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APPLYING KNOWLEDGE:

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PRAXIS AND PUBLIC POLICY¹

by

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In the midst of an academic world that has become increasingly specialized, increasingly sceptical of claims to sound knowledge and wisdom, and increasingly ambiguous about the role of scholarship in the wider world, Richard Salisbury stands out. He believed in the value of an intellectually rigorous point of view, a commitment to what he thought was right and a passionate activism in the service of other people and peoples. He said repeatedly that knowledge was for use and that informed decisions were better than uninformed ones.

Salisbury was among the few anthropologists who were as well known for their applied work as for their theorizing. His exploration of the links between intellectual and applied concerns reached a depth rarely seen in contemporary anthropology. His most widely-known applied research, on the socio-economic implications of the James Bay Hydro-electric Project in Quebec, forms the main focus of this section. In fact, the history of how he began the research in James Bay, outlined below, could easily provide the grist for one of his own analyses of the potentials and constraints of entrepreneurship and power in New Guinea big-men politics.

In elaborating and testing ideas from economic development theory and organizational analysis through applied research in both these parts of the world, Salisbury emphasized several analytical themes: the need for decentralized development; the possibilities of economic development through the service sector; and the institutional pre-conditions for common interests and actions in emerging regional societies within larger nation states.

His arguments for decentralization were based both on pragmatism and on a commitment to justice for local peoples. He argued that effective negotiations between development agencies and local peoples were essential to both. Thus, Dick often addressed audiences of government policy-makers, regional and Indigenous leaders, business people and the public. In these formulations, he elaborated the arguments of many of the growing Indigenous rights and self-governance

movements around the world. But he carried these arguments to development agencies and corporations, with conclusions drawn from cross-cultural, social science research. He thus showed that research was equally critical for local peoples and macro-institutions. In the process, he decisively contributed to the early development of the new partnership relationships that are emerging between anthropologist practitioners and local peoples.

PRINCIPLED ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEGOTIATED INTERVENTIONS

Salisbury's earliest and best known books, *From Stone to Steel* (1962) and *Vunamami* (1970) not only addressed debates in anthropological economics and the economics of development, they also were laden with practical implications for development as practised by government and international agencies.² His first specifically applied research resulted from a request in July 1971 from the administrator of Papua New Guinea to accept an appointment as an anthropological consultant to investigate and report on an increasingly violent four-year dispute among Tolai factions and the government over new, local governing institutions which were being proposed in the context of the move towards national independence. With Tolai support for his mission, Salisbury conducted a month of discussions and research with the various factions in August 1971. He reported after that he had attempted to lessen the tensions by increasing each group's awareness of the reasons for the positions adopted by the others as well as by increasing their awareness of alternative means for resolving the conflicts (1971). His later reflections on the general lessons which he drew from this experience in the Gazelle Peninsula (1976a) are reprinted here as Chapter V.13.

At about the same time as the work in Papua New Guinea, Dick took his first initiatives to do applied research in northern Quebec. One of us (Feit) recalls being invited by Dick to accompany him in May or June of 1971 to a meeting at which the first Quebec Minister of the Environment introduced himself and his portfolio to researchers at McGill University, and invited them to tell him about what research they were doing which might be relevant to his mandate. The James Bay Hydro-electric complex had just been announced in April, and the project would take place on the lands of the James Bay Cree. It was in this area that most of the earlier research by the McGill Programme in the Anthropology of Development (PAD) had been conducted. Dick had taken on the Directorship of the Programme in 1969, after Norman Chance left McGill.

Dick, in the audience, asked whether the Minister knew what the social impacts of the hydro-electric project at James Bay might be³ and "What do you intend to do about them?"⁴ He then noted that researchers from McGill had been

doing social research on development processes in the region since the mid-1960s, including studies of land use and social change. The minister was visibly interested, saying frankly that, so far, the government knew virtually nothing of the social and environmental impacts but that it needed to remedy the gap. He then turned to an assistant, finger pointing vaguely in Dick's direction, with an evident instruction for the aide to find out who it was who had asked the question. In a matter of weeks, correspondence and an invitation to become involved in social impact research had arrived from the government and from the James Bay Development Corporation (JBDC), which was then the lead Crown agency for regional development. Salisbury later noted that he thought the Minister had been pressured to act because of protests by the Cree, environmentalists and student supporters (1982c:264).

During the same period, Dick initiated discussions of research possibilities with several Cree band chiefs, with leaders of the provincial Indians of Quebec Association (IQA), with Cree post-secondary students in Montreal – all of whom were becoming part of an emerging Cree, regional-wide leadership – and with the lawyers working for the IQA and Cree. The emerging Cree leadership had announced strong opposition to the hydro-electric project (Feit, 1985); and Dick advised the Cree that studies should be commissioned and carried out by the Cree. He also said that he would like and prefer to work for them. He argued in favour of them undertaking research, claiming that it would provide additional information for opposition as well as clear foundations for decisions and Cree planning. He was initially dismissed by provincial Indian political leaders, and told by young Cree leaders that it was impossible for them to think of doing research in their present circumstances, as Cree communities had no regional political organization or decision-making structure at the time, and no funding (Salisbury 1983b).

Dick continued discussions into the fall, and Cree and provincial Indian leaderships eventually adopted the view that "although they would not endorse anything having to do with the [Hydro-electric] Project, [they] would prefer that we do the study than that it not be done, especially if they would be informed" of the results (Salisbury 1983b). With growing support from Cree leaders, Salisbury responded to the invitation of the government corporations to do "social impact studies" and to make recommendations.

But it took several months of negotiations with the JBDC, and some mobilization of public pressure on Dick's part, to reach an acceptable agreement for the research. The sticking points were his insistence that the initial results be fully provided to the Cree as part of consulting them on their views and that the final results be made public immediately – procedures which the JBDC did not initially accept. He refused to undertake the work without full disclosures.⁵ For him, the

research plan and the report were not simply pieces of research for the JBDC; they were direct interventions by the researchers in communicating information about the development and social conditions to the affected peoples. Dick thus envisaged a consultative process that would be truly two-way and which would facilitate the development of new Cree structures for possible future discussions and ensuing negotiations with central governments.

To get his conditions accepted, Salisbury had to enhance the pressure for social impact studies. In September 1971, when he returned from the Gazelle Peninsula project, the Quebec Minister of the Environment asked him to join the Federal-Provincial Task Force on James Bay. The Task Force was formed in response to pressures for environmental impact assessments; and it was mandated to survey and synthesize quickly, for the government, existing knowledge on the James Bay region and the potential impacts of the hydro-electric developments.⁶ The final report of this Task Force, submitted just a few months later, concluded that there was "only one ecological impact of potentially alarming proportions and significance," namely, the impact on the Cree (Federal-Provincial Task Force on James Bay 1971:50). Its recommendations were that intensive studies should be initiated on the impact of the project "on the native population of the territory;" and that such "programs ... provide full and open discussion with representatives of the native community on the planning of the regional development" (ibid.1971:2-3). These recommendations had resulted from Salisbury's input (Salisbury 1983b).

The Report, circulated within government circles before its public release, had the impact which Salisbury intended. A contract was signed by the JBDC and McGill University on 21 December 1971, the day after the Task Force Report was made public. The contract made a single concession to the Corporation: that the specific list of recommendations which would be presented by the researchers in their final report would remain confidential for a period of three years. This was, in Dick's view, a token concession because, as he indicated in his introduction to the final and public report in August 1972, the "recommendations, we feel, spring quite readily from our analysis" (Salisbury 1972a:15).

MAKING THE CASE FOR DECENTRALIZATION AND AUTONOMY

Dick's commitment to sharing information was not only politically wise and morally sound, it was central to the analytical position he adopted as an anthropologist and to the development of new directions in the theory and practice of anthropology. It flowed from his early defence of formal economic analysis, and his subsequent call for an ethno-economics (e.g., 1968), both of which contributed to the reviving interest in actor-oriented models and to the emergent appreciation of the

centrality of local knowledge and praxis to the analysis of broader histories and processes.

This personal and professional commitment to participatory decision-making was linked by Dick to practical reasons for its acceptance by corporate, government and other "macro-system" planners. When emphasizing to them the need for increased consideration of social factors, local implications and the knowledge of local people, he attributed the repeated failure of many development plans to insufficient attention to precisely these issues (Salisbury 1972a:5). In his report to the government, he said that the value of the research would be "nil" if the Cree were not present on planning bodies.

Part of Dick's strategy was to address those who were affected by development plans as well as those who consciously saw themselves as planners. Vis-a-vis the Cree, he deftly and, in our view, accurately summarized their position: that they had no choice but to oppose the proposed project but that they could be willing to discuss the future of the region as full participants in planning bodies. He thus addressed and treated them as potential decision-makers. In so doing, however, he emphasized the need for them to take up their own planning more actively, and he urged them to become researchers themselves. He predicted that there was likely to be a crisis in Cree society within a few years: as the large cohorts of youth entered adulthood, not all would be able to pursue careers in subsistence hunting. He argued that the hydro-electric project was one of the options that they should consider in planning a response to the potential crisis. He thus wrote his report from the assumption that the project would proceed; but he also assumed that it was not an "irrevocable unchangeable scheme" (Salisbury 1972a:14) and, therefore, that the Cree could have an effective role in its planning.

Some readers of the 1972 Report to the JBDC were not comfortable with making such projections, or with making them public. Dick argued that models were not about inevitabilities; that he was not predicting a future outcome but trying to make it possible to effect outcomes. Models, he argued, were useful for changing the world; and failure to anticipate and consider possible outcomes reduced the chances of changing what would happen. He also argued that it was wrong of some experts and researchers to "exclude 'people' from the ranks of policy-makers" (Salisbury 1978a:88). Indeed, he repeatedly emphasized the possibilities of local control and effective participation in wider planning arenas because he saw decentralization as contributing to relative autonomy and self-governance of local peoples.

In practice, Dick constantly balanced commitments with a strong sense of pragmatism as well as a vision. In the James Bay debates, he was one of the

earliest professionals, if not the first, to advise the Cree that they should challenge the hydro-electric project on the basis of their Aboriginal legal rights to the territory on which it was to be built. He presented his case to both Cree leaders and their legal advisors in his early discussions with them in 1971. But the lawyers were reluctant at that time – considering it politically impossible – to argue on the basis of Aboriginal legal rights to land (Salisbury 1983b;1986b).⁷ However, the advice which Dick gave coincided with views being expressed by a number of Cree; and this option was initiated in court action in the spring of 1972, although the case was not pressed forward to hearings until late in that year, after renewed efforts to establish effective negotiations failed. Indeed, it was on the basis of the plausibility of Aboriginal land rights that the Cree won the first Cree court victory, in late 1973, which finally forced the province into serious negotiations with them.

RESEARCHING IMPACTS, HAVING AN IMPACT

The report, *Development and James Bay*, was prepared in the five months between January and June 1972 by Dick and three young co-researchers, Fernand G. Filion, Farida Rawji and Donald Stewart (Salisbury 1972a). The earlier delays in signing a contract resulted in a winter research schedule which meant that no new fieldwork was undertaken as part of the project because Cree hunters were in isolated bush camps. However, unpublished data were gathered from official statistical sources and from other researchers in order to examine regional conditions and patterns of change. As well, consultations with Cree students at McGill, and with Cree who were resident in Montreal, went on continually during the research, both individually and through a series of weekly university working seminars. The seminars, taken for credit by some graduate students, provided a forum for informal and middle-level discussions both among those involved directly (Cree youth and JBDC officials) and those academics, media people and social activists involved in the ongoing public debates and protests which the hydro-electric project had sparked.⁸ The first draft of the main chapters, completed by June, was presented to the Cree for consultations and inputs. This provided the occasion to report on existing development plans and data to the emerging Cree leadership, and to invite them to respond to the JBDC data and research findings. The results of this consultation were incorporated into a final chapter; and the full report was circulated in September to the JBDC and the public.

The Introduction to the official report, *Development and James Bay* (Salisbury 1972a), included in this volume as Chapter V.12, set forth a clear view of a practical social science and the problems inherent in such consulting. This report was read extensively by specialists and policy-makers working in northern Quebec and Canada,⁹ but because this was primarily a study for the planning stage of a particular project, it was not very widely circulated beyond those with regional interests.

Nevertheless, this Introduction affords an overview of Salisbury's ideas about applied research, just at the moment when he was beginning to undertake extended work of this type.

The full Report included some forty recommendations; and Dick later commented that he was pleased that three-quarters of them had eventually been adopted (1988a:243; see Chapter V.16, this volume). Some of these recommendations, because they involved a full turn-around in government planners' policies, were particularly important to Cree and the corporations. The recommendations included new initiatives for local involvement in the planning process and regional governance, recognition of the need to support the subsistence sector, recognition of a local role in plans for developing service industries (as well as relocating and isolating construction camps and staging areas away from Indigenous settlements), and creating a local priority for on-the-job training programmes. The practical consequences of the adoption of these recommendations for the development of Cree society have been significant.

While Cree leaders were also arguing most of these issues, it seems clear that formulating these issues in planners' terms and documenting what was known from other parts of the world were critical for the adoption of the policies and programmes. Dick's position as an independent researcher also gave him the opportunity to meet, explain and press for his recommendations with corporate and government officials, outside the increasingly confrontational context of government-Cree relations.

For the Cree leadership, the report elaborated the issues that Salisbury had raised earlier with them, emphasizing the consequences of demographic growth, the vital but limited potential for the growth of subsistence hunting activities, the need to upgrade job skills in the population, the role the hydro-electric project could play in training and enhancing skills levels, the need to evolve region-wide planning, and the crucial importance of political rights and of building an effective organization for social and economic development.

Dick's own assessments of the effectiveness of his report were generally positive, but qualified. Looking back three years later, he wrote in 1975:

I am convinced that even [with] the inadequacy of previous research, the empirical irrelevance of much existing theory, and the haste and lack of sophistication of our early emergency efforts, our predictions were vastly superior to

those that anyone else was making at the time, using "common sense." (Salisbury 1978a:86-7).

In the final chapter of the report itself, in which he reviewed the consultations with Cree leaders in June of 1972, he had been more uncertain. There he reaffirmed his conviction that there was a need for "enlightened planning going beyond mere traditionalism if dependent status is to be avoided" and if negotiations among the Cree, the corporation and government were to proceed. However, although he noted some emergent beginnings, he did not see many concrete instances. He concluded the report by noting that it was probably "somewhat in advance of its time," that "the questions it answers are not yet being asked" and that the extensive communication efforts "have been largely ineffective" (Salisbury 1972a:174-5).

But the report was not without consequence; and it changed the very conditions under which it had been conducted. During the discussions with the Cree leaders, Dick was invited to undertake field research for them in the three communities most directly affected by development. This second research project was urgently undertaken in August 1972, before hunters went to their bush camps; and the report was submitted in September, in time to be used by the Cree in their unsuccessful efforts to get effective negotiations underway with Quebec before the courts started hearings on the legal proceedings initiated by the Cree as a last means to get effective participation and recognition. This report, *Not by Bread Alone: Subsistence Activities of the James Bay Cree*, was written with three students, Jacqueline Hyman, Kenneth Hyman and Nathan Elberg (Salisbury, 1972b).¹⁰ The report – edited, introduced and concluded by Dick – documented the subsistence economies and the cash incomes of the affected communities. It confirmed the importance of subsistence production and activities to local economy, diet and health. It also warned of the potential pauperization of the Cree if the hydro-electric development led to reductions in game harvests and a need for increased importation of foodstuffs paid for with the limited cash that families had.

Reflecting on the reports three years later, in 1975, Dick commented that more had been accomplished by and with Crees in ensuing negotiations than had been the case in his initial June, 1972 assessment (quoted above). The Crees'

primary reason for interest in the data was based upon a desire to oppose the project more effectively ... and, at least initially, [they] had no interest in our analyses of other problems they would face if the project did not go through, or in the sections dealing with ways in which

industrial development could be utilized to produce benefits for local society.

... As negotiations between the Cree and the James Bay Development Corporation developed between 1972 and 1975, so the questions became important: how to produce long-term benefits; and what social advantages had to be guaranteed in any agreement which involved damages to subsistence economy, or to local social autonomy? Our report was eventually well used – but in ways chosen by the Cree (1978a:87-8).

Looked at from the present, Dick's desire for more effective political and economic negotiations between local groups and governments has now become a commonplace feature of the various initiatives for Aboriginal self-government being explored across Canada, and by Indigenous peoples and regional societies around the world. His works are among the finest exemplars, in both scholarly and policy-oriented publications, which argue that local knowledge, participation and a sense of real autonomy are key components of the planning and development processes and of legal claims. His formulations of these issues contributed to and enhanced a direction in applied research which has since then been greatly extended. Analytical and methodological approaches, such as participatory models and increasing local control over research, have been much elaborated. At the same time, there has been extensive acknowledgment that Salisbury's James Bay studies were the early models for participatory applied research.¹¹

REFLECTING ON THE ROLE OF THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

Shortly after completing the initial James Bay studies, Dick wrote generally about his vision of the emerging and potential role of anthropologists, drawing on the experiences in both Canada and New Guinea. The paper, which is included in this volume as Chapter V.13, was circulated for the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences meetings held in Chicago in August/September 1973 (Salisbury 1976a).

The direction of his argument is well conveyed in his title, "The Anthropologist as Societal Ombudsman." In the paper, Dick developed his case that the anthropologist should ideally not take sides but should be impartial. It is important to note, however, that such neutrality did not mean, in his view, that the results

of their work would be neutral. His position acknowledged the imbalances of power that kept local people from effective participation in regional and national decision-making and that limited access to information was one of the roots of that inequality (1976a:263). He thus envisaged that if the applied anthropologist effectively communicated information, the result would not be neutral with respect to power, but would enhance the position of the relatively powerless groups.¹²

He presented a range of arguments in favour of impartiality, the core ones being set out in this paper. Here, as elsewhere, he also implied that the anthropologist committed to working only with local people runs the constant risk of preempting the local group's own representations (see 1978a:88, 89). One other reason such intervention was inappropriate, he argued, was that it jeopardizes effective resolution of the disputes. To succeed, the conflicting parties must make their own choices in negotiations, they must negotiate compromises they can live with and they must identify the outcome as one of their own making.

Dick was careful to explain that certain key conditions were essential for the emergence of impartial ombudsman roles in society. These included a "relatively enlightened central bureaucracy" and local people having confidence in an "outsider appointed and paid by an official organization." As he later noted, events were always changing rapidly, and there was growing uncertainty about how frequently such conditions could be met.

Salisbury's defence of the value of impartial and independent advice was partly a response to the increasingly adversarial views expressed in development conflicts. These adversarial stances, partly although not solely the result of the "legalization" of conflicts, were occurring not only in James Bay but more widely in relation to Aboriginal, minority and local issues throughout the United States and Canada. In Canada, the first modern Supreme Court recognition of the continuing existence of Aboriginal legal rights was handed down in the Nishga ruling in 1973, in time to influence the James Bay Cree's court challenge of the hydro-electric project. An important consequence of that ruling was a much wider use of the courts as an alternative route to gaining recognition of Aboriginal interests in conflict situations, over and above the earlier choices of negotiation and political action.

The legalization of the processes quickly changed the context of social action and applied social science, in ways that left less opportunity for research which was not seen as simply committed to "our side" or the other "side." Salisbury had anticipated and was concerned about this development. In an unpublished presentation to a national social science conference in Ottawa in 1975, Dick expressed the unsatisfactory choices with which social scientists were now faced: the "stereotype of

all researchers as useless, or even hostile, is changing, as researchers are being divided into 'good researchers' on our side, and 'bad guys' who are not working for us" (1975:9).

How quickly things had changed was clear at a 1975 Social Science Federation of Canada conference on evaluating change. His paper was cited by the editors of the conference proceedings as the only contribution which actually referred to the role of the scientist in evaluating change or to methodologies for evaluating change (Nelson and Gray, 1978:157). Most of the discussion at the conference, according to Salisbury, focussed on "necessary changes in political and legal processes" (1978b:159). Given his differences with the other participants, Salisbury was invited to prepare a short postscript to the conference proceedings. In it, he said he would not change what he had said, but he acknowledged that:

I would agree, in short, with all the panelists that attention must be paid to the legal and organizational problems of getting effective action to prevent catastrophes and to implement benefits. It may well be that the most immediate, highest payoffs may be derived from attending to these problems. This unanimity makes it all the more important for at least one paper to stress the actions that the social scientist can take, qua scientist (1978b:160).

By 1981 Salisbury was not speaking of social ombudsmen, but of the role of experts in social negotiations (1982c). In this context, he compared the ability of social researchers to contribute to solutions acceptable to both parties to what he saw as the more limited ability of judges and court proceedings to facilitate solutions satisfactory to each party (1982c:258-9).

On strategy, Salisbury's position was clear: "confrontation doesn't get you anywhere" – words heard more than once as we (Scott) discussed current events in Indian politics. His approach was transactional: that each party be able to formulate its position in the best possible knowledge of the perceptions and expectations of others and that, out of such transactions, the structure of future relationships could be influenced for the better (1976b, 1977; 1979a). This, he felt, could result in development without jeopardy to the autonomy of any party to the process. He expected that people could be convinced to take the interests of others into account, in their own long-term interest. For example, local agreement is often essential for

facilitating the stability needed by national and international agencies and corporations making large-scale investment decisions. Of the James Bay case, he wrote:

The challenge to the anthropologist was one of showing what were the different payoffs to different sub-groups, of a solution that was acceptable to all. Some parties may not have obtained the maximum that they might have obtained from a purely self-centred strategy, but that would have been at the expense of other sub-groups and, we would argue, also to their own long-term disadvantage, as they would have alienated the parties whom they would have "oppressed." Over the long term there would have been major strife in the area (1984c:15).

To show how all parties could benefit from a non-antagonistic transaction of their own interests in relation to others – this was the professional as well as the ethical standard that Salisbury preferred. His discussion thus raised the fundamental issues that two decades later still pervade considerations of the role of anthropology in a post-colonial world, where power is widely acknowledged and the foundations of knowledge are plural, and explicitly moral, but where many anthropologists still struggle to find a self-image, and a role, that can be mutually empowering for those with whom they work and for themselves.

THE PUBLIC FIGURE: OTHER CONTEXTS, OTHER TEXTS

From the early 1970s on, Dick was involved in an increasingly wide range of applied research, consulting, media contacts and public presentations in addition to his scholarly publications, teaching, university administration and other professional activities. This extraordinary range of activities expressed his convictions about the relevance and obligations of social scientists. Indeed, over the course of a few years, he became a public figure in Canada and beyond, often sought out for his advice and views on a broad spectrum of topics by governments, Indigenous groups, media and public associations. This applied research not only took him the breadth of Canada but also, in the mid-1980s, back to New Guinea. As a public figure however, Dick was not only active or known for his work with Aboriginal peoples. He also, for example, published on Quebec universities as a member of the provincial *Commission d'Enquête sur les Universités Québécoises 1977-79* (1978c; 1979c) and he was a Board member of the Canadian Human Rights Foundation from 1980 (1982e).

An example of his contributions as a public figure is a dinner address he delivered in 1979 to the Eighth National Northern Development Conference, meeting in Edmonton, Alberta (1979b), and reprinted here as Chapter V.14. Attended by several dozen oil company and mining executives, senior government ministers and bureaucrats, and a handful of Indigenous spokespersons, his paper ("The North as a Developing Nation") offered them rich and provocative conceptual fare. It is an exceptionally succinct and clear interpretation of the lessons that he drew from what was known about third world development, and of the implications of those experiences for the future of development in the northern regions of North America. But it is also an example of the ways in which Dick used scholarly findings, and his own personal vision, to address businessmen and government officials about how some of their interests overlapped and needed to be co-ordinated with local interests. His moral rationality, simultaneously addressed to the different sectors of decision-makers involved in development, became a hallmark of his public communications.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

The relationship between the application of knowledge and the advancement of basic knowledge was the central focus of Dick's vision of anthropology. His 1979 paper, "Application and Theory in Canadian Anthropology: The James Bay Agreement," which is included here as Chapter V.15, reviewed the key, applied research that he and his students had done during the 1970s in James Bay in order to show how applied research and theoretical developments were linked. Indeed, it was a recurrent theme in his publications that anthropologists could not ignore theory when doing applied research, just as it was his view that they could not ignore applications when developing theory. In the above-mentioned 1979 paper, he showed the dialectical relationship between economic and transactional theories and the applied research he was doing.

In another article, when describing how to build predictive models based on existing social science findings, Dick argued that original research formulations had to be re-worked. This was because earlier findings usually revealed cases of "[c]ircular arguments, non-causal relations masked as causal ones by loose wording, or correlations which, in reality, are merely attempts to construct 'types' for inclusion in a typology" (1978a:89-90). Thus, to "recast the analysis of existing findings, into a form suitable for use, with a specific set of social data, may lead to theoretical advance in and of itself" (1978a:90). In addition, "[c]onstant use of theory to make predictions ... lead to much more objective testing of theory, with many more theories being rejected. As a result, theory would develop more rigorously" (1978a:91). As he concluded in an unpublished report: "[T]he theorist who does not involve himself in pol-

icy research is depriving himself of invaluable stimulation" (1975:12). The paper included in this volume provides his most extended defence of these views.

THE 1980S – A TIME OF COMPARISON AND ASSESSMENT

After a decade of concentrated work in Northern Canada, Dick went back to Oceania where, during a six-month sabbatical at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) in 1983-84, he set out to do comparative research on how well provinces were using local governments to deliver services. He made contacts with a number of provincial premiers and established a research agenda which included work in New Britain, Siane and Bougainville. While he was at UPNG, the University wanted someone to take part in assessing the social impacts of the Luluai hydroelectric proposals in Bougainville. Dick volunteered; and he used participatory research models very similar to those he had developed in James Bay a decade earlier (1984f;1984g). Salisbury was also drawn into a UPNG project team that was investigating rumours of "uncontacted tribes" in the Schrader Mountains. The Miyamiya group "indeed had never previously been patrolled ... [and] I have some unforgettable and almost unique experiences, that shed dramatic light on what 'delivering services' means" (Salisbury 1984d;1984e;1984g). Despite such a very full sabbatical, Dick did get to compare developments in several provinces, and he prepared a synthesizing report on "Decentralization and Local Government in Papua New Guinea" (1987; 1984g).

It was Salisbury's intention to bring this phase of the PNG research to completion during a sabbatical projected for 1991, upon finishing his term as Dean of Arts at McGill. The sabbatical was also to enable him to complete a major theoretical book on development, bringing together the lessons learned from his longitudinal research in both New Guinea and northern Canada. Also in progress was a volume on economic anthropology that he was editing, to deal with parallel issues. The long-term plans for synthesizing his New Guinea and Canadian research findings were cut short. Nevertheless, he did complete several syntheses of the James Bay findings.

Dick said that he became aware of "the great need for a brief descriptive study of the Cree experience" which would be accessible to a wider audience than anthropologists, after he presented a Canadian "case study" at a United Nations University symposium on "Development Alternatives" at Ste. Marguerite, Quebec in 1980 (1982d:1-2). *A Homeland for the Cree: Regional Development in James Bay 1971-1981* (1986a), his last book, was the fulfilment of that need. Alongside the book, he published a series of papers on theoretical aspects of the analysis, in particular: "Formulating the Common Interest: The Role of Structures in Cree Development" (1982a); "Le Québec: microcosme du monde ou monde en soi?"

(1984a); his "Introduction" to his co-edited volume on *Affluence and Cultural Survival* (1984b); and the 1988 paper reprinted here as Chapter V.16. In this latter paper, "Economics of Development Through Services: Findings of the McGill Programme Among the Cree (1988a), Dick moved from analysing the processes to exploring the outcomes. In so doing, he provided a synthetic survey of the lessons for development anthropology uncovered by a decade and a half of modelling and testing in applied settings.¹³

These publications were facilitated by new social impact research, commissioned by the James Bay Energy Corporation in March 1982, to assess the next phase of the hydro-electric development which was to be built on the lands of the southern Cree villages.¹⁴ In the summer of 1982, Dick and five field workers collected data, on a tight schedule, and completed a report before the end of that year. For despite regional-level approval by Cree community leaders, individual communities restricted the fieldwork time to about three weeks in each village because of the extensive Cree-initiated research which was underway at the time. Interestingly, such Cree-initiated research was an objective which Salisbury had highlighted for the Cree a decade earlier. The result was that the Salisbury team had to depend in part on data from organizational files and from recent research which had been done for other purposes (1982b:12-16).¹⁵ Nevertheless, this research provided comparative data for the monograph on the decade of rapid change in the James Bay region since his initial impact studies.

The resulting book, *A Homeland for the Cree* (Salisbury 1986a), paralleled the recognition in anthropology more generally that there were no peoples isolated from national systems. It also foreshadowed the more recent critique of radical separations between local and global social institutions by exploring the recent transformations of local systems. Indeed, Salisbury thought that "the existing literature on most northern Canadian communities pays little attention to the realities of life in the 1980s – it persists in viewing them as collections of people leading 'traditional' lives, though administered by white officials in a quasi-colonial state" (1982d:3). He thus objected both to the analytical models of the social systems and to the locus of social agency on which they focussed. He argued that what had happened among the Cree was that the majority of administrators were now Cree and that local political decisions were being made by Cree. "The relevant 'system' still includes politicians and bureaucrats in Quebec or Ottawa, but the involvement of the Cree in the total system is complete up to, and beyond, the regional level. ... 'Village life' ... is no longer the significant 'system'; the Cree region is the most significant system" (1982d:3-4).

Salisbury thus saw the implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) of 1975 as a major experiment in decentralized regional development (Salisbury 1983a, in this volume as Chapter VI.18). Local people were in charge of providing services to their communities, maintaining the conditions for land-based production and creating a productive modern sector. Direct negotiation by native political organizations precipitated the native corporate entities and bureaucratic arrangements needed for the task as well as for developing the necessary skills. The required financial and advisory support flowed as compensation and as legal commitments undertaken by external businesses and governments (Salisbury 1979a).

His evaluation was that the JBNQA was in fact a success in many important respects. While he was disturbed that social and ecological impacts tended to get inadequate consideration before hydro development decisions were taken on purely technical or financial grounds, the JBNQA did show, he felt, that the social costs and benefits of development could be balanced via negotiation (1979a). Thus, positive changes in Cree society had been brought about by the development of corporate regional Cree bodies or “structures” that served as vehicles for shaping a “common interest” out of the crisis of hydro-electric development. The existence of such structures permitted action to be taken, court cases to be initiated, research to be conducted, communities to be consulted and a consensus to be expressed to outsiders. In due course, a variety of corporate arrangements emerged that were seen both as “legitimate” Cree entities and as effective in administering the rights and benefits secured in negotiations (Salisbury 1982a).

In the Preface to *A Homeland for the Cree*, Dick argued that changes to Cree society between 1971 and 1981 were an “emergent outgrowth from their preexisting society and culture” (1986a:vii) and that the development of a regional Cree society was a process in which Cree had acted as architects and not merely reacted to external forces. Factors both internal and external had made this possible: the willingness of Quebec and Canadian governments to decentralize governmental powers to a region; the Cree consciousness of regional unity provoked by the crisis of hydro-electric development; the availability of local personnel to operate emergent structures; a regime of services and transfers that made possible the maintenance of a viable local subsistence economy, as well as growth in administration and services; and predictability of resources and programmes enunciated in legal, implementable terms enshrined in the JBNQA.

Dick believed that anthropologists had helped to put local native people on a more equal footing with government bureaucracy and industry in negotiating development. To an important degree, he also felt that Cree had come to share

his research values, noting their express appreciation of complete and honest research as essential to sound decision-making – even if the findings were sometimes initially unpalatable (1986a). So far as we are aware, Salisbury never wavered in his optimism for reasonable and decent outcomes among parties who, despite conflicting goals or inaccurate stereotypes of each other, were generally well-meaning. Thus, both the integrity of Salisbury’s approach, and its pragmatic value, have remained extremely persuasive. It was the kind of world he wanted; and it was, therefore, life as he himself transacted it.

NOTES

1. The authors have been aided in the preparation of this paper by Mary E. Salisbury and Marilyn Silverman. The authors, however, are solely responsible for the contents. Preparation of this paper was funded in part by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to Feit (nos. 410-93-0505, 410-96-0946, 410-99-1208) and to Scott et. al. (no 83-91-0035). A few passages in this article have appeared before in papers presented by the authors in a memorial to Dick Salisbury in *Culture* 10(1).
2. From his earliest fieldwork, Salisbury had been involved in the kind of ad hoc practical policy-influencing initiatives that field workers are commonly asked to engage in by their host communities. During his Tolai fieldwork in 1960, for example, he was asked by people at Vunamami village to investigate the history of the expulsion of a village group from land to which they now claimed rights in a dispute before the Land Titles (Restoration) Commission. The results of this work are included as Chapter III. 6 in this volume.
3. Feit was one of the PAD researchers, and he was writing up his dissertation on Cree hunting economy at the time. Salisbury, his supervisor, urged him to speak up at the meeting, but when he declined, Salisbury spoke.
4. We put the second of these questions in quotation marks because, twenty-five years later, Feit remembers the exact words.
5. For a discussion of the principles, see his comments in 1978a, pages 88-9.
6. With the exception of its two co-ordinators and Salisbury, the Task-Force was comprised entirely of staff from provincial and federal government departments.
7. It is important to recall that, at this time, there had not been any judicial recognition of the contemporary survival of aboriginal rights within Canada.
8. The documentation centre which was assembled at PAD also became a focus of work and meetings among diverse individuals.
9. For example, the report was a key source document for one of the first books published in Quebec on the project and the Cree (Jay-Rayon 1973); and extracts from the French version of the report were included in an appendix to this book.
10. Jacqueline Hyman, who had done a summer of M.A. fieldwork on 1989 in Fort George (now relocated to Chisasibi), and her husband, Kenneth Hyman, co-ordinated the local research staff in Fort George during the three week field research period while Nathan Elberg co-ordinated the questionnaire interviewing by splitting his time between Paint Hills (now Wemindji) (10 days) and Eastmain (one week).
11. See for example Ryan and Robinson (1990) and Waldrum (1993).
12. Hedican (1995:55-73) situates Salisbury's position within the broader debate over the merits of neutral mediation versus advocacy in social research.
13. The article is the most complete summary of the findings reported more fully in his book on James Bay.
14. Hydro-Quebec later chose to try to develop the northern-most phase of the proposed development, on the Great Whale River, before going ahead with the southern project. A concerted international campaign by the James Bay Cree and allies within the environmental movement, in the context of worsening economic conditions and reduced demand for electricity, resulted in an indefinite postponement of the future phases of hydro-electric development in the James Bay region. However, the projects have not been permanently abandoned.
15. It was with much sorrow that Dick did not get the opportunity to undertake extended fieldwork in the James Bay region, constantly working as he did on schedules restricted by various constraints. He did however make shorter trips, and he was in continual contact with Cree leaders, administrators and students who lived in Montreal or who visited the city regularly.

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