentially neolithic existence to a modern life consonant in most of its forms with that of the more settled parts of Canada is the necessity of controlling the change in such a way that the native peoples will not lose their natural virtues in acquiring the forms and advantages of modern life. The change must be gradual and voluntary. It must be conditioned by a recognition of the values that were developed in the more primitive forms of society. Its inevitability must not be accepted as justification for compulsion or for an unnecessary fracturing of native codes, customs and ideals. The suggestion that conventional Canadian marriage forms should be demanded of all Eskimos, for example, would, if imposed at this time, simply result in antagonizing the majority of those concerned and in creating unnecessarily a whole generation of illegitimate children.

These things are recognized by those who are charged with the official responsibility for the welfare of the native populations of Northern Canada.

First among the steps that are being taken to meet the needs of our Eskimo and Indian compatriots in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon is the provision of a more adequate medical service. Conditions among the northern nomads have always been harsh; the death rate has been high, particularly at birth; and the incidence of disease has been far beyond