

ESKIMO BUSINESS PROSPERS

Art has become such big business in Canada's Arctic that, for the first time, the white man is faced with competition from the Eskimo in ordinary trade. On the basis of earnings from the internationally-famous stone-block and seal-skin prints, Cape Dorset Eskimos have set up a co-operative to compete with the local Hudson's Bay Company store. And, following the white man's business practices a step further, the Eskimos have lured away the Hudson's Bay manager to make him boss of their own store.

The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative is the second such organization to be formed in the North-west Territories, the other being at Port Burwell.

ART IS THE AIM

The West Baffin Co-operative is, however, singular in that its main purpose is the creation of art. During the last two years, the Eskimo prints that are now prized collectors' items throughout North America as well as in other parts of the world have brought in more than \$80,000 for the Eskimos - \$60,000 in 1960 alone. This year, another big sale is being planned and the Cape Dorset Eskimos are calling upon the volunteer services of experts to advise them. A Canadian Eskimo Art Committee is now being formed by the Eskimos and details are to be announced shortly.

The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative, first in the Arctic to hire a white man as manager, now has about 75 members, representing approximately 95 per cent of the households in the Cape Dorset area. The expected volume of business in 1962 is \$16,000. This figure covers all 10 departments of the co-operative, although the largest single item of revenue is the print. Other categories covered include hunting, fishing and tourism. "The co-operative is set up in such a way as to meet all the needs of the Eskimo, both from the exporting and importing viewpoints," an official said recently. Members share profits equally.

Set up originally as the West Baffin Sports Fishing Co-operative Ltd., the group changed its name in October 1960, as a result of the print sales and a vastly increased volume of business.

The Cape Dorset Eskimos first got into the art business about 10 years ago, when soapstone and ivory carvings were shipped to the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, Montreal, by the Department of Northern Affairs. In 1957, they showed Area Administrator J.A. Houston what they could do with prints. The Hudson's Bay Company became interested, supplied the necessary materials and sold the finished products. The Department of Northern Affairs provided technical assistance and made a small heated building available.

It soon became obvious that more had to be done to develop the new art form. In the autumn of 1958, Houston travelled to Japan to study print-making techniques under Japanese experts.

By December 1959, the Eskimos were ready for the professional art market, and the entire production of graphics was flown south. A committee of persons experienced in fine arts volunteered assistance in determining quality, price and outlets. The net return from the first sale was \$20,000. The 1960 production was an even greater success, both in public estimation and in profit, bringing \$60,000 to the co-operative.

With the formation of the co-operative and its financial success, the Cape Dorset area experienced true community life for the first time. The Eskimos had a large bank account and they began talking about getting a store of their own. Many could vividly remember the 1920's when there were two stores competing in Cape Dorset until Hudson's Bay brought out the other. Last September, after lengthy discussions, the Eskimos built their own store and filled it with all the articles needed in an Arctic community.

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JANUARY STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS

During January the number of workers involved in work stoppages was less than half the previous month's figure and the total loss in man-working-days was cut sharply, according to a preliminary summary of strikes and lockouts recently released by Mr. Michael Starr, the Minister of Labour.

There were 40 work stoppages in January, involving 9,174 workers and a total time loss of 85,420 man-days. In December there were 42 work stoppages involving 22,053 workers with a time loss of 139,390 man-days.

Twenty-two of the stoppages were in industries in Ontario, seven in British Columbia, three in Quebec, two each in Newfoundland and Alberta and one each in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Manitoba. A single stoppage was in an industry under federal jurisdiction.

Nineteen of the January stoppages involved 100 or more workers. Of these, eight were over by the end of the month. Five work stoppages accounted for just over 55 per cent of the month's estimated time loss. These involved auto workers in Oakville, Ontario, hotel employees in Toronto, mine workers in Chapais, Quebec, transportation workers in various Ontario and Quebec centres, and workers in fur manufacturing in Montreal.

Analysis by industry of the month's stoppages shows 17 in manufacturing, nine in construction, six in transportation and utilities, four in trade and two each in mining and service.

On the basis of the number of non-agricultural wage and salary workers in Canada, it was calculated that the number of man-days lost in January represented 0.08 per cent of the estimated working time. In December the percentage was 0.13. The corresponding figure for January 1961 was 0.03.