

The Future of Hunters Within Nation-states: Anthropological Theories and Practices, and James Bay Cree

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The revolution in anthropological thought of the last decade brought about by the “discovery” that the productive activities of hunting and gathering peoples are relatively reliable, abundant, and efficient has stimulated the re-examination of a series of anthropological models and explanations. Among the most important areas of revision are the anthropological models of how hunting and gathering societies change and undergo transformation. This paper raises several questions concerning anthropological and popular ideas about the future of hunting and gathering societies, and it suggests some orientations for discovering and/or creating answers.¹

The central question that arises from the developments occurring within the hunting societies of the Canadian north today concerns the nature and diversity of the transformations which occur when hunting and gathering societies become less isolated and must increasingly relate to and respond to nation-state political and bureaucratic structures and to international economic structures. These questions are relevant to a wide range of the surviving societies of hunters and gatherers. It is not simply a question of the transformation of hunters and gatherers into something else: farmers, pastoralists, slum dwellers, ethnic minorities, proletarians, specialized labourers, or welfare recipients. It is also a question of the transformation of hunting societies into new and potentially viable forms of hunting societies, with diverse productive organizations, consumer goods, complex imported productive technologies, and extensive state intervention and relationships. In these societies hunting and/or gathering is no longer the sole productive activity, but hunting and/or gathering still is significant economically, and it is often the key productive activity with essential reticulate linkages to cultural, ecological and social conditions. In order to understand these contemporary hunting and gathering societies it is essential to understand the directions of their change.

The study of change, however, is not a matter of just recording transformations. Change in the current context must be analysed with new tools because it is becoming more and more clear that significant components of the changes are self-conscious. In increasingly diverse ways the hunting peoples themselves are actively trying to play a determining role in the transformations

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they themselves are undergoing. They are not just trying to survive. At least in some regions the hunting peoples have adopted new means by which to seek to restructure their relationships with macro-institutions in terms of their own cultural systems. These include protest movements, public information campaigns, legal actions, drafting legislation, and direct negotiations. In the process, the hunters have not only modified the means, they have set out to redefine the ends, namely their own futures.

This is a situation in which the anthropologist may be a participant and an observer, but in a sense that is wider than the usual anthropological meaning of those terms.

Anthropologists are being called upon, in such situations, to play new roles, roles that often require them not only to criticize the societies in which their own professional work is embedded, but to go beyond such critiques to evaluate/discover/create means by which other societies can achieve their own futures in the face of world political and economic interventions. The scope of the task is delimited on the one hand by the real and fundamental, but not universal, conflicts of interest between hunting societies and industrialized nation states and economies, and it is delimited on the other hand by the relative improbability of fundamental short-term transformations in nation-state and international economic structures. It is a situation in which anthropological understanding and theory must be both applied and developed in the same process.

These problems are discussed here primarily on the basis of examples and data drawn from recent research on the hunting peoples of the Canadian north, and particularly the Eastern Cree Indian communities of the James Bay region of Quebec. Much of this recent Canadian research has focused on the interaction of societies of hunters with the political institutions of the nation state and with the international economy (see Salisbury *et al.* 1972a; Salisbury 1976a, 1976b, 1977, 1979, [1979]; Paine 1971, 1977; Freeman and Hackman 1975; Asch 1979; Savard 1979; La Rusic 1970, 1979; Chance *et al.* 1970; Charest 1975; Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec 1971, 1979, 1980; Inuit Studies 1979a, 1979b; Tanner 1979; Scott 1979; Usher and Beakhust 1973; Feit *et al.* 1972; Feit 1972, 1973b, 1979, 1980).

This paper is composed of four parts: (1) a brief résumé of recent developments in the Canadian north; (2) a critical analysis of previous anthropological assessments of the changes being undergone by hunting societies in the light of recent data on Cree hunters in Quebec; (3) an account of the nature of the dependences encountered by the Cree in interaction with the state; and (4) an account of some new and innovative responses initiated by the Cree, and designed to enhance their autonomy in the face of present changes. The paper concludes by indicating some implications of these developments for the theoretical orientations and the practical activities of anthropologists who study hunting peoples.

Hunters and Anthropologists: Recent Developments in the Canadian North

Hunting and gathering societies have continued to exist in the northern parts of Canada despite 150 to 350 years of involvement with the international fur-trade, despite 25 to 75 years of administrative involvement with national and provincial governmental structures, and despite governmental policies that have frequently been based on the assumption that hunting was a dying way of life. In the last decade several developments have simultaneously brought these facts into the forefront of both public attention and anthropological interest. New plans have been put forward for the “development” of the resources of northern portions of Canada by the national and provincial governments, and by inter-national economic interests. These plans and projects have been a stimulus for significant changes in the consciousness both of the hunting peoples and of the anthropologists and other social scientists who are familiar with the region.

The native peoples have increasingly sought to stop and/or prevent these developments, because aspects of such development conflict with their interests, particularly their interests as hunters, and because they have been undertaken without their consent and participation. They have been using legal means, and particularly recourse to claims for legal recognition of their “aboriginal rights” to accomplish this goal. Across much of the Canadian north aboriginal rights have some *prima facie* recognition within the legal system and have not been extinguished or clearly defined. This fortunate circumstance provides a legal resource with potential political and economic influence for many northern hunting peoples.

The native position has not been a simple opposition to development, but rather an insistence that aboriginal rights must be recognized before development can proceed. Although it has taken many forms, this has been interpreted by all the groups of native peoples to mean the negotiation and establishment of land-claims agreements between themselves and the appropriate levels of government. Such agreements would recognize their rights, clearly define them, and afford legal protection to such rights. All native groups have sought a comprehensive agreement that would include a definition of the rights as well as specific benefits and actions. These would touch on many areas of activity, including as a minimum: (a) protection and development of their hunting and gathering economies including protection of the environments and biotic resources on which they depend; (b) expansion of the local economies; (c) increased control and/or involvement in the local economic projects of regional, national or international institutions; (d) maintenance and expansion of community self-determination; and (e) new social and political institutions to articulate the local and regional native interest with the larger political systems up to the national level. While the means by which each group seeks to accomplish these general goals varies, and the relative values they put on each goal vary, the native groups have all sought

such goals with increasing clarity and with a determination not to be satisfied with mere tokenism (see Cumming and Mickenberg 1972; Cumming 1977; McCullum and McCullum 1975; McCullum, McCullum and Olthuis 1977; Usher 1971/1976a, 1976b; Watkins 1977; O'Malley 1976; Richardson 1972, 1975; Weinstein 1976; Brody 1975; Berger 1977; Sanders 1973; Rouland 1978; Peterson and Wright 1978; Keith and Wright 1978; Penn 1975; Feit 1979, 1980).

The last decade has thus led to the threshold of a series of significant and widespread new transformations that will be occurring in the hunting societies of the Canadian north during the last quarter of this century, and beyond.

In this context social scientists, and anthropologists in particular, have been called on to take up some relatively new roles. At least four general demands have been made upon the social scientists: (1) to document the aboriginal and contemporary ways of life of the native peoples, and the transformations that have already occurred, especially in systems of land use and subsistence economies; usually in order to provide evidence for use by the native peoples in their legal, para-legal and political confrontations; (2) to advise the native peoples on the detailed formulations of their goals and the means of attaining them in the light of present social-science theory and knowledge of the interactions, processes, and transformations of hunting societies and national and international institutions; (3) to help present and articulate such policy as is adopted by the native people to the public, to the government, and to the courts; and (4) to do problem-oriented research on present conditions and by this and other means help to implement the changes sought.

Such developments provide an opportunity to link anthropological thought and action in a way that fulfils the claims for the ultimate usefulness of anthropological knowledge, while at the same time making possible significant advancement of that knowledge. There is therefore an opportunity both to be useful and to do theoretically significant research on the interaction between local populations and the larger political and economic systems in which they are irrevocably enmeshed.

An early example of the study of this interaction was the pioneering work of cultural ecologists and acculturation theorists following the Second World War, which specifically touched on the question of the future of hunting societies. This work stands out in the anthropological literature because, contrary to many studies which have either viewed hunting societies as static, or studied hunters from the perspective of the abstract evolution of modes of subsistence, the acculturation theorists effectively located hunting peoples in the modern world and attempted to analyse the processes of change actually occurring. These formulations have been so out of keeping with the main trends in hunting studies during recent years that they have not generally been submitted to a critical evaluation and revision in over two decades.

As the ongoing processes of change in hunting societies become a renewed focus of attention in anthropology, it is appropriate to return to these early formulations and examine them in the light of the new data now available. A review of this work in the present context provides an opportunity to suggest some of the changes which have occurred in the last decades in both the local and the macro-level settings. And it will set the stage for a discussion of more recent developments and responses.

Initial Assessments of the Future of Hunters in Northern Canada

In 1956, Robert F. Murphy and Julian H. Steward proposed a general and explicitly theoretical analysis of the transformations occurring under certain specified conditions in hunting and gathering societies. They formulated certain cross-cultural regularities in processes of acculturation (1956), basing their analysis in part on the field research of Eleanor Leacock in northern Quebec (1954) and of Murphy in Brazil. In addition, they went boldly beyond a synthesis of existing data on historical change and, under the conditions specified, predicted the likely future of specific hunting and gathering societies, defining a “final cultural type” which was then emerging among such populations (Murphy and Steward 1956: 335).

Murphy and Steward argued that in the geographically diverse cases cited, “outside commercial influence led to reduction of the local level of integration” (1956: 335-6) and resulted in a culture type that was similar, in each case, because the local culture core contained “the all- important outside factor of almost complete economic dependence upon trade goods which are exchanged for certain local produce and because the functional nature of local production, the family, and other features were directly related to this new element” (1956: 336).

This shift from a subsistence economy to dependence upon trade is “evidently irreversible,” they claimed, so long as there is continued access to trade goods. “It can be said, therefore, that the aboriginal culture is destined to be replaced by a new type which reaches its culmination when the responsible processes have run their course” (1956: 336).

This final phase, under the conditions specified, is “characterized by assimilation of the Indians as a local sub-culture of the national sociocultural system” and eventually it may result in the “virtual loss of identity as Indians” (1956: 350). Murphy and Steward identify six features which characterize this phase of convergence and culmination in northern Quebec: (1.1) fur-trapping is predominant over subsistence hunting and (1.2) winter provisions are purchased; (2) economic interdependences shift from group to trader; (3) winter groups are not necessary as family or individual hunting is more efficient and permits resource conservation; (4) the nuclear family is the basic unit at all times of the year; (5) hunting territories develop which are exploited only by a trapper and his family; (6) chiefs emerge as intermediaries with administrative

institutions. These features may be broadly considered as falling into two groups: the economic criteria, items 1 and 2, and the social criteria, items 2 to 6.

This provocative summary of acculturation processes and prediction of future outcomes involving disintegration, dependence and assimilation of hunting peoples has been used to describe historical changes among native people of northern Quebec by several other researchers (Pothier 1967; Samson 1966; Désy 1968). While some criticisms and revisions were suggested, predictions respecting the end product of acculturation processes were not generally revised (for partial exceptions see Balikci 1964 and Bernier 1968).

However, despite this initial support, more recent, intensive and long-term studies have tended to contradict rather than confirm the predictions. Significantly, much of the latter research cited below owes its inception and execution to needs generated by the native responses to development projects and by their claims for recognition of their aboriginal rights. One result has been much more comprehensive data on the economies, culture and social organization of native communities than were previously available. Drawing on data from my own research among the Waswanipi Cree, an Indian band which is adjacent to one of the groups on which Leacock provided extensive historical data, and on other recent research among closely related Eastern Cree bands,² it is possible to subject the specific criteria offered by Murphy and Steward to a detailed review.

With respect to the relative importance of trapping for furs to sell and hunting for subsistence foods, Knight has argued (1965: 35) that fur trapping is not incompatible with various hunting activities, as had been assumed. Certain intensively harvested animals, such as beaver, lynx and muskrat, are important both for the commercially saleable pelts they provide, and for the substantial quantities of food they provide. Certain other species which are hunted primarily for food, such as moose, are harvestable at times and places that are compatible with trapping for fur bearers, while other species hunted primarily for food, such as geese, are harvestable at seasons when fur trapping is relatively less productive. The consequence is that as fur trapping becomes important it need not replace hunting for subsistence.

The data now available from recent studies in fact indicate that fur trapping has not become the predominant productive use of wildlife, and that subsistence hunting, which includes the trapping of such furbearing animals as are used as components of the normal diet, remains the predominant use. In terms of labour inputs to wildlife harvesting, a sample of Waswanipi hunters, whom I studied in the autumn, winter and spring of 1968-69, the main fur-trapping period of the year, spent 31 per cent of harvesting man-days hunting moose, small game and

² I am including among the Eastern Cree the bands of: Great Whale River, Fort George, Old Factory (Paint Hills), Eastmain, Rupert House, Nemaska (Champion Lake), Mistassini and Waswanipi.

waterfowl, and fishing for food, whereas they spent 7 per cent of man-days trapping fine-fur-bearing animals other than beaver, some of which were eaten. But, they spent 62 per cent of harvesting man-days hunting and/or trapping beaver (Feit 1978: 839). Beaver was both the most important source of subsistence foods and the most important source of fur sales income, accounting for 54 per cent of all calories available from winter food harvests and 84 per cent of the cash value of all fur pelts sold.

Data on the community-wide patterns of production indicate fur-pelt sales provided \$36,149 of income in 1968-69, whereas subsistence production accounted for 206,453 lb. of butchered food, which I estimate would have cost \$185,902 to replace with commercially produced meats, fish and poultry at local prices (1978: 78 and 91).³ The comparable figures for the following year were \$27,585 in fur-pelt sales and \$169,694 worth of subsistence foods. The value of subsistence production was therefore about six times the value of fur-pelt production.

Comparative data on fur production and subsistence production from other Eastern Cree communities during the 1970s indicate a similar predominance of the value of subsistence products (Table 1). The most recent published figures for the Eastern Cree region as a whole are for 1974-75, for which fur-sales income was \$384,340 (James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Harvesting Research Committee 1976: 198) and the subsistence-food value calculated on a basis similar to that used above was \$3,632,713.50 (Grand Council of the Crees [of Quebec] 1977: Table 8c). Subsistence hunting has therefore remained the predominant use of wildlife resources and the predominant harvesting activity.

As these figures would suggest, the importance of local subsistence products, called 'bush food', also remains high in relation to the quantity of commercially purchased foods. In a sample of winter hunting camps at Waswanipi in 1968-69, bush foods provided 78 percent of the calories available for human consumption from all foods during the winter period, 93 per cent of the available protein, and 90 percent of available fat (Feit 1978: 624). In the neighbouring community of Mistassini Adrian Tanner estimates that in the winter of 1969-70 bush foods provided 573,400 lb. of foodstuffs, while commercially bought foods provided 140,000 lb., or 20 per cent (cited in Salisbury *et al.* 1972a: 46).

³ For a general discussion of the methodology of establishing the cash value of subsistence food production see Peter Usher 1976a. It may be worth emphasizing here that the Waswanipi do not consider commercially produced foods to be the equivalent of locally produced foods, in terms of nutrition or spiritual origin.

Table 1. Comparison of incomes derived from fur-pelt sales and subsistence-food harvests, Eastern Cree communities, various years

Year	Communities	Fur-pelt sales	Cash value of subsistence foods
1968-69	Waswanipi ^a	36,149	185,902
1969-70	Waswanipi ^a	27,585	169,694
1970-71	Eastern Cree ^b	300,000	3,864,300
1971-72	Fort George ^c	20,180	526,487
1973-74	Fort George ^d	72,413	782,299
1971-72	Paint Hills ^e	16,238	162,636
1971-72	Eastmain ^e	14,962	66,769
1974-75	Eastern Cree ^e	384,340	3,632,713

^a Source: Feit 1978.

^b Source: Salisbury *et al.* 1972a.

^c Source: Salisbury *et al.* 1972b.

^d Source: Unpublished data from the Fort George Resource Use and Subsistence Economy Study. Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), Montreal.

^e Source: Fur-pelt sales from James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Harvesting Research Committee 1976; cash value of subsistence harvests from Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec) 1977.

The data therefore also contradict the predicted dependence of the hunters on commercially purchased provisions.

Nevertheless, the proportion of total food requirements provided by bush foods would be much lower than 80 per cent if accurate data were available for the entire year and the entire community. Only estimates of these parameters are available. The percentage of annual community-wide requirements that are provided by bush foods is estimated to range from 50 to 55 per cent for all Eastern Cree communities by weight (Salisbury *et al.* 1972a: 50), to 25 per cent of calorific needs (Berkes and Farkas 1978: 162). My own estimate for Waswanipi is 45 to 50 per cent of calories (Feit 1978: 82). The bush food available to the community can however provide between 50 and 100+ per cent of the mean adult recommended daily intake of most other nutrients (Feit 1978: 84; Berkes and Farkas 1978: 162-3). In the bush camps, from which the most intensive hunting takes place, there is a clear predominance of bush food, and at Waswanipi about 40 per cent of the bush food produced there is brought back to the settlements either for later consumption or for wide distribution (Feit 1978: 696).

The reason for the discrepancy between figures for bush camps and those for the community as a whole is primarily due to the fact that not all Cree adults now participate intensively in hunting activities. Wage employment and transfer payments have become sources of significant incomes, and they provide opportunities for some adult males to work on a permanent or on an intermittent basis.

Virtually all able-bodied men still participate in some hunting activities, but the degree varies from individual to individual, and from time to time. Intensive hunters often work during the summer period, when hunting is least productive, and when employment is often available in the "bush" where their hunting activities can be conducted daily around flexible working schedules. As La Rusic has shown, Cree choices of involvement in employment often emphasize those factors that best facilitate an integration of wage-labour with hunting activities (1970: B40). On the other hand, those who work often have wives and children who fish or snare small game, while workers themselves often hunt on weekends and take holidays to coincide with a particular productive hunting season; and, since wage employment for many is often temporary, many men hunt between periods of work.

The effectiveness of these methods as means of retaining a significant subsistence harvest is substantial, although it varies depending on the kind of biological resources available, especially near the settlement where workers must harvest most of their catch. Recent data from the James Bay Cree communities indicate that those who do not intensively hunt as their primary winter activity harvest an average of 41 per cent as much subsistence food by weight on an annual basis as those who do hunt as their primary winter activity (James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Harvesting Research Committee 1978: 222). Thus, while winter employment does

reduce subsistence harvests, it does not completely eliminate hunting activities as might have been expected. Indeed, in 1975-76 the harvest taken by non-intensive hunters accounted for 27 per cent of the total community harvest by weight.

In 1968-69 and 1969-70 surveys of Waswanipi men indicated that 55 and 50 per cent hunted during at least five months of the productive seven-month autumn-winter-spring season, two-thirds of whom also worked during part of the year; and 30 and 37 per cent of Waswanipi men worked or looked for work during all seasons, all of whom also hunted. The remaining 12 and 13 per cent were aged, sick or indigent, and did relatively little work or hunting (Feit 1978: 62).

Thus, it is wage employment, rather than trapping, which has become an important alternative to intensive hunting; but it is also, as I will show below, an important support for hunting activities. On a community-wide basis incomes derived from employment accounted for 33 to 40 per cent of total incomes, whereas incomes from the sale of furs accounted for only 8 and 6 per cent in the two years. By comparison, incomes in kind from hunting bush foods accounted for 40 and 37 per cent of total incomes. Transfer payments account for the remaining 18 and 17 per cent (Feit 1978: 81). Figures for other communities in the Eastern Cree region are generally similar, although the relative importance of incomes from hunting, transfer payments and employment varies among sectors of the population, and from community to community, and from year to year (Table 2). Fur-pelt sales income is uniformly less than 10 per cent of total incomes.

Even for those men who hunt intensively in winter, and who only work in summer, the percentage composition of annual incomes indicates the relatively smaller contribution of fur incomes than transfer payments and wages. At Waswanipi in 1969-70, those who hunted intensively derived 55 percent of total incomes from subsistence foods, 19 per cent from employment, 14 per cent from transfer payments, and 12 per cent from the sale of fur pelts (Feit unpublished data).

These data uniformly indicate that trapping has not become the primary source of total or cash incomes, and that hunting has continued to hold a decisive place among economic activities. While employment has become a significant economic activity, it has not become the pre-dominant form of productive activity. Although fewer men hunt intensively now, those who continue to hunt intensively appear to have increased per hunter harvests sufficiently to offset the modest declines incurred by those who work, so that total food harvests appear to have remained about stable over a 10-to-15-year period (Feit 1978: 83). The intensive hunters harvest foods over and above the nutritional needs of themselves and their families in order to provide a net exchange of food gifts to those who hunt less intensively. It is estimated that a net 20 per cent of their production flows to the families of men who do not hunt intensively (Feit 1978: 696).

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Thus, production and sharing of food, and economic interdependences among Cree themselves, remain central to Cree economic and social life. Although hunting and wage employment provide roughly equal contributions in dollar value to the total economic outputs at a community level, hunting is the more highly valued activity, it is the more stable activity, and it remains most closely and reticulately linked to the local social and cultural structures that are central to Cree life and that the communities clearly desire to maintain.

With respect to the social organization of hunting, Waswanipi hunters in 1968-70 did not pursue intensive hunting individually and without their families. They typically established winter hunting camps with their wives, their non-school-age children, and often some of their school-age children. In total about one-half of all children, or one-quarter of the school-age children, were in winter hunting camps in any year (Feit 1978: 474; and Salisbury *et al.* 1972a: 178).

The family, or commensal unit, which generally cooks separately, eats together and keeps a distinct but not exclusive larder, is the social unit with the greatest economic cooperation and the greatest social solidarity. It is the basis of both productive activities and consumption activities, although it is not the only important socio-economic unit. At Waswanipi, no hunter stayed in the bush without being attached to a commensal unit,⁴ and each commensal unit was built around an adult-male and adult-female pair, with an interdependent division of labour. In 75 per cent of the cases, the commensal unit was a nuclear family (Feit 1978: 460). Waswanipi hunters did not, therefore, go to the bush hunting camps individually but as families.

⁴ Although adult all-male hunting camps have occurred at other Eastern Cree communities at certain periods, such camps have not become common in the region, and tend to be declining for reasons now related to the structure of the income security programme to be discussed later in this paper.

Table 2. Percentage of total incomes derived from employment, fur sales, subsistence harvests and transfer payments, Eastern Cree communities, various years

Year	Communities	Percentage of total incomes derived from			
		Employment income	Fur-pelt sales	Cash value of subsistence foods	Transfer payments
1968-69	Waswanipi ^a	33	8	40	18
1969-70	Waswanipi ^a	40	6	37	17
1970-71	Eastern Cree ^b	25	8	50	17
1971-72	Fort George ^c	61	1	25	12
1973-74	Fort George ^d	50	2	25	24
1971-72	Paint Hills ^e	18	3	30	49
1971-72	Eastmain ^e	11	6	32	51

^a Source: Feit 1978.

^b Source: Salisbury *et al.* 1972a.

^c Source: Salisbury *et al.* 1972b.

^d Source: Unpublished data from the Fort George Resource Use and Subsistence Economy Study, Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), Montreal.

^e Source: Salisbury *et al.* 1972b.

Nuclear families, on the other hand, were the most basic of the social units through the year as Murphy and Steward predicted, but, in intensive hunting especially, they were not the only important units nor were they self-sufficient.

The commensal groups that go to winter bush camps to hunt form larger social groups - hunting groups. The hunting groups are winter co-residential groups comprising one or more commensal groups that live together at the same camp site. Thus the 42 commensal groups hunting in the winter of 1968-69 were organized into 18 hunting groups, and the 41 commensal groups in 1969-70 were organized into 21 hunting groups. Over the two years 67 per cent of the hunting groups comprised more than a single nuclear family. This pattern is consistent with those reported earlier for Waswanipi in 1964-67 (Bernier 1968) and for the neighbouring community at Mistassini, by Rogers in 1953-54 (1963), Pothier in 1964 (1967), and Tanner in 1968-70 (1979).

Within the hunting groups there is extensive sharing of bush-food harvests, of equipment and of purchased food. Furthermore, hunting units are important units of economic cooperation not only with respect to consumption, but for production as well. Hunters typically work on a daily basis in pairs, and in many cases the hunters' teams comprise hunters from different commensal groups within the hunting group. Furthermore, the hunters who make up a hunting group generally follow a consistent hunting strategy under the direction of the head of the group who has special rights with respect to the hunting territory on which the group resides.

Hunting groups use specific delimited areas, or hunting territories, but these are not exploited exclusively by a trapper and his family. In the present Waswanipi system of hunting territories each territory is identified with a specific "owner" whom I define, on the basis of discursive statements by the Waswanipi, as a person with a claimed and acknowledged right to take long-term decisions respecting the ongoing relationships between human beings and the animals and spirits inhabiting an area. In more etic terminology the owner is a person with a right and an obligation to manage and use the animal resources of an area (1978: 948-49). While Waswanipi statements about rules emphasize these rights and obligations with respect to fur-bearing mammals, less formal statements and actual practices indicate that these rights and obligations extend to intensive use of all the most important wildlife resources (1978: 947-48).

The owner, or a hunter he chooses, is the head of the hunting group which uses his hunting territory in a given year or season. In addition to the rights and obligations of the owner, there are three other key kinds of recognized interests. First, there is a recognized right of any person for short-term access and use of the animal resources of the territory, such as occurs in normal travel or in abnormal emergencies. Any individual hunter may take game animals whenever in serious

need of food, and any hunter may take smaller game animals anywhere on an occasional basis, that is, during a brief period. However, any intensive hunting of the major “big game” wildlife species and therefore, in effect, any sustained or long-term hunting in an area, is always assumed only to be proper under the direction of the hunting territory owner or his delegate.

Second, there is a recognized right of most hunters who are not owners to use one or more specific hunting territories for intensive hunting under the general decision-making authority of the owner. These men, who have typically hunted with the owner of a given territory over a period of years, are often, but not always, related to the owners of the hunting territories to which they have such rights. I call this a long-term right of access, and a person with such a right to a given territory is normally assumed to be able to join the hunting group using a given hunting territory whenever the owner decides to use, or permit the use, of a hunting territory in a given year (Feit 1978: 950).

Third, in contrast to rights of ownership and access, there is a recognized privilege to use intensively a particular hunting territory which is given by the owner of a hunting territory for a defined or assumed period of time (1978: 952). Owners appear to be under obligation generally to grant such privileges where this is consistent with expected harvests, although they are not under obligation to each particular individual request. Nevertheless, obligations do frequently develop between individuals on the basis of more or less extended series of exchanges of privileges.

As a result of this system of rights and privileges the number and composition of the group of hunters using a hunting territory varies considerably from year to year.

There were 40 Waswanipi hunting territories in 1968-70, of which 13 were not used in either of the two years of the research. Most of these owners, and intensive hunters with long-term access rights to unused territories, were exercising privileges to gain access to other territories. In only 22 percent of the cases did the hunters actually using a hunting territory in a given year exactly correspond to the hunters with long-term rights of access. Furthermore, only three cases of the same hunters using the same hunting territory in both years occurred, about 19 per cent of the cases (1978: 1055-6).

Privileges therefore play an important role in allocating use of hunting territories among hunters, and the granting and exchanging of such privileges comprises an important dimension of economic, social and spiritual interdependence within the community. Waswanipi hunting territories are not therefore exploited exclusively by a single trapper, nor are they typically used exclusively by a stable group of closely related kinsmen.

Furthermore, this hunting territory system is an effective means of conserving wildlife, more effective in fact than a system in which hunters were less flexible, because it permits a

management of wildlife populations by a single individual, while also permitting a fluid redistribution of hunters to resources. This provides a complex series of strategies for changing the demand for harvests of particular wildlife resource populations in accordance with the changing conditions of the wildlife. The distribution of hunters and dependents can be changed from year to year, territories can go unused so game populations can recover from declines, the “mix” of wildlife resources used to meet subsistence needs can be varied, and the actual level of production of subsistence foods can be modified within certain limits (Feit 1973a, 1978: 1000-76). The success of this system is demonstrated by the stability of the harvests over periods of a decade or more, and by certain critical indicators of the conditions of the intensively utilized wildlife populations (Feit 1978: 870-8 and 893-9).

This culturally distinctive set of beliefs and rules about the order and meaning of the world and about the rights and responsibilities men have towards each other and towards the land, which they use to distribute men, land and harvests, is clearly not dependent on either the new administrative positions or external institutions. I do not, of course, claim that there have not been changes and cross-cultural influences, as I will indicate later, but the end product is not a simple individualized possession and ownership of land or resources. There has not been a breakdown of effective group cooperation in these areas, nor has change led to the degree of individualized control of resources predicted with the acculturation model.

While it might be argued that such results do not preclude the future predicted by Murphy and Steward, because the processes of transformation are ongoing and the final stages have not as yet been reached, there are reasons for rejecting such a conclusion. As I have indicated already, there are data for an extended period of time and from a series of studies in a number of communities which now indicate that, in general, neither the economic nor the social trends are as predicted. A similar conclusion appears to have been recently reached by a group of researchers working on new data on Brazilian conditions (Gross *et al.* 1979: 1048-9).

Given that the historical trends have generally not been as predicted, what conclusions may we then draw about Murphy and Steward's basic theoretical orientations? If their bold and innovative analysis is not correct it may be because several factors were omitted in their analysis, either because they were not perceived, or because conditions have changed since they wrote. And, if there are key elements omitted, then we may find that their theoretical framework is itself not adequate for a contemporary analysis.

I think that two basic elements have been omitted in their analysis. First, the variety of the types and complexity of the interactions hunting societies have with external institutions need to be expanded, especially to include relations to nation-state institutions as opposed to only considering economic-sector institutions. Second, the varieties of conscious control of such interaction now being actively sought by hunters need to be considered, thereby reducing the

relatively simple determinism implicit in their predictions of future trends. In the next two sections of this paper I will explore each of these factors in turn, indicating both the origins of the pattern of Cree hunting described above, and then the response of the Cree themselves to recent conditions.

The Intervention of the Nation-state in Northern Quebec, New Dependences

Murphy and Steward consider the world economy, operating through the traders, as the major external factor determining the course of development in the local societies. The external political condition, particularly in the form of nation-state institutions, policies, programmes and action, do not explicitly enter their analysis. While this may have been true over much of the period they were considering, it has clearly not been the case in recent decades throughout most areas occupied by hunting peoples.

Since at least the 1940s in northern Quebec, the nation-state and its subsidiary governments have become major interveners, affecting the conditions of the native populations. They have intervened both as developers of resources or promoters of that development, as in the James Bay hydroelectric scheme, and as a source of programmes affecting incomes, health services, education, employment and community infrastructures available to local societies. The specific effects of these latter interventions on the lives of people in the north of Canada cannot simply be analysed as coincident with the interests of world economic institutions, although the governmental actions may precisely coincide with and assist these interests on specific occasions. It is clear that in addition to economic interests, governments are motivated by a range of specifically short-term political, social, and bureaucratic interests, that often lead to policies and programmes whose impacts need to be analysed rather than assumed.

This is especially so because the impact of government interventions, given political and bureaucratic interests, often is to initiate significant changes in the lives of people living in local societies, changes which notoriously often are unforeseen. As a result, the changes often both conform to and conflict with state interests as well as with local interests, producing a pattern of policy failure and local crises accompanied by a growing pattern of local dependency and reduced local autonomy. Murphy and Steward clearly foresaw the critical issue of increasing dependence, but they failed to note the political components which are now often key elements in the increases in dependence.

The origins of the recent changes in the economic and social pattern of Cree communities, described in the previous section of this paper, are closely linked to the nature of governmental programmes and administration. The active involvement of government agencies in aspects of

Cree hunting activity began in the 1930s and 1940s, when the governments of Quebec and Canada instituted programmes in response to the decimation of the beaver populations in the Cree territory. This near-extirpation was caused primarily by pre-emptive hunting by the Cree, in response to the intrusions of Euro-Canadian trappers who were extending their trapping activities during the period of high world fur prices. These trappers sought to clean out beaver populations in specific areas, including parts of the Cree territory, and then move elsewhere in successive years. The Cree hunters, despite the indigenous system for management of wildlife, found themselves left with little choice other than taking the beaver before the Euro-Canadians got to them, thereby decimating the populations (Feit 1978: 1117-25). The government programmes were designed to: give legal recognition to the traditional system of Cree hunting territories, now called traplines; improve beaver populations; exclude non-native trappers from the region; prevent excessive harvests; and improve the Cree trappers' cash return from the sale of fur pelts. The governments were concerned to prevent the Cree from becoming completely dependent on government support.

In addition to these responses, the government of Canada started giving out limited transfer payments to Cree hunters in the 1940s, in response to the economic crisis in subsistence and incomes caused by the decimation of beaver populations during the preceding decade. The government provided incomes first in the form of welfare in kind or credit and later also from universal-transfer-payment programmes in cash. This income helped the Cree hunters meet subsistence and cash needs during the period of low beaver harvests.

When beaver trapping recommenced in the early 1950s, after joint government and Cree restocking, fur prices were high and the combination of incomes from the sale of pelts and government assistance provided an adequate income. Furthermore, the incomes were well integrated with the specific scheduling needs of hunters, the welfare ration was given out monthly in summer, when hunting is more limited, and in a lump sum in the autumn, and the fur income came in winter and in spring. The autumn lump-sum payment was needed to facilitate purchasing the goods - food, supplies and equipment - for the six to nine months of living in isolated bush camps between September and June. The welfare payment complemented and partially replaced the credit given by the fur trader in the autumn, which was traditionally repaid when the pelts were sold in winter and spring. With fewer beaver, and with stricter debt policies imposed by the main trading firm, the Hudson's Bay Company, credit was limited and welfare rations took up the slack in the autumn. By giving out a lump-sum autumn ration, equivalent to about 3 months of welfare payments, the government kept people productive in the bush in winter, and off welfare for part of the period from September to June.

The cash available was used by many hunters to reduce some of the most onerous aspects of the heavy work load required of intensive hunters, living in a highly unstable, relatively

unproductive, and rigorous sub-Arctic environment. While certain components of this work could not be reduced, given the nature of the animal distributions and abundance, and given the technology available, there were other components which could be eased.

Most important for present purposes were the possibilities of more extensive use of chartered bush airplanes as a means of improving transportation to and from those winter camp locations which were not readily accessible from the summer settlements by waterway or by the new but limited road network. Air transportation eliminated the need to carry families and winter supplies to bush camps by canoe. Travel by canoe usually involved paddling one or more heavily packed canoes, and then frequently portaging the supplies and canoes between water bodies. While the time saved by flying varied widely, the more isolated hunters could save two to four weeks of travelling time, and the more than 100 portages needed to reach winter camps. Given this situation, the practice of chartering bush aircraft rapidly became commonplace, and it had ramifications creating other new labour-saving uses of cash incomes.

Use of chartered aircraft made possible the transportation of larger quantities of supplies to the bush, including the liquid fuels needed for more extensive use of equipment such as outboard motors and snowmobiles. These changes involved significant new annual cash expenditures, both as capital investments and for operations and maintenance.

The period of adequate funding therefore led to the kind of transformations which have been found in subsistence societies, the use of available cash to improve labour efficiency, to possibly improve productivity, and to improve security and comfort through a limited use of consumer goods.

But these desired improvements brought with them an increased, but possibly not yet apparent, dependence, not only on the world fur market, but also on the governmental welfare system. This dependence existed despite the fact that the Cree themselves often perceived the welfare payments as compensation for past profits by Canadians at Cree expense, and therefore as “due,” and despite the fact that the actual levels of cash incomes being received were modest by the standards of an affluent nation-state.

During the middle and later 1960s the consequences of these increased and new dependences became apparent as conditions changed. First, the income from fur-pelt sales declined. Second, the credit system was curtailed by the Hudson's Bay Company. The growing Cree demands for consumer goods made it more profitable for the Hudson's Bay Company to shift its emphasis, in much of the region, from running fur trading posts to becoming general merchants. This, plus the growing Euro-Canadian presence which brought in competition among merchants, made them less willing and able to issue large credit amounts in many communities.

The Cree, in general, attempted to use the growing opportunities for summer employment to increase their incomes, and to offset these other restrictions on access to cash, because

summer wage-labour could be integrated with the maintenance of winter hunting and trapping. Summer employment however also increased expenses because less fishing was done, and more foods were purchased to meet family needs during the summer itself. To meet their winter needs many Cree would therefore work later into the autumn when possible, almost until freeze-up, and then fly to the bush. And they would come out of the bush earlier in the spring as well. Changing world economic conditions therefore initially forced many Cree into a more intensive involvement in wage labour, although it did not force them out of hunting (Feit 1978: 44).

These changes led the government of Canada's representatives in the southern part of the region to decide the Cree were on the way to abandoning hunting and becoming wage-labourers. As a result they started cutting off lump-sum payments to hunters in the autumn, and offered a standard monthly welfare cheque, while introducing various make-work programmes to reduce the apparent unemployment (see Feit 1978: 52-3).

This change of policy deprived many hunters in some communities of the cash to charter aircraft in the autumn, and it encouraged people to stay near the towns to pick up their monthly cheques. The final result was that many hunters were in fact within a few years forced by the shifts in government policies to abandon intensive hunting from isolated bush camps. It should be noted however, that the numbers of intensive hunters did increase somewhat later, after a Cree initiated reorganization, but it has not yet returned to previous levels.

These problems were accompanied by other changes related to the cost of hunting. The lack of fur-trade posts in some areas meant that the specialized goods needed for hunting were often unavailable. Similarly, changes in the demand for air services often meant that planes were not available when needed. And, the increased services available in the settlements increased demands for improved services available in the bush camps, but these had to be funded by the individual hunters because there were no provisions for bush services under existing government policies.

While quantitative data for the early decades are not available, the data for the 1970 to 1975 period indicate the problems. In 1969-70, Waswanipi hunters owned hunting equipment with an average replacement value of \$848 per hunter, and they incurred expenses each year of some \$175 for winter food purchases, \$79 for hunting and trapping supplies, and an estimated \$85 for travel costs (Feit 1978: 529, 541, 535). By 1975-76, Waswanipi hunters had equipment valued at a replacement cost of \$2,685 (Feit 1978: 533-4, 529 and unpublished data), and they were spending \$1,274 on food and hunting and trapping supplies, and an estimated \$134 for travel (Bearskin *et al.* 1977: 14). In 1969-70, fur income averaged \$619 (Feit 1978: 547) and in 1976 it averaged \$671. By 1976, the Cree regional average value of hunting equipment owned by hunters was \$2,328, and the average annual costs of intensive hunting included an estimated \$761 for supplies of food and goods and \$284 for transportation. The maximum possible fur-sale

income averaged \$617 for the year (Bearskin *et al.* 1977: 14, 15, 16).

Thus, the Cree were trying to maintain a subsistence economy in the midst of an increasing interaction and dependence on cash, goods, services and employment in the regional market economy. The results were mixed, and a significant number of people were being driven out of intensive subsistence production in the process. The external factors affecting the Cree during this period included market conditions for both the sale of products and the provision of needed goods and services, and also government policies concerning social assistance and community infrastructure.

These problems were exacerbated during the period by the accelerating pace of change in the regional resource use and environmental conditions, which also put Cree hunters in an increasingly difficult situation. Although these problems had their origins in the increasing physical intrusion of Euro-Canadians into Cree territory, the problems were intimately linked to the development policies and the accompanying expansion of the administrative and political structures of the nation state.

Mining centres were opened in the 1950s bringing roads and rail communication links into the southern portion of the Cree territory, and opening the well-forested southern portion to commercial forestry operations. Along with the generally adverse impacts this activity had on the wildlife and the ecological systems of the territory, the new communication links made the region significantly more accessible to Euro-Canadian sportsmen. Competition for those wildlife species of interest to sport hunters and fishermen rapidly developed, and as a response to this problem the government of Quebec implanted conservation officers, then called game wardens, in the southern portion of the territory.

The conservation officers began to impose provincial game laws, regulations and policies on the Cree hunters for the first time, as part of their response to the wildlife conservation and management problems. These policies were based on a recognition that standard game laws could not be inflexibly applied to Indian populations, who hunted and fished for subsistence, who extensively depended on the food of the animals they harvested for nutrition, and whose whole culture and society were integrated with and by hunting activities. The government did not however recognize a basic right to hunt, and it viewed the special exclusions from the laws of general application as a privilege granted by the government to the Crees. The government therefore reserved entirely to itself the formulation of the extent of special privileges to be accorded indigenous peoples. While the Cree resisted these new policies, largely by passively or surreptitiously ignoring them, some of the new regulations which were imposed had the effect of limiting Cree hunting in the areas most accessible to sportsmen.

The government programmes of this period can be contrasted with those which had been introduced in the 1930s and 1940s. The latter were distinguished by the fact that: they excluded

Euro-Canadian trappers and protected Cree interests; the entire system was cooperative, encouraging Cree inputs; and, in so far as it involved Cree compliance, it was self-regulated. In fact, the system had as its model the indigenous Cree system of hunting-territory organization and wildlife management. The involvement of the Quebec government in the 1960s was therefore a radical break with previous practice because: the existence of an aboriginal right to hunt was explicitly denied; the government acted to protect the interests of Euro-Canadian hunters and restricted some Cree activities; and the Cree no longer participated in the formulation of new policy nor were they involved in its implementation.

The dependence of Cree on government regulations concerning developmental and sporting activities by Euro-Canadians thus became as important as their dependence on government-issued welfare and transfer payments. During the 1960s, dependence on nation-state programmes and institutions was apparent to the Cree as it had not been in the 1940s and 1950s. A critical step in this course of events came with the announcement that the provincial government was going to build a massive hydroelectric project on Cree lands, without consultation or forewarning. This threat eventually provided the context within which the Cree initiated an autonomous new local response to these growing crises.

Dealing with Dependence, the Cree Approach to Enhancing Autonomy

The Cree response to the crises of growing dependence was greatly facilitated by using the leverage provided by their opposition to the James Bay hydroelectric project, and their claim for settlement of their aboriginal rights. The Cree response to the project was to try to stop it, but when it became clear how difficult this would be the Cree progressively moved towards negotiations that would moderate the impacts of the project, while providing measures necessary to significantly enhance the Cree ability to maintain their way of life and reduce their dependence. These negotiations resulted in the first comprehensive aboriginal-rights settlement in Canada.

The negotiation of a comprehensive aboriginal and land-claims settlement during 1974 and 1975 not only provided the Cree people with the first opportunity to deal with the general problems of hunting, it permitted them to do so in a relatively extensive and coordinated fashion. It was one of their objectives during the negotiation of the agreement to establish the conditions necessary to sustain the central core of Cree life and society, and to ensure that in the future they could build a society based on a balance among the population of participation in subsistence activities and in economic enterprises and employment. Furthermore, they explicitly sought to reduce both the economic and the administrative dependences.

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) was signed in 1975 by the James Bay Cree, the northern Quebec Inuit, the government of Canada, the government of Quebec and the James Bay Corporations after two years of detailed negotiations. The Agreement provided for the extinguishment of any aboriginal rights or claims the approximately 11,000 Cree and Inuit might have in Quebec, in exchange for the specific rights and claims spelled out in the 30 sections and over 400 pages of the agreement. The agreement was comprehensive, covering the questions of hunting, fishing and trapping, land allocations and regimes, local and regional government, education, health and medical services, economic and social development, income security, police and justice, environmental protection, modifications to the James Bay hydroelectric project, compensation and eligibility (Anonymous 1976). In each of those areas the JBNQA provided for specific rights, benefits and responsibilities of the parties and for the mechanisms thought necessary for successful exercise of those rights, benefits and responsibilities.⁵

A major component of the settlement concerned the protection and enhancement of the hunting activities of the Cree. The range of hunting problems the Cree addressed during the negotiations had five focuses for which the Cree sought solutions: definition and recognition of aboriginal hunting rights; effective involvement of the Cree in management of wildlife and the environment; regulation of the allocation of wildlife between indigenous hunters and sportsmen including priority allocation to the former; regulation of the environmental impacts of developmental activity; and reduction of the dependence of the hunters on world-market conditions and on government policies and programmes.

The specific provisions designed by the Cree negotiators and their scientific and legal advisers in order to meet the first four of these objectives have been described in detail elsewhere (Feit 1979), and only a brief review of these can be offered here.

With respect to hunting rights the JBNQA provides for a right to “harvest,” which includes the right to pursue, capture and kill all species of fauna at all times over the entire territory where the activity is physically possible and where it does not endanger the safety of others. The generality of the right to harvest is limited by the operation of the principle of conserving endangered wildlife species and habitats, but this conservation is specified as being for the primary purpose of maintaining the traditional pursuits of the native people, and it is implemented in the first instance through traditional Cree measures for conservation and

⁵ Since December 1973 I have served as an adviser to the Cree Indian organizations, the Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec) and the Cree Regional Authority, first in their court fight against the hydroelectric project with respect to the social implications of the James Bay development, and later in the negotiations, on the social aspect of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Land Claim Agreement. For a discussion of the process of negotiating the agreement, see Feit 1980.

management. The right to harvest and the principle of conservation are an attempt to codify an aboriginal hunting right in modern terms and to give it a legal force that is binding on government. The right and the associated principles are intended to stop the unilateral redefinition of native hunting rights, and the ad hoc encroachments on Cree hunting activities by governments.

Effective involvement of Cree in the management of wildlife and the environment is established through a joint and balanced Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee which is the permanent, exclusive and mandatory forum in which native authorities and the responsible governments formulate regulations, supervise administration, and manage the regime. The powers are predominantly consultative, but the consultation is mandatory, and in a limited number of key areas the committee has major decision-making authority.

The allocation of wildlife resources between Cree hunters and sportsmen was a critical area, and the Cree established a binding principle for those allocations which gave priority to Cree hunters. They also established an operational procedure for implementing the principle. This procedure involves the establishment of the present levels of wildlife harvests by Cree peoples over a specified seven-year period by a joint research team (see James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Harvesting Research Committee 1976, 1978, 1979). This present level then determines the allocation of permissible harvests for those species populations which are under careful management for conservation purposes. If these populations permit a kill exceeding the number presently harvested, then the Cree hunters are allocated the present harvest level automatically, and the balance of the permissible harvest is divided between Crees and sport hunters according to need and the principle of priority to Cree harvesting. If the populations only permit a kill equal to or lower than present harvest levels, then the entire permissible kill is allocated to Cree hunters.

This operational procedure assures priority to Cree hunters, and minimizes the impacts on them of declines in animal populations. In addition, certain areas of land, and certain species which are not of primary interest to sportsmen, are reserved for the exclusive use of the Cree.

In total, these provisions are intended to assure that, although the nation-state and its subsidiary governments exercise most wildlife management authority, they will do so only within certain limits, according to rules and procedures that protect Cree interests, and on the advice of the Cree themselves; and that the Cree will have a legal recourse against the governments if they violate these terms of the agreement.

The protection of the environment from the adverse effects of development, and the minimization of negative impacts on Cree hunting, economies, societies and culture, were the subject of a series of parallel principles, procedures and consultative and participatory mechanisms. These have a similar intent to those directly related to hunting, both limiting the

exercise of state authority and assuring Cree participation in decision-making. In addition a number of specific programmes and organizations, to be described below, were designed to provide the economic means whereby the Cree could adapt their hunting patterns to the changes created by resource-development activity in their territory.

This first group of procedures made up an integrated package designed to reduce Cree dependence resulting from the political, legal and administrative activities of the Canadian and Quebec governments in relation to the environment, wildlife and hunting in the Cree area.

The second range of problems the Cree set out to deal with in the JBNQA were related to the growing difficulty of meeting the economic costs of hunting and the resultant dependence.

The economic problems of hunting were addressed primarily in the JBNQA sections dealing with an Income Security Program for Cree Hunters, Trappers and Fishermen (ISP), and related programmes for a Cree Trappers' Association (CTA), and the provision of a corporation to undertake remedial works relevant to the impacts of the first stage of the hydroelectric development (SOTRAC). ISP was the key provision, intended to provide efficiently generous cash payments to Cree hunters effectively to reduce their dependence on fur prices in the world economy, on wage employment and on government transfer payments. The explicitly stated objective of ISP is: "The program shall ensure that hunting, fishing and trapping shall constitute a viable way of life for the Cree people, and that individual Crees who elect to pursue such a way of life shall be guaranteed a measure of economic security consistent with provisions prevailing from time to time" (JBNQA, Section 30.1.8).

With development of the natural resources of the Cree region accelerating, the ISP was justified as a way of providing individual Cree hunters with the means to maintain, modify or expand hunting activities in the face of the more difficult hunting conditions. The improved funds available to hunters could be used to pay for transportation to more distant or isolated wildlife resources, to improve hunters' equipment which could improve the efficiency of hunting at a time when other factors might lead to declines in efficiency, and to improve the levels of security experienced in the bush during a time of disruption caused by development. The programme and its form however were generally designed to respond to the dependences native people perceived were being created for their hunting activities and economy during the previous decades.

Since the main reasons cited for abandonment of hunting were instability of the available cash and insufficiency of the total cash actually available, the ISP was designed to provide a stable cash income for those who practised intensive hunting, sufficient to meet current needs taking into account other earned incomes.

The ISP provides an annual guaranteed income to Cree hunters who meet the basic requirements. Requirements for participation are, generally: (a) that more time be spent each

year in hunting and related traditional activities than is spent in paid employment; and (b) that at least four months be spent in hunting and traditional activities of which 90 days are out of settlements “in the bush” (Anonymous 1976). In fact, 80 per cent of all participants spend over 150 days “in the bush,” and 50 per cent more than 200 days, almost seven months (La Rusic 1979). Eligibility for any year is based on the activities of the previous year.

The main payment in 1979-80 was \$16.64 per day for the head of household, and a similar amount for the consort, for up to 240 days each spent “in the bush” in hunting and related traditional activities, paid four times a year. This amounts to 75 per cent of the total paid under the programme, and it is guaranteed to all beneficiaries. In addition a basic amount is calculated for each family based on the composition and size of the family. From this amount 40 per cent of all family cash income including daily payments is deducted, and the balance paid to the family. This amount, which is approximately 25 percent of the total paid, goes primarily to families that have a large number of dependants and to those with relatively few days “in the bush.”

At the beginning of 1979-80 year, the fourth year of operation, there were a total of 841 beneficiary units, single individuals 18 years of age or over, or heads of families. The average payment was expected to be about \$7,683 per year to bi-parental families, and \$3,265 to single individuals and the few mono-parental families. The overall average was expected to be about \$5,900. It is difficult to compare this with welfare payments, but welfare would maximally amount to 60 per cent of what beneficiaries receive from ISP all year. However, because of the time spent in the bush, few hunting beneficiaries get the maximum welfare in a year, so ISP is probably more than two times what beneficiaries would get from welfare if they maintained their hunting patterns.

Beneficiaries also receive other universal transfer payments such as family allowances and old-age pensions, but are not eligible for social aid or welfare. The amounts paid under the programme are indexed annually to the cost of living.

At the time of negotiating the programme the Cree negotiators were aware that the control of transfer payment programmes at the provincial and national levels was creating a real dependence on those institutions by hunters. There was therefore concern that although ISP benefits could meet immediate needs, the programme still could increase dependences. The incorporation of ISP into the framework of the JBNQA claims settlement made it possible for ISP to be structured in a way that could limit some of the dependences inherent in usual transfer payment programmes. The programme was therefore designed to differ from other transfer payments in several respects.

First, ISP exists through Quebec legislation which is to give force to the terms of the claims agreement. But, because this legislation does not replace the agreement, and because the agreement provides that the implementing legislation must reflect the provisions of the JBNQA,

any change in the government legislation or in the programme must involve changes in the agreement, and this can only be done with Cree consent. This was intended to ensure, in effect, that ISP is not treated as a standard government programme, which could be unilaterally changed by the government. It is intended to ensure, with certain specific exceptions, that changes to ISP require the approval and consent of the Cree. If this principle is violated, the agreement provides a base for the taking of legal recourses against the government by the Cree.

Second, unlike most welfare recipients, the beneficiaries of ISP have the right to benefit from ISP, so long as they meet the fixed criteria for eligibility in the programme, and based on fixed criteria for calculating the size of the benefits to be paid. And, they can appeal or take legal action if those rights are violated.

Third, ISP is not administered by the government that funds it, but by a separate corporate entity, the Cree Income Security Board, made up equally of Quebec and Cree appointees, with a rotating chairmanship. The Board hires and employs its own staff, although those hired may be civil servants if the Board so decides. The legal obligation of Quebec is to transfer the funds needed each year to the accounts of the ISP Board. In practice, the Board members and the staff are either closely associated with the Cree or with the Quebec government, but a balance is and has been maintained. The Board is therefore not bound by the full range of government administrative norms, and it is given considerable authority to implement, and where necessary interpret and review, the programme and its operations, consistent with the agreement and the legislation.

Fourth, the Board operates out of a regional office, but it must also maintain staff and offices in each community to assure access of the beneficiaries to the administrators of the programme.

Furthermore, the incorporation of the negotiations over ISP within the framework of the comprehensive aboriginal and land-claims negotiations permitted ISP to be integrated into a package of regimes, programmes, organizational structures and benefits thought to be necessary to assure the viability of hunting as a way of life (see Feit 1979). To review, then, the negotiation of ISP established a programme that: although funded by government, was significantly independent of changes in government policy and politics; was jointly controlled and administered by the government and the representatives of the beneficiary population; and it also provided the opportunity to legally encode the specific rights of the beneficiaries.

Several researchers at McGill University are presently studying the initial responses of the Cree hunters to the programme but our results can only be indicated here (Scott 1977, 1979; LaRusic 1979; Scott and Feit forthcoming). A major available indicator of the response is the history of enrolment. During the initial registration there was a provision to admit people who wanted to try hunting as a way of life, but who were not currently doing so. Approximately 300

beneficiary units were admitted under this provision, approximately 43 per cent of 700 already hunting as their main source of livelihood. After one year of operation about 75 dropped out, and the remaining 225 stayed. These people have effectively returned to, or begun hunting as their major productive activity, apparently as a result of the establishment of the programme. In fact, the great majority of these people were former intensive hunters and their families, who had been driven out of intensive hunting under pre-ISP and pre-JBNQA conditions.

Other preliminary results suggest that hunters stay away longer in the bush, and most of those who had not taken their families to the bush in the recent past because of the costs involved have begun to do so. In some communities more isolated geographical areas have begun to be used because of the additional funds to cover travel costs, and significant new capitalization has occurred to increase the ease and efficiency of hunting, skidoos especially being purchased in large numbers. Data on harvests are still only available for a few communities, but it appears that individual harvests may not have increased, although the increase in people hunting may have increased the total harvest proportionally.

These data are too limited, and cover too short a time, to permit final conclusions concerning whether the Income Security Programme will continue to meet its stated objectives in the longer term. The general experiences with the provisions of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement are just beginning to accumulate, and it will be several years in my view before it will be possible to evaluate the provisions of the agreement in general. One aspect is already clear: subsistence production has been maintained during the first half-decade following the agreement, despite increased development activity in the region. This continuing subsistence production may itself be a significant factor in the levels of autonomy or dependence experienced by the Cree.

While it is too soon to say whether the provisions of the agreement will meet the expectations of the Cree, the process has clearly demonstrated how a hunting people can undertake to define their own futures, and how they can take innovative local initiatives aimed at achieving these objectives. It will be important to see whether the particular provisions included in the structure and organization of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement are effective to prevent or limit the extent of local dependency on international markets and provincial and federal governments that have been characteristic of recent Cree history. And this will provide one of a number of fundamental tests of the assumption made during the negotiation of the agreement, namely that local populations can develop specific institutions and benefits, closely linked to national institutions, and still retain and enhance local autonomy.⁶

⁶ A wide range of research on the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, its implementation, and its impacts on regional development have been and are being undertaken by researchers in the Programme in the Anthropology of Development, at McGill University (see Salisbury 1976a, 1976b; La Rusic 1979; La Rusic *et al.* 1979; Scott

Conclusions

The responses of the Cree to the conditions of increasing dependence on macro-level economic and political institutions emphasize the possibilities for responses to these conditions generated at the local level.

This indicates a second type of inadequacy of the theoretical formulation provided by Murphy and Steward. The acculturation model, and indeed many other anthropological theories of change, involves the assumption that micro-level changes originate primarily externally, and more particularly that local-level responses are simply reactive, the local population having neither the power nor the means to generate unique or effective responses. Thus Murphy and Steward predict the course of local-level change entirely from an account of macro-level interventions and local patterns of material production given the currently existing environment and technology (see Murphy 1970).

The data on James Bay Cree history indicate that there may be important local-level initiatives taken, and that the impacts of macro-institutional interventions in a given community cannot be assumed to be generally and simply determined externally, given the local productive organization, and independent of: (1) the economic and political resources of that community; (2) the specific cultural values of that community; and (3) the specific decisions and actions taken by the local population.

It is clear from the above data that hunting societies have not been simply passive in the face of external changes, and that many have sought to set and meet their own objectives. In the Canadian context it is clear that native groups in general have tried specifically to retain their ties to the natural environment, their subsistence production, their social and community ties, their languages, and their belief systems, in the face of those changes whose origin lies totally, or in part, in the macro-institutions. And it is also clear that many native societies have had, under conditions found in developed nation states, a substantial measure of success to date. The data on the James Bay Cree specifically indicate that under certain conditions, hunting people are able to maintain significant parts of the communal fabric of their society and culture in the face of significant externally initiated changes and at least some dependences on international economic institutions and nation-state structures.

The reasons for this degree of success are complex. The data indicate that when hunting peoples in developed states are able to mobilize some political/economic leverage in the macro-

arena then it may be possible for them not only to resist external pressures leading to a restructuring of their own social fabric, but they may also be able to restructure the relationship between themselves and the impinging macro-institutions. The extent of such restructuring is variable, and the means of reorganizing relationships between a hunting society and macro-societies necessarily involve the creation and introduction of new institutions. While it is clear that the particular legal and political leverage which the Crees were able to exercise is not universally available to hunting peoples, these and other significant forms of leverage are available in much of the Canadian north, and to many other hunters in developed nation states. Therefore, it is plausible that when such political leverage can be mobilized organizational forms and local control can be developed that will both be responsive to local conditions and goals, and at the same time effectively accomplish those local objectives in macro-level arenas and institutions. In short, local societies may have and exercise effective power, in the sense of being able to accomplish their own objectives.

These conclusions indicate that local values and knowledge play a central part in the process, and that a singular focus on material resources, work organization and material production is insufficient, because indigenous peoples are increasingly seeking to choose for themselves and the particular “mix” of values and institutions with which they want to make their lives. The extent of local success is and will be variable, but nevertheless one cannot adequately describe or account for the actual course of change without taking into account the values and knowledge that inform people's decisions and actions.

Following from this then the Cree example also indicates that the course of change can only be accounted for by examining the consequences of both local and macro-level actions, and the ways in which these consequences are interpreted and inform later action at all levels. This emphasizes the need to link macro- and micro-levels of analyses.

In addition to revising our theories of change so as to better account for local-level power, belief, decision and action, we also need theoretical frameworks that provide us with a more complex and sophisticated analysis of the macro-system itself. We need a framework from which to analyse and evaluate the inconsistencies and impotencies of nation states and international markets, as well as their powers. That is, we need a critique of developed nation-states that does not fall into the structural trap of seeing them as all-powerful and hyper-integrated. The Cree data emphasize again the very common place finding that government policies often fail, and that governments often do not control the effects or the outcome of their actions.

Therefore we need, given a critical analysis of nation-state political and international economic structures, to be able to analyse these both from the perspective of their constraints on autonomous local action, and simultaneously from the perspective of their intended or unintended potentialities for effective local initiatives informed by local knowledge and values. We

might say that we need to move from the single-focus study of dependence, to a wider framework that, without abandoning such study, also includes study of the means of action by which autonomy may be created among the constraints causing dependence.

The creation of means to such autonomy, and the critical evaluation of the effectiveness of their implementation, is a significant task for local populations and for anthropological research. If anthropologists are to analyse and to assist in this process, the challenge will be to develop and apply theoretical orientations which enhance the capacity of local populations to determine their own futures. These will have to involve, in my view, analyses of local beliefs and knowledge, of possible sources of local power, and of the effectiveness of decisions and actions at all levels. This will require the linking together of analyses of both the logic and the incoherence of macro-level structures with comprehensive decision-making analyses of the micro-level knowledge, power, imagination and initiative.

We need a social analysis that has a macro-view but that also can account for and contribute to the process by which groups of men and women may make their own futures within the constraints determined in their interactions with the nation state and international economies. Such research holds the unique promise of both being theoretically informed and contributing to the efforts of hunting peoples to avoid extinction or assimilation and to create new, viable and relatively autonomous forms of hunting societies.

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