Leadership Among the Indians of Eastern Subarctic Canada

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RÉSUMÉ

Le *leadership* chez les Indiens Cris et Ojibwa de l'Est du Canada a subi de profondes transformations durant le cours des trois derniers siècles. Avant l'arrivée des Européens, il était très peu développé; mais lorsque les traiteurs sont venus en contacts avec les Indiens, le leadership a connu une période de développement. Aujourd'hui, il est de nouveau devenu une institution floue et peu influente quand les Indiens se sont vus imposer le conseil de bande, avec son chef et ses conseillers, par le gouvernement.

INTRODUCTION

The people discussed in this paper are the Cree-Ojibwa of Eastern Subarctic Canada, members of the Algonkian linguistic family. They inhabit an area which extends from the Labrador coast, west to Lake Winnipeg, north to Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait and south, roughly, to the Canadian National Railway. Other Cree-Ojibwa, of course, are found to the south and west of this area.

The following account is based on field work among the Mistassini Cree of south-central Quebec, the Round Lake Ojibwa of northern Ontario and on published materials. Before any discussion of leadership can be made, a few words are necessary regarding the habitat occupied by these people and the culture which they possess or possessed.

The winters are long and cold and the summers short and not too warm. The landscape is not rugged, at a low elevation and with little relief until one reaches the northern Labrador coast. Here occur rather rugged mountains. The land is covered with a coniferous forest, composed primarily of black spruce and interlaced with innumerable lakes, streams and rivers. Also, in certain parts, there are extensive areas of muskeg.

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The population density is and was exceedingly low, one of the lowest to be found anywhere in the world. At Mistassini in 1954, it was one person to sixty-six square miles and at Round Lake in 1959, it was one person to twenty square miles. And, since the turn of the century the population has increased greatly. The people did, and still do to a certain extent, live by hunting and fishing. Their technology was quite simple, but with the advent of the fur trader certain changes occurred especially in the realm of material equipment.

Leadership among the Cree-Ojibwa does not appear to be rigidly formalized although there exist conflicting data. Therefore, any discussion of leadership must give some consideration to the concept "leader" and to the "social units" which possessed or possess leaders.

As MacIver stated:

> ...social regulation is always present, for no society can exist without some control over the native impulses of human beings (MacIver, 1960:373).

How is this control implemented among the Cree-Ojibwa of the Eastern Subarctic? Theoretically, there are a variety of means to maintain control over individuals, such as a police force, gossip or a single individual in command of a group of individuals. In the latter case, the individual's authority can be based upon economic, kinship or religious sanctions or more rarely, physical force. Gossip was important among the Cree-Ojibwa as a mechanism of social control but does not define leadership and a police force never existed. Basically among these people, there tended to be one individual responsible for a number of others. The present inquiry of leadership will therefore be along these lines. Leadership implies a number of features or constellation of attributes, which define the role, "leader". These attributes consist of the degree of power or authority wielded by the leader, his responsibilities, the extent of his control and the actual way in which his role is enacted. In addition, the means by which recruitment of leaders was undertaken and the sanctions, both positive and negative, which maintained the role must be considered.

Levy states:

> Political allocation ... has been defined ... as the distribution of power over and responsibility for the actions of the various members of the concrete structure concerned, involving on the one hand, coercive sanctions, of which force is the extreme form in one direction, and on the other, accountability to the members of other concrete structures. The term *power* has been defined ... as the ability to exercise authority and control over the actions of others. Responsibility has been defined as the accountability of an individual(s) to another individual(s) or group(s) for his own acts and/or the acts of others (Levy, 1952:468).

Do leaders, as here outlined, exist among the Cree-Ojibwa of the Canadian Eastern Subarctic? The purpose of this paper is to explore this problem.

But to do this entails another problem. The social units which exist, or existed, must be defined. The band, hunting group, extended family and recently, the community, have been designated as basic social units among the Cree-Ojibwa.

No satisfactory definition of the term "band" has ever been given when referring to the maximal social unit as it existed among the Cree-Ojibwa of the Eastern Subarctic. Speck defined a band as follows:

> a group inhabiting a fairly definite territory with more or less stable number of families, possessing paternally inherited privileges of hunting within tracts comprised again within boundaries of the territory, often having an elected chief, speaking with idioms and phonetic forms by which they and outsiders distinguish themselves as comprising a unit, often with minor emphasis on this or that social or religious development, often with somewhat distinctive styles of manufacture and art, and finally traveling together as a horde and coming out to trade at a definite rendezvous on the coast (Speck, 1926:277-8).

Lips referred to the band as a political unit, headed, as a rule, by a chief. If the band was large, the chief was assisted by a council of older men. According to Lips, the band was dependent upon the principle of territoriality, rather than kinship. Furthermore, the band territory was rather well defined and the boundaries respected by neighboring bands (1947-398).

Among the Attawapiskat Cree of the west coast of James Bay, the population was said to have been divided into a number of "acephalous" units and each river drainage system was composed of a number of independent and self-sufficient "mobile bands" (Honigmann 1953:811; 1958:57).

But these concepts of "band" strictly speaking are not accurate. Rather, the band was the largest social and, to some extent, political (not economic) unit that existed among the Indians of the Eastern Subarctic. Each band was composed of two or more hunting groups and ranged in size from 50 to 100 or more persons. The hunting groups formerly joined together during the summer months at a favorable fishing locality, later about a trading post. In some cases, perhaps all, they recognized one of their members as "leader" and each band may have had a name for itself. Group activities were minimal. During the rest of the year the band, as a rule, was dispersed, each hunting group exploiting a particular area.

The former bands have now evolved or are evolving into communities (Honigmann 1953:816; Rogers 1963b:73-4). The definition of "community" is not easy. It can be defined as a settlement containing a number of families occupying permanent houses in close, or fairly close, proximity to each other, for the greater part of the year. (*vide* Rogers 1962:B 3).

The hunting group was, ideally, composed of four nuclear families closely related through kinship although, in practise, of varied composition. It was the paramount economic, social and political unit by default since for nine to ten months of the year it was the largest residence unit. In many cases the hunting group is breaking down and is being replaced by trapping partnerships, although these have not as yet crystalized. A new unit, the "work group", under the direction of a leader, is coming into existence, but to date, data are insufficient to do more than mention it. Finally, there are families and family units of various types (nuclear and bilateral extended families and kindreds) which are, or were under the direction of a leader.

Leadership patterns as they existed at the level of the band, community, extended family, and hunting group, are considered in this paper. No consideration is given of the nuclear family or kindred.

In order to discuss leadership among the Cree-Ojibwa of the Eastern Subarctic, three rather broad time periods have been chosen. First is the period of initial contact with Europeans when

as yet aboriginal conditions had not been altered greatly. Second is the period when the fur trade came to be basic to the peoples' life, and a new order and way of life came into existence. Finally, is the present period when contacts of a much more diverse nature impinged upon the Indians, the fur trade lost its central position and new changes initiated.

CONTACT ERA: 1600-1800

During a period which extended roughly from 1600 until perhaps 1750 or 1800, depending upon the particular area within the Eastern Subarctic under consideration, Europeans were making initial contact with the inhabitants. During this time the Indians' way of life was not altered drastically, although data are insufficient to reconstruct a detailed picture of their culture at this time (*vide* Lane 1952, Garique 1957, Marten 1950). Nevertheless, certain generalizations seem permissible.

To understand the situation, seasonal movements and the consequent annual altering of group composition must be taken into consideration. During the winter, the people were scattered throughout the country in hunting groups composed usually of several closely related nuclear families, with dependants, if any, exploiting a particular area (Rich 1949:226). Although data are meagre, it appears that each group was under the authority of the eldest male member. He directed the movements of the group, led in religious ceremonies, distributed food and gave advice and counsel. With the coming of summer, the hunting groups assembled at a convenient fishing station. This assemblage formed the band, apparently under the leadership of a headman or chief. Although often referred to as "chief", LeJeune said of the Montagnais in 1634 that:

> All the authority of their chief is in his tongue's end; for he is powerful insofar as he is eloquent ... he will not be obeyed unless he pleased the Savages (Thwaites, 1896-1901: Vol. 6, 243).

Approximately a hundred years later the following was recorded:

> The Indians of certain Districts, which are bounded by such Rivers, have each an Okimah, as they called him, or Captain over them, who

> is an old man, considered only for his Prudence and Experience. He has no Authority but what they think fit to give him upon certain Occasions. He is their Speech-maker to the English; as also in their own grave Debates, when they meet every Spring and Fall, to settle the Disposition of their Quarters for Hunting, Fowling, and Fishing. Every Family have their Boundaries adjusted, which they seldom quit, unless they have not Success there in their Hunting, and then they join in with some family who have succeeded (Oldmixon, 1741: Vol. 1, 548).

This was in reference to the Indians about James Bay, particularly Rupert House, but is no doubt true for other parts of the Eastern Subarctic.

According to Honigmann, the role of "chief", or as he styles him, "leader", among the Attawapiskat Cree contained within it the role of priest, village aid worker and political authority (1956: 59). The leader was a wise man, the oldest of the group, who worked hard so as to have surplus which he could distribute to others. Furthermore, he was able to speak well. But he lacked legal power (1958:58). Among the Northern Saulteaux, the chief was merely a man who attained power through his own ability and personal influence (Skinner 1911:150). In the Ottawa Valley in the early 1800's, chiefs, it is said, had little or no coercive power but that their advice had some weight (Wallace 1932:110).

Skinner reported more powerful chiefs among the Eastern Cree. The chief was the best warrior and most trustworthy man. He was not elected to office but acquired it through the tacit consent of the people. A young man rarely became a chief. The chief's orders had to be obeyed, especially in times of war (1911: 57). Warfare would appear to be out of place given the rigorous conditions imposed upon the inhabitants of the Eastern Subarctic. Yet in the southern part of the area conflicts did occur, although on a small scale. Cases have been reported in the past (Anderson 1873-73-80; Thwaites 1904:134). In the northern part of the region, the Indians were at times in opposition to the Eskimo. In 1791 Albany Indians are reported as having proceeded up the east coast of James Bay in search of Eskimo to kill (Davies 1963: 278).

Garique, in reconstructing the past, pointed out that "chieftaincy" differed, depending on the type of band the "chief" represented. According to him, among the northern Montagnais-

Naskapi, where the band formed the hunting unit for much of the year, the chief was said to have considerable influence in the conduct of the hunt, but in the south, where the bands broke up into hunting groups for the greater part of the year, the power of the chief was much weaker and was only effective when the hunting groups assembled in summer (1957:121). Although in principle I would agree with Garique, there is as yet (perhaps never) insufficient data to clarify this point.

There are no data regarding leadership of the extended family or hunting group during this period. It may be, although it appears impossible to tell at this date, that certain headmen or captains referred to in the literature may, in fact, have been leaders of hunting groups.

Although information is limited and in no case is material available to test the reliability of the observers, there is a certain cluster of attributes which set apart particular individuals who can be considered "leaders" to a limited degree. Perhaps the most noted attribute was the ability to speak well and by this means act as arbitrator among members of the group and between the group and the European. Unfortunately, there is no indication as to the exact size of the group nor its composition. However, it appears to have been larger than the hunting group and therefore was a band as defined above. But the ability to speak well was not all that was required of a Cree-Ojibwa "leader". He was generally an old man, who because of his age had the wisdom to advise in crisis situations, having previously observed such situations and seen their outcome. In addition, the "leader" had superior religious power, was a hard worker and thereby had a surplus to distribute, and was trustworthy. That he was the best warrior was, no doubt, in certain areas, an attribute but rarely called into operation. It is readily apparent that a leader under these conditions maintained his power through his own ingenuity and/or personality and not by means of any rigidly defined formulations. Nevertheless, leadership must have been just as effective as elsewhere in the world. Given the small maximal social unit — the band — and the very short time that this unit remained together during the course of a year, there was no need for strong leadership patterns among the Cree-Ojibwa of the

Eastern Subarctic at this time. Rather it was the hunting group that was of supreme importance.

Unfortunately, recruitment of "leaders" has not been specified except to say, and the information is suspect, that leaders were not elected. Furthermore, there are no data as to the sanctions which maintained the leader's role. But the very nature of leadership suggests that public opinion was a sufficient sanction. It is to be suspected that if this was true, the real leaders, or that body which possessed the actual power, were the hunting group elders who composed, in a sense, a council which debated matters and arrived at a general understanding. It was the "leader" who was able, because of his speaking ability, to put these into words. In many ways the situation resembles that portrayed by Whyte in "Street Corner Society" (1955).

FUR TRADE ERA: 1800-1940.

During the nineteenth century, the fur trade became the dominant economic activity of the Cree-Ojibwa and Europeans within the Eastern Subarctic. In order to carry out this activity the trader was dependent upon native hunters, trappers and canoemen. It often took considerable time for the traders to get the Indians to perform these tasks since subsistence was a major concern of theirs and European foods could not be introduced into the country in sufficient quantity to supply the needs of the people. In 1820 the Hudson's Bay Company was trying to hire Indians to freight supplies between Rupert House and Neoskweskau (Davies 1963:19). In 1830 traders were actively trying to get the Mistassini to trap marten (Lips 1947:4). This had been going on for at least a hundred years and probably more, for Isham, stationed at York Factory in the early 1700's, said that the traders had been instructed to encourage the Indian to trap fur bearers (Rich 1949:28). In the early 1800's, Finlayson said of the northern Montagnais-Naskapi that: "...not one out of every ten knows how to trap a beaver or otter" (Davies 1963: 234). Eventually these problems were overcome, and the Indians developed a full fledged fur trade economy during the second half of the century and first quarter of this century.

The establishment of trading posts provided new foci about which the Indians could and usually did gather during the summer (*vide* Honigmann 1964:332). Now several bands often came together at one post but from available evidence we know that they tended to maintain their individuality throughout this period. Leacock feels that the changes due to the fur trade frequently led to more stable bands and greater formal organization (1954:20). In this she is probably correct. In addition, new bands arose in response to the creation of trading posts (*vide* Hickerson 1956:289-345; Baldwin 1957:68). Finally, on the abandonment of a post, the bands who had traded there moved to other posts, either as a body or in segments.

The bands of this period are credited with having had chiefs, or in some instances one chief over the assembled bands. These "chiefs", however, were said to possess little or no power (Lips 1947:398; Tanner 1955;645; Skinner 1911:57, 1950; Chance & Trudeau 1963:52; McGee 1964:40; Honigmann 1956:58). This is similar to what the situation had been previously.

Yet the fact remains that the Cree-Ojibwa did have a term for chief — *okima* (Round Lake Ojibwa dialect; Oldmixon 1741: Vol. 1, 548; Wallace 1932:110). But in time, the term came to be applied to the trader and the term *okimahka'n* to the Indian leader. The latter can be translated "chief-like" (*vide* Ellis 1960: 1; Rogers 1962:B90). When this transfer took place is not known, but is no doubt occurred sometime between 1750 and 1850. The transference of the term *okima* from Indian leader to European trader suggests that the trader had become the recognized authority figure. Lefroy, speaking of the area just west of the Eastern Subarctic, said that the Indians generally looked upon the officers of the "Company" as having authority of a chief (Stanley 1955:74). Presumably the trader's authority was mainly in the economic sphere, although a case is recorded where an Indian turned to a trader regarding a social matter (Lips 1947: 483) and no doubt there were other instances.

In spite of what has been said above, what appear to be genuine leaders on occasion did arise. These men had considerable power over the assembled bands or those individuals who settled about the trading posts during the summer. One such

individual was Soloman Voyageur of Mistassini. He is said to have had good control over the band members and was undisputed master when in charge of the brigades (Nanuwan 1929:163). Anderson, who apparently knew him, said he was chief through force of character (1961:123). John Iserhoff, chief at Rupert House, may have been a similar type (Greenless 1954:48; Nicolson 1924:49).

In southern Ontario such leaders arose in the early 1800's, (Jones 1861; Copway 1847) and in the Arctic during this century (Frank Vallee per. comm.).

The emergence of such leaders seems to be an acculturative feature which has occurred and is occurring and is dependent upon the type or degree of contact. These leaders seem to have secured their power from several sources. In many cases they were of mixed ancestry and this may (in part) explain their position. Since there was one Western parent, they received training which allowed them to deal effectively with Euro-Canadians and which inculcated in them a desire to "succeed" in the Western sense. Furthermore, they lived at a time when the Euro-Canadians were not the massive majority that they are today in many areas.

Another factor was that the leader often became the head of the Christian Church in his area at a time when missionary effort was minimal and before the missionaries had settled there permanently. Because of little interference, he was able at the same time to retain much of his old religious influence. It was he who led the services and protected the group from supernatural harm.

ki.hci David, chief of the Caribou Lake Band of northern Ontario is a case in point. Besides his own group he is said to have had the Round Lake, Nikip Lake, Windigo Lake and Fisher Lake peoples under his control. His ability to command so many groups was based on his superior supernatural powers. It was at this time that a native preacher was introducing the Anglican faith to these people and this may have further strengthened ki.hci David's power. On his death the large group he commanded broke up.

Above all else the chief was expected to be a superior hunter, but if he failed in this he would no longer be looked upon as chief

(Lips 1947:401). In the eastern part of the Labrador Peninsula, hunting rituals, and these may have been of some antiquity, appear to have been important in maintaining a leader's position since only he, it appears, could perform them. Before a major hunt the men discussed the matter, drummed and studied scorched shoulder blades. Following this the chief made the decisions and gave the orders. But before the hunt could start, he must perform certain rites (Tanner 1944:645-6).

Other characteristics of the chief were that he maintained high ethical standards and that he be married. Furthermore, senior age was a requisite since it was the elder of two suitable choices who would hold the position (Lips 1947:401).

Sometimes, the leader was placed in charge of the fur brigade and in this way his status was elevated and he was able, through economic sanctions, to command obedience. In these instances, he was backed by the traders. This seems to have been the case with Soloman Voyageur cited above. In this connection, it is claimed that a chief could force a delinquent to pay his debt to the Hudson's Bay Company (Lips 1947:401).

Other factors may well have been in operation to maintain the chief's position at this time. As indicated previously there is no suggestion that formerly a chief held such a position of power. And within fifty years, he lost the power he had gained.

The means whereby leaders were recruited is not clear. Among the Mistassini and Lake St. John bands the position of the chief is said to have been hereditary. It devolved upon the eldest son, or if there were no sons, the deceased's brother. If there were neither, or the people thought both unqualified, then a new chief was elected. But the relative unimportance of chieftaincy is suggested by the fact that by 1935 no new chief had been installed at Mistassini, although the previous chief had died in 1925 (Lips:400-1).

During this period, the hunting groups continued as in the past and remained approximately of the same size, insofar as can be ascertained. But the concept of the hunting territory emerged in full bloom (Rogers 1963a). Each hunting group was under the direction of an able-bodied elderly male (Speck 1917-100).

In the northern Labrador Peninsula, the men selected the locality where they would spend the summer and with the approach of fall each head of a party announced his intended winter location and then left the summer encampment (Turner 1890:276).

Throughout the fur trade era, the group leaders maintained their positions of authority over their followers and increased their sphere of influence in that now territorial rights came under their domination. It was they who maintained and defended the boundaries of the hunting territories against outsiders, primarily by means of sorcery. Furthermore, the head of the hunting group is said to have allocated portions of the land to the married males of the group and would often renew this right at the beginning of each hunting season (Cooper 1939:72). He might divide the land among his sons or hold it until his death (Cooper 1939:67).

The extended family, if it existed throughout the Eastern Subarctic, has been overlooked by field workers. The following information was secured among the Round Lake Ojibwa (Rogers 1962:B82-86) and refers to former days. At present it has almost totally disappeared. The extended family was referred to as *nintipe.ncike.win* or "those whom I lead" or "my followers".

The term though can be used in other contexts but these will not be discussed here. The extended family was based, ideally, on three principles. The first was that of patrilineal descent, but only for three generations. The second was the solidarity of brothers. And third was the fact that all unmarried women and widows were under the control of the head of the extended family. But not always did these principles hold and different family composition might arise.

The head of the extended family was responsible for the members in a variety of ways. He had to see that those in need were cared for. He had control over the marriage of the unmarried women of the family. He also had to control any deviant behaviour on the part of members. Finally, through his superior religious knowledge he protected the group from such harm as witchcraft and promoted the well-being of the family.

The extended family was, ideally, a group of patrilineally related males, unmarried females, and the wives of the males

under the leadership of the eldest male. Such a unit stood in opposition to other such units with which it exchanged females. Since it was bilateral in composition, there was the possibility for overlapping of groups and it was here that the troubles were apt to occur, each leader claiming the same individual for his family. The trouble was usually over women.

In summation, data for the Fur Trade Era, are limited and no clear picture of leadership emerges. It appears that many, perhaps all, of the attributes formerly associated with the role of band chief remained. In some instances there arose what seem to be quite powerful chiefs, but unfortunately there is little to indicate what sanctioned their position or exactly what their duties were.

The leader of the hunting group had many of the attributes of a chief. Although the group he was in control of was smaller than the band, his effective control was greater. He was daily in face to face contact with his followers and usually closely related to them. By means of ridicule he had effective jurisdiction over the younger members of the group. His duties were increased with the emergence of hunting territories, in that now he had to punish trespassers.

The extended family may have been more or less coterminus with the hunting group. Its leader appears to have had many of the attributes of the hunting group leader, with the additional one of responsibility over the disposition of women.

PRESENT ERA: 1940-1965

With the passing of the height of the fur trade, major changes occurred in the life of the Indians of the Eastern Subarctic. The independent bands which formerly had gathered about a trading post continued to do so but now they began to coalesce into larger aggregates. Yet, even to this day, not all the bands at any one post have completely fused. But no longer can one speak of a "band" as though it were the same socio-political unit that it was in the last century. The Canadian government, however, has retained the term for administrative purposes. According to the government, "band" means:

> ...a body of Indians
>
> (i) for whose use and benefit in common lands, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty, have been set apart before or after the coming into force of this Act,
>
> (ii) for whose use and benefit in common, moneys are held by Her Majesty, or
>
> (iii) declared by the Governor in Council to be a band for the purposes of this Act (Anon., 1963:1).

and a "member of the band"

> (j) ...means a person whose name appears on a Band List or who is entitled to have his name appear on a Band List (Anon., 1963:2).

Furthermore, as the Indian Act reads the Minister may form new bands, fuse bands or dissolve bands (Anon. 1963:7).

In actual fact, the real social aggregate is the "community" or what might be called a "deme" (Murdock 1960:62-63). The community is much larger than the band (as a rule) and it tends to be endogamous. In addition, there is an elected chief and council which is a result of government edict. There is now less mobility on the part of the Indians than formerly as the result of the establishment of schools, churches and a growing dependency on the Euro-Canadian binding the Indian closer and closer to the village (*vide* Van Stone 1963:157-174; Rogers 1963b:64-88). With a decrease in the importance of hunting and trapping, the hunting group is tending to disappear as is the extended family.

Instead of a band leader, there is now a chief and council in charge, theoretically, of each community. This is a relatively new development having been established by the government and occurring after treaties had been signed with the Indians. (Morris 1964:54-58). By 1911, chiefs were being appointed by the government for the "Saulteaux" in the southern part of the area (Skinner 1911:50). This was done about twenty years later in northern Ontario.

The chief and council are modelled only in part on the old pattern of "chieftaincy". The Indian Act (Anon. 1963:24-26) specified the election of chiefs and councils, the composition and their duties. The chief is conceived of as the legitimate head of the community with responsibilities toward community administra-

tion and with the power to implement his decisions. But in actual practice, this is not the case. It seems that the power of today's chief is weaker than even that of the band leader of headman which existed at the time of contact. Certainly, the chief no longer has as much power as some of them did during the fur trade era.

Honigmann has said of the Attawapiskat Indians that the chief and councillors possess practically no power and display little effective leadership. Accordingly, they are unaccustomed to formerly co-ordinated actions and it is difficult for them to arrive at any community policies. Instead it is the mission director who often formulates the policy (1958:61). At Northwest River the chief is depicted as powerless (McGee 1961:35-6). Leacock has much the same to say for the chief of the Natashquan band. His duty appears to be primarily that of liaison officer between the Indians and their agent and he may even be regarded to some extent as a spy for the Euro-Canadians. He is termed "government" or "outside" chief in distinction to the "real" or "inside" chiefs who are the leaders of the hunting groups (1954: 21, *vide* Ellis 1960:1). At Great Whale River there is an elected chief and an assistant chief. Here a man familiar with the Bible and noted for generosity is chosen, but it is not indicated to what extent he has real power (Honigmann 1962:60). At Mistassini the chief and councillors lacked any real authority (Rogers 1963b: 25) and the same holds for the Round Lake Ojibwa (Rogers 1962:B90-91). A similar situation apparently holds for Rupert House (Honigmann 1964:358).

The government asserts that authority has been vested in the chief whereby he can carry out his duties. But in the final analysis, the chief has lost his former powers and has acquired no new ones. There are a number of reasons why the chief has lost what power and authority he formerly may have possessed.

The chief of today no longer has the multiplicity of role attributes that he formerly had. He is no longer a religious leader in the Christian churches and missionaries have weakened the aboriginal system of beliefs which formerly bolstered his position. Religious power is now vested in the missionary or else in a native preacher. The chief is no longer the distributor of goods to his

followers since economically this is not feasible and he now has fewer kin to support him in this duty.

Furthermore, where several bands are in the process of losing their identity there is still a certain amount of band loyalty so that the chief cannot hope to have a majority behind him. In other words, the chief may be supported only by those individuals who belong to the chief's former band.

And the chief has no police power in order to punish transgressions on the part of his people. He must call upon outside authorities. This he can do, but would be most reluctant to do so since he would be greatly criticised by his own people. Therefore, he frequently does nothing, nor can he.

Finally, individual members of the community have access to outside authority figures and can consult with them directly. This by-passing of the chief, often on matters that should concern him, further weakens his position.

The chief, theoretically the leader of his people, is in fact left powerless. If he becomes aggressive he is apt to lose the next election. And with a reluctance on the part of most individuals to involve themselves in community affairs, it sometimes happens that there is only one individual who is willing to stand for election. Part of this is due to the fact that individuals are fearful of one another since witchcraft still plays a prominent role in their culture (*vide* Hallowell 1942).

Furthermore, there are always individuals who, for one reason or another, attempt to take matters into their own bands. One may decide to act as trader dealing with an outside supplier. When this occurs another may try to enter into competition. Or one may decide to deal with a particular fish buyer in opposition to another Indian, sometimes the chief, who has made arrangements with a different fish buyer and feels that all the fishermen should deal with his agent. This type of leader quickly arises, gathers a small following, and then it all collapses. And each time the membership is different, depending on the issue at stake.

Whatever the case, the chief often finds himself being bypassed, at times not even knowing what is happening. It sometimes happens that the chief finds himself in opposition to the

policies of the government, and for this reason is circumvented by the outside authorities who are attempting to implement these policies. In such a situation, the chief has little or no power left. On the other hand, those who attempt to achieve a position of power in reality never really attain it. Community leadership, whether formal or informal, is weakly developed among the Indians of the Eastern Subarctic.

The band has disappeared, or is disappearing and with it its leader. The same is true of the hunting group. It no longer holds the position that it once did in the society. Today there is a tendency for the men to trap in partnerships, leaving their families in the village. In such cases, one of the members acts as leader. Where hunting groups exist, the leader will be, as a rule, the eldest male but his power has been weakened greatly with the disappearance of the old religious system, with the advent of a money economy and the weakening of kinship ties, duties and obligations. The same fate has befallen the extended family and its head.

CONCLUSION

During the past three hundred years, there have been several trends which have taken place in the social organization of the Cree-Ojibwa of the Eastern Subarctic. Bands have disappeared and communities have emerged. Formerly, band leadership was weakly developed but with the establishment of the fur trade strong leaders occasionally arose. But in time this picture was altered through government action. A chief and councillor system was instituted. These individuals have even less power than the old band leader.

Formerly, the hunting group was the major socio-political unit. But this group is disappearing and is being replaced by trapping partnerships. Each unit had, or has a leader, but the hunting group leader had a multiplicity of duties in comparison with the leader of the trapping partners.

Finally, the extended family is disappearing and the nuclear family coming into greater prominence. The leader of the extended family is, of course, also disappearing. The husband/

father of the nuclear family is now assuming more and more responsibilities. As he does, he stands alone.

Why is it that leadership was so weakly developed among the Indians of the Eastern Subarctic? There are a multiplicity of factors that appear to be involved. First, the Cree-Ojibwa of this area have always tended to live in small groups negating the necessity for strongly developed leadership roles. This has resulted in a tendency toward individualism. At the same time suspicion of one another was, and still is present to this day because of a fear of witchcraft. This has tended to fragment groups and prevent the emergence of strong leadership patterns. The above factors, and no doubt others, underlay the former situation. But today there are other complicating factors. Outside authority figures have taken over the role of leader, or attempted to do so, inhibiting the development of local Indian leadership. In addition, many of the duties of the former leaders have been stripped away through the acculturative process thereby weakening their position. Furthermore, with a breakdown in the native culture, the people have not established new objectives or clearcut goals which would promote the development of strong leadership roles. This, in part, is due to a lack of education and at the same time the maintainance of many of their old values and customs.

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