The Implications of Pluralism for Social Change Programs in a Canadian Arctic Community

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Kuper and Haug have noted that theories of pluralism conform to two general types.[1] The first, generally the work of American sociologists and political scientists, uses "pluralism" to indicate "open" societies in which there is a diversity of political interest groups. This theoretical type describes social systems in which diverse interest groups may safely express divergent views and bring selective pressures to bear on government. Aron, Shils and Kornhauser severally hold views which suggest that liberty (in the narrower sense of political freedom) and democracy tend to be strong where pluralism is marked and that liberal democracy is the ideal realization of the principles of pluralism.[2] Yinger's concept of pluralism is closely analogous.[3] Although these models in no way minimize the occurrence of conflict in what they regard as plural societies, they tend to see conflict in a positive role as a system of checks and balances functioning to ensure the decentralization of power from any one interest group. They are equilibrium models which do not necessarily imply societal integration derived from value consensus, but generally imply that the component groups share a sufficient core of common values that integration is assured. Shils refers to some of these common values: tolerant recognition of the worth and dignity of opinions and social ways of other groups; commitment to gradual, non-revolutionary change through the democratic process; respect for the rule of law and belief in its sanctity; and sentiments of communal affinity among the elites.[4] Dahrendorf, holding similar views, states that "pluralism of institutions, conflict patterns, groupings, and interests makes for a lively, colorful, and creative scene of political conflict which provides an opportunity for success of every interest that is voiced."[5] Integration is also held

to derive from the tendency in such societies for persons to have multiple affiliations even with conflicting groups.[6] These theories of pluralism focus largely on political diversity.[7] They are largely irrelevant to the issues of pluralism now being debated in anthropology and should not be confused with them.[8] They would correspond much more closely to what we prefer to call heterogeneous societies,[9] in which sub-culturally differentiated groups, while conducting some of their social arrangements in their own ways, are integrated by common participation in complusory core institutions and by the tendency for persons to have multiple role affiliations even in conflicting groups (*cf.* Gluckman on "multiplex roles" in hetergeneous societies).[10]

Models of pluralism in anthropology constitute a second general type. They are best represented in the works of Furnivall, M.G. Smith, and Kuper.[11] These models emphasize that the conflict or confrontation within the plural society is between distinct sections marked by pervasive cultural differences. In this model the cultural sections, unlike the minimally differentiated sub-cultural groups of heterogeneous societies, each pursue their own institutional arrangements and, at least in the extreme limiting case, have no value consensus or common participation in core institutions of the society as a whole. Plural societies in this sense differ in kind as well as degree from heterogeneous societies with respect to integration.

M.G. Smith points out in the plural society cultural sections practise their own forms of "compulsory institutions" (religion, kinship, education, etc.) within the same polity. It is the extent of this polity that defines the boundaries of the society. Integration in this case derives not from consensus of values between the component cultural sections, but rather from *regulation* of inter-sectional relations through the exercise of control in the polity by (e.g. in two-section system) one of the sections over the other. Kuper, interpreting M.G. Smith, writes that regulation in such a case

> ...consists in the rigid and hierarchical ordering of the relations between the different sections. Since the various sections are culturally differentiated, and consensus therefore a remote possibility, and since the subordinate sections are unlikely to accord equal value and legitimacy to the preservation of the hierarchic pattern, authority and power and

regulation have crucial significance in maintaining, controlling and co-ordinating the plural society.[12]

In short, cultural diversity, social cleavage, hierarchic arrangement of the socio-cultural sections, and "integration" by regulation through authority and power mark the plural society.

As Gluckman points out, most analyses of pluralism "...are broad analyses either of large-scale plural societies, or comparative discusions of major problems over several such societies."[13] This paper focuses on pluralism in a subsocietal unit. With M.G. Smith, I shall define societies as maximal social systems,[14] the boundaries of which coincide with the maximum extent of a polity, or Nadel's "relatively widest effective group". As such, in the ideal case, "a society is a self-sufficient, self-perpetuating and internally autonomous system of social relations."[15] Other kinds of social systems which are not "self-sufficient, self-perpetuating and internally autonomous" are not societies but specific domains of social relations within societies. Societies subsume all other types of social system as parts of themselves. A "society" differs in kind as well as degree from other social systems.[16] Consequently, societal pluralism as a mode of social relations may be expected to differ in kind from pluralism within other kinds of social systems (such as communities, component states of a federal union, etc.). It is with pluralism in a "social domain within a society", namely a specific community, that this paper is concerned.

I shall broadly define a "community" as a field or domain of social relations within a territorially localized group in which some degree of face-to-face association between persons is at least possible. A community has a structure of regulation and control, but unlike a society it is not "self-sufficient, self-perpetuating, and internally autonomous". A community is dependent upon the wider society of which it is a part.

Objective conditions which are broadly described as poverty and social marginality, although similar in their outward attributes, differ in the structural factors which establish and maintain them in plural systems as distinct from non-plural systems. In addition, these structural factors differ in the plural *society* and the plural *community*. This thesis is illustrated with reference to a plural community in Canada's Western Arctic.

First of all, it is necessary to define poverty and social marginality, specifying analytically their distinctive structural relations to plural systems. In ordinary usage poverty is defined as relatively marked economic deprivation, usually expressed in absolute terms. One need hardly mention that economic deprivation is one of the most potent sources of societal differentiation, perhaps because it is much more readily observable than social deprivation of other sorts. Economic deprivation may be the result of any one of several structural factors: relative lack of access to the means of production; lack of access to market; exploitation (conscious deprivation) of one group by another, etc. In most general terms, it can be seen simply as one kind of social marginality. Individuals or groups who have relatively marked deprivation of access to the institutional means of mobility, authority and power within a social system may be defined as marginal. More explicitly, marginality is observed "...where some members of one group for one reason or another come under the influence of another group... and where racial and/or cultural barriers serve to block full and legitimate membership within another group."[17] "Poverty" is manifested in deprivation of goods and money, "marginality" in deprivation of social resources. Usually economic deprivation and social marginality are inter-related in a complex fashion. As Lewis and others have gone to some pains to point out, the behavioural responses and situational adaptations of marginal or poverty groups display a remarkable similarity in whatever society they are found.[18] This constellation of social arrangements is in part a result, in part a response, to economic and social marginality. The subculture of poverty/marginality is a total response of a group of people to deprivation on a broad front — social, cultural, economic, political, and emotional.

In Lewis' words, this way of life

> ...is both an adaptation and a reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class-stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic society. It represents an effort to cope with feelings of hopelessness and despair which develop from the realization of the improbability of achieving success in terms of the values and goals of the larger society. Indeed, many of the traits of the culture of poverty can be viewed as attempts at local solutions for problems not met by existing institutions and agencies because the people are not eligible for them, cannot afford them, or are ignorant or suspicious of them... once it comes into existence it

> tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effect on the children.... The lack of effective participation and integration of the poor in the major institutions of the larger society is one of the crucial characteristics of the culture of poverty.... On the level of the individual the major characteristics are a strong feeling of marginality, of helplessness, of dependence and of inferiority.[19]

Lewis has specified some of the conditions which typically give rise to the subculture of poverty. Economic deprivation is a necessary but not sufficient condition,[20] for many of the world's poor do not display the characteristics of the culture of poverty.

To summarize Lewis, the culture of poverty typically arises in marginal groups within class-stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic societies; especially those maintained in servile colonial status or having undergone a process of detribalization; in groups having little positive identification with the values and institutions of the wider society; or in groups structurally alienated from or denied access to the institutions of the wider society in which they are found. These marginal groups display, relative to powerful groups with which they are necessarily contrasted in a stratified society, a general impoverishment of internal social organization and of sense of identity.[21]

Marginality of the scope and kind that may result in a group's development of a subculture of poverty is a common feature of markedly subordinate cultural sections in plural social systems. The typical hierarchic structure of colonial societies is only one mode of pluralism, although these societies often display pluralism in its clearest form. A clear example of pluralism is found in situations where the encroachment of white settlement has disrupted the native social system, depriving the people of an alternate way of life and, consequently, of a positive identity in the society in which they are now incorporated; where mobility between the indigenous and settler sections is limited, and white settlers have effective control of the means of power. Here is fertile ground for the development of a sense of relative deprivation and a way of life which has affinities with Lewis' subculture of poverty. This situation differs significantly from that of marginality in heterogeneous systems. In heterogeneous systems there is at least the potential for marginal groups to utilize existing institutional avenues of mobility in order to diminish personal or group

marginality. In plural systems there are few or no such alternatives. Marginal groups (such as poverty or ethnic minorities) in heterogeneous societies usually identify strongly with the attitudes toward success, achievement and mobility of the wider society. In plural societies, marginal groups do not identify with the values and institutions of the wider society, may actively reject the legitimacy of its core institutions, or be actively denied access to them. This, in general terms, is probably what Myrdal and others have meant by the "vicious circle of poverty".[22] There is a complex interplay between internal subcultural features and external structural factors which tend to maintain a group in the subculture of poverty. While Lewis emphasizes that it is a way of life which tends to perpetuate itself through the successive generations of people who are socialized in it, structural features of the wider society provides the primary conditions under which it develops.

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The Mackenzie River Delta is one of the major areas of population in Canada's Western Arctic. In Arctic terms the population is large, consisting of some 4,400 persons, now almost totally concentrated in four major settlements. This population derives historically from several racial/cultural sources. It is the product of a complex history of large-scale social change beginning with the introduction of the fur-trade some 125 years ago and culminating in the intensive development of Canadian administration and urban living over the last three decades.

Racially and culturally the indigenous sector of the population derives from two major Athapaskan Indian "bands" (the Tetlit and Vunta Kutchin — collectively referred to as Loucheux); from a dozen or more major groups of coastal and inland North Alaskan Eskimos; and from a smaller number of Eskimo immigrants from the Canadian Central Arctic. Both the Indian and Eskimo groups have undergone miscegenation on a large scale with the diverse peoples with whom they have come in contact since the development of the fur-trade: Indians with Scottish and French trappers and traders; Eskimos with Ame-

rican and European explorers, trappers, traders, and whalers, and even with South Pacific Islanders and Cape Verde Negroes employed in the American-based whaling industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

There has been massive disruption and re-orientation of the aboriginal socio-cultural systems. Both Indians and Eskimos were fishers and hunters who lived primarily outside of the Delta: Indians in the mountains to the west and south of the Delta; Eskimos on the Arctic Coast and in the mountains. Neither the Indians nor the now extinct Mackenzie Eskimos had any primary dependence on Delta resources. The modern population is descended from Indian and Eskimo immigrants who were attracted to the Delta by its rich fur-resources only after the development of the fur-trade (after 1848 for the Indians, and primarily after the collapse of coastal whaling in 1908 in the case of Eskimos). During the development of this multi-racial, multiethnic population in the fur-trade era many aboriginal social arrangements were abandoned, and a new fur-trade culture has developed which cross-cuts traditional ethnic boundaries in very significant ways. This process of ethnogenesis owes its origins less to specific features of the traditional culture than exposure to several common factors in the history of contact with Eurocanadian and American culture of which the following seem to be the most important:

1. The inhabitation of a common area, hitherto unexploited by the traditional societies, but made important as a resource area by the advent of the fur-trade.
2. Dependence upon this common resource base with an introduced technology.
3. The replacement of traditional marks of identity such as dress, language, food, and ceremonial behaviour with Eurocanadian variants or with variants representing a blend or compromise of aboriginal ways.
4. The replacement of traditional social arrangements with Eurocanadian variants: e.g. cash economy, urban residence, etc.
5. Face-to-face contact between the ethnic groups for a relatively long period of time.

6. The development of the native people, regardless of ethnic origin, as a marginal group with respect to the wider Canadian society.

This emergent way of life, distinct from both the aboriginal cultures and from that of the intrusive agents of contact, is a situational adaptation to the re-orientation of life-ways to that of the fur-trade on the one hand and to a common marginal position in Canadian society on the other.

The designations "Indian", "Eskimo", and "Metis" current in the Delta are administrative and legal categories bearing only minimal relevance to racial or cultural realities. In popular usage they are ambiguous. To the extent that distinctively Indian or Eskimo cultural characteristics survive in the Delta of today they are stylistic or subcultural variants within the common cultural patterns shared by the native people regardless of ethnic origin. Theirs is truly a "contact culture". Some inter-group difference is maintained within the native sector by the persistence of some aboriginal cultural features and by the selective operation of Canadian administration with respect to the legal categories "Indian", "Eskimo", and "other Native". For example, Indian development programs are circumscribed by the Indian Act which does not apply to Eskimos. "Others" (or Metis) are not eligible for measures designed to assist "Indians" and "Eskimos". While it is true that the history of contact differs in detail between these groups, I maintain that it was structurally similar. Metis are usually the offspring of unions between Indian or Eskimo women and "white" trappers, traders, or whalers. Where the white father has been resident in the family group, their Metis offspring have tended to be socialized more in a white way of life from which certain advantages in ability to operate in the white world have accrued. In the fur-trade era those known locally as "white trappers" tended to follow a subsistence regime essentially similar to that of the native people and to adopt many features of "native" culture and social organization. The word "native" in local usage, then, denotes any person following a northern way of life (essentially that which emerged with the fur-trade) and includes "white trappers" as well as Indians, Eskimos and Metis.

The most palpable, thoroughgoing line of social cleavage in the Delta is between "natives" (or northerners) and "outsiders".

Outsiders, sometimes referred to as "transient whites" are those who have come to the Delta to fill administrative positions, mostly in government agencies. Their way of life differs little from that of southern Canadian except for local modifications to a relatively isolated life in a northern climate. Their stay in the Delta is usually of short duration (two or three years) coincident with the tenure of their administrative appointments. A few outsiders in recent years have committed themselves to a life in the North. These "new northerners" play a distinctive role in the Delta community, but their way of life remains essentially similar to that of the outsider.

What is confronted at this line of cleavage are two ways of life which display on the one hand a native-identified, sub-culturally differentiated, multi-ethnic native way of life the content of which is essentially derived from that of the fur-trade era; on the other an outsider-identified way of life differing little from that of southern Canadians. The terms native and outsider denote two exclusive roles in modern Delta society. To understand the pungency of their meaning and their complex interaction is to be in possession of a major key to the social structure. This two-section system has been identified in other northern areas. It has been called a "caste-like" structure. Although the expression "caste" conveys some of the superordinate-subordinate relationship between the outsider and native sections the term here fails to communicate the extent of differentiation between the Delta segments or the peculiarity of their relationship. "Castes", although exclusive groups in a stratification system, are part of an integrated stratification order in a single socio-cultural system. In the Delta there are two separate cultural sections, each possessing its own system of stratification (unlike "castes"), integrated in a way fundamentally different from that of a single order of stratification.

The dominance hierarchy between the two Delta segments is maintained by a number of factors. The most obvious is that most outsiders in the area are concerned with administration of the area and its people or in services in direct support of these activities. The relationship between outsiders and natives is essentially that of "the administrators" and "the administered." Cor-

respondingly, integration between the two cultural sections is one of regulation and control. Most outsiders, too, are active through administration, mission activities, education, and other organizations as "socializers" of northern people. This is usually worked out in a hierarchical "teacher-student" relationship.

Although there is a complete horror of the word "colonialism" in the North and in Canadian administration, because of its association with imperial despotism and exploitation, northern communities such as the Mackenzie Delta display many colonial characteristics. These may be briefly summarized:

1. Outsiders are present chiefly in order to administer, govern and "develop" the area, its resources, and its native people;
2. Outsiders are highly transient — present in the Delta for the duration of appointment (usually two or three years);
3. Financial and other subsidies are paid to outsiders to encourage their employment in the North;
4. Outsiders form a socially distinct unit, residentially segregated in some Mackenzie Delta settlements;
5. The outsider segment is highly organized, especially in the political sphere — in this case around the massive structure of the metropolitan power (basically the federal government) created to administer the area;
6. Settlers or "new northerners" dominate the entreprenurial sphere (economic, political, and social).

In contrast, the native segment is the object of most of the activities of the outsiders; lacks stable formal organization beyond the family; has only a few weak leaders; has minimal political interest, organization, or power; and its members are not usually eligible for the subsidies supplied to outsiders. Apart from the regulatory function of the bureaucracy, native people are simply not able to compete with the hyper-organization of political structures among the outsiders, and in fact do not usually value opportunities to do so. The hierarchical relationship between natives and outsiders is only partly a function of the bureaucratic structures which allocate authority largely to the outsiders. It is also a matter of native people being unable to compete effectively

in the formal organizations of the community which are essentially outsider-oriented and outsider-organized.

In the Delta, virtually every outsider has strong opinions about native people, the "native mind," the so-called "native problem", and "what should be done about them." Although these opinions cover a wide range of views from the blatantly racist to sophisticated ideas about civil rights and social justice, every one of them implies that the existing situation is wrong, bad, or undesirable, and their bearers are usually quick to express them in their behaviour toward native people or in organized political activity influencing the role of native people in the community. It is not difficult to find incidents of conflict between natives and outsiders who believe that native people are "savage", "child-like", and inferior to outsiders in virtually every way. Yet the most powerful mechanism of discrimination and differentiation in the Delta lies much deeper than incidents of inter-personal friction. It lies in the overwhelming directiveness and control of outsiders (both pro- and anti-native) towards native people and the pressure for them to conform to ways of life prescribed by outsiders according to their several views of "what is good for native people."

"Separatist" opinions and activities among outsiders cover a wide spectrum from those which state that native people are so inherently different (and probably inferior) in racial, cultural, or psychological characteristics that they cannot be "integrated" into the wider society, to those which maintain that the native way of life has inherent worth, dignity, and value, that it should be maintained by all means possible, and that its disappearance would be destructive and costly for native people. "Integrationists" cover an equally wide spectrum from those who hold that the native way of life is inferior and doomed to extinction so that native people must abandon it and become "integrated", to those who maintain that social justice requires outsiders to make every effort to incorporate native people so that they may enjoy the benefits of Canadian society. In the struggle between outsiders competing to enact their points of view abundant political activity is generated, much of it influencing the role of native people, some of it functioning explicitly to maintain outsider interests, but in which native people have minimal participation.

Native people are not necessarily excluded from these political structures by intention or ill-will on the part of outsiders as many of the numerous polemicists in northern matters would have us believe. Rather, the particular political mechanisms proliferated by outsiders are not forms with which native people can positively identify. They are often forms expressing attitudes and action which native people either do not understand or which they actively reject as incompatible with native values or interests. This is a measure of cultural cleavage and incompatibility between the outsider and native sections. The result is that native people cannot compete effectively either within the outsider structure as it now stands or in opposition to it.

Patterns of leadership also clearly illustrate socio-cultural cleavage between natives and outsiders. Mailhot has drawn attention to the massive proliferation of voluntary organizations and service clubs within the outsider section. As Mailhot points out, this proliferation is a direct reflection of the heterogeneity of the outsider population and "can be seen as the transplanting of southern suburban preoccupations, with the importation of ready-made formulas to give structure to these southern interests."[23] In Inuvik, over half the voluntary organizations have an exclusively outsider membership. The absence of native membership is due to a number of factors: high membership fees (e.g. the Lion's Club); special restrictions in membership (e.g. the Canadian Legion requires previous or current service in the Armed Forces); and the fact that many clubs have little relevance to native interests and values (e.g. Chess Club, Science Club, Library and Museum Society). In organizations which have mixed outsider-native membership, outsiders tend to occupy the leadership positions since they are more familiar with these outsider-structured organizational forms and tend to have more of the necessary abilities, interests and skills. Most formal organizations, even those intended primarily for native people, come into being on the initiation of outsiders. Native leaders, where they exist, have usually developed with the stimulus and support of outsiders (usually new northerners). One usually finds that these native "leaders" have a limited following in the native sector, in which there is a devaluation of the authoritative and aggressive qualities of leaders as defined in outsider terms. It is also true that most native leaders are selected from a

relatively small elite of highly acculturated native people, many of whom are Pentecostal Eskimos. There is considerable negative feeling against them since their high valuation of thrift, steady employment, and urban life differentiate them from social arrangements such as kinship sharing obligations with the majority of native people.

Other outsider practices have tended to weaken the position of native leaders. For example, the Indian Act requires that Indian bands elect a chief and councillors who are charged under the Act with certain administrative obligations: management of band funds and lands; the management of transfers in band membership; the allocation of land allotments to band members; and limited legislative responsibilities with respect to the keeping of livestock and the maintenance of fencing, roads, street-lighting and buildings on reserve lands. The Indians of the Delta have not as yet been allocated reserve lands, and even if they were, the agriculturally-oriented circumscription of band obligations under the Act are irrelevant in the Arctic. Consequently, Delta band councils have only minimal obligations under the Act except those dealing with band membership and equity in band funds. In the administration of other legislation especially concerning Indians (such as Social Assistance, education, and housing) the councils are bypassed and administrative officers deal directly with individual Indians involved. Local Indian opinion sees this as intentional disrespect, or at least negative evaluation, of the Chiefs who outsiders have specified must be elected in the first place. In addition, there is considerable development of "token leaders." When outsiders request a native spokesman, one or two individuals who have oratorical ability are put forward by the native people. Otherwise these leaders have no authority and tend to be ignored. Their following amongst native people is usually exaggerated by outsiders, and it is these token leaders who tend to be cultivated by new northerners in clientage relationships.

The discussion so far should be sufficient to show how the Mackenzie Delta social system conforms to a model of pluralism by displaying hierarchical arrangement of native and outsider cultural sections in which effective regulation of inter-sectional relations is maintained by the outsiders. There is also evidence which

suggests that ideas of superiority are allocated to outsiders and that native people are considered inferior in many contexts both by themselves and by outsiders. Several apt illustrations delineate the situation:

1. A young Eskimo girl in Aklavik appeared at school one day in March 1967 with her face peeling and badly scarred. Questioning revealed that she had washed her face in hot, undiluted laundry bleach because she wanted to be like a white girl.
2. Several elderly Eskimos repeatedly explained untoward behaviour amongst native people as a sign of their rejection by God, who had given them dark skins as a mark of their inherent sinfulness. This idea was learned from white whalers.
3. There is a common idea among outsiders that native people are either physically or psychologically inferior to whites in their ability to metabolize or use alcohol, and should therefore be denied access to it "for their own good."
4. An Arctic Red River Indian writes in a newspaper article describing his knowledge that some white people "hate native people with their guts", and goes on to say "But some Indians or Metis or Eskimos don't blame this kind of white people in one way. They know that we are, inferior to white people. White people talk about evolution of mankind, therefore some of us think our time don't come yet. White people makes impossible (come true) on earth — and now they will be in space soon. What has Indians made or been doing? They want to know why white people have more power, more brains than the Indians."

Not all outsiders hold these views of native inferiority, but those who do use them as a rationale for outsider dominance over native people and for their role as socializers and protectors of native people. Many native people feel themselves inferior to outsiders and use this sense of inferiority to rationalize their dependence upon outsiders, their rejection by some, and their inability to compete effectively in the outsider-dominated social structure. Among younger native people especially one finds stigmatization of traditional marks of native identity (e.g. use of native languages, dress-styles, food preferences, "native-identified"

occupations). They actively aspire to adopt outsider-identified variants. My evidence shows considerable personality conflict and social stress in the native sector over ethnic identity. In short, to be a native person in the modern Delta community from the point of view of many outsiders and native people is to be in an inferior, undesirable, and relatively powerless position. Native rejection of, or alienation from, outsider-dominated institutional means of authority, power, and mobility, accompanied by widespread feelings of inferiority are a measure of the degree of marginality of Mackenzie Delta native people in Canadian society. It is within this context that social and cultural structure within the native section must be understood.

Without engaging in extensive debate about the analytical status of Lewis' "culture of poverty" concept, one can readily draw parallels between it and some of the major features of Mackenzie Delta native social structure. However, it is not sufficient simply to show that the Delta native section displays the majority of traits listed by Lewis as characteristic of the culture of poverty, nor even to demonstrate that these traits are interrelated. It is necessary to demonstrate analytically that traits of the culture of poverty (or indeed any others) in Delta native social structure are, in fact, "both an adaptation and a reaction" to social marginality. Such key traits of the culture of poverty as Lewis lists (even in combination) may simply be survivals from an aboriginal system that was not in itself a culture of poverty (e.g. such traits as matrifocality, high incidence of consensual marriages, present time-orientation, emphasis on immediate gratification, wife-beating, early initiation into sex, lack of formal organization beyond the family, etc.) If a social group shows all of the characteristics of Lewis' culture of poverty but these traits cannot be shown to be an integrated response to marginality, then it is not in fact a culture of poverty. The space available permits only a demonstration of the relationship between three of these traits and Mackenzie Delta native marginality.

Matrifocality

There is a relatively high incidence of mother-centred families in the Delta. In the modern situation, residence of a widow or

unwed mother with her children is a viable alternative, for separate residence makes the family eligible for increased social assistance payments. These payments can be very important as a steady source of cash in a situation where poverty is common. In addition, unwed mothers often officially declare illegitimate children as "father unknown" even in cases where the father is known, for then mother and child are eligible for state support. If the father were known he would be sued for support. If the father is an outsider, a native woman would probably be unable to afford legal counsel in order to file suit, and probably unable to ensure continuing support when the father leaves the North on conclusion of his tour of duty. In addition, native people are suspicious and often unaware of the role of courts of law.

Immediate Gratification

Many of the traits Lewis lists (high incidence of violence in settling disputes, wife-beating, early initiation into sex, high rates of alcohol consumption, the absence of savings, job instability, etc.) are simply specific examples of his traits of "present time orientation" and "immediate gratification". Insofar as these involve economic matters, they can be shown to be of adaptive significance in Delta native marginality. The incomes in the native sector are not only very low, but they follow an erratic "boom and bust" pattern. Job instability and reluctance to immobilize usable cash in the form of savings are adaptive in the native sector. Commitment to long-range planning in a highly unstable economic situation might, from the native point of view, prove to be folly rather than wisdom. Very roughly, the ethic is "take what you can while you can; enjoy what you have while you have it; you never know if you will have another chance." Insofar as immediate gratification involves interpersonal relations, a similar situation holds. Since mechanisms of formal social control in the native sector differ from those of outsiders, and since native people are either ignorant or suspicious of mechanisms of control and litigation (e.g. police, courts) available to them in fact but outsider-identified and controlled, settlement of disputes is carried out on an interpersonal *ad hoc* basis with the means of coercion most readily available. If gossip and threats do not work, violence may be used.

Alcohol

Much has been written to show that heavy use of alcohol is related to psycho-social problems. Here, emphasis on a limited aspect of social structure (marginality) will be used to illuminate the high incidence of heavy drinking in the native sector. The Honigmanns clearly show that a Delta native person who has a "stake in society", a commitment to, and respect for, the norms and values of the society in which he lives... acts to preserve the advantages that accrue to him from his society, (his job, respect from outsiders, etc.) and is less likely to indulge in "illegal or reckless behaviour" (such as heavy drinking) which would serve to jeopardize his position.[24] Their evidence clearly shows that among native people in a Mackenzie Valley community, those most integrated or involved with town life and steady wage-employment have considerably fewer problems with alcohol. In the Mackenzie Delta these represent a relative minority. Most native people do not have a "stake in society" (i.e. do not feel committed to the outsider values and institutions which effectively dominate or constrain their action), and have less to lose through heavy drinking. This findings are consonant with those of Clairmont, who shows that Delta people who have aspirations to an outsider way of life (steady employment, higher education, settlement residence in an outsider style) but do not have the legitimate means to achive them, either through their own social resources or through access to those of the outsider section, are likely to respond to this frustration by heavy drinking.[25] Obviously both the Honigmanns' and Clairmont's explanations, insofar as they represent a response of native people to marginality, require reference to other cultural and personality variables. They are not complete explanations, but they serve to show that marginality is a significant factor.

Certain traits of Lewis' subculture of poverty were conspicuous features of the aboriginal socio-cultural systems of Delta native people, although these systems did not constitute subcultures of poverty, at least in the sense intended by Lewis.[26] For example, both Loucheux and Eskimo social systems were rather markedly egalitarian. They did not have strong formal leaders or a proliferation of formal organizations beyond the family, and appear to have emphasized present-time orientation

and immediate gratification. These "traits" were functionnally adaptive in their small-scale societies with relatively dispersed populations in a forbidding, unstable Arctic environment. Even if certain of these features present in the modern context represent a legacy from the aboriginal past, there is no doubt that their functional significance and "meanings" have changed. Old patterns continue in the new context for different reasons and with changed meanings. Their present significance lies in their adaptiveness to marginality in a highly-differentiated plural society.

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If Canadian public opinion or government policy holds that the social condition of native people in the Mackenzie Delta is undesirable, then specific social strategies will have to be developed to ensure reversal of the present situation. The remedial strategies to "cure" a situation or marginality in a plural society are, in effect, to reverse the mechanisms which presently maintain it — in other words, a task no less than to reform the structure of society.

Constitutional revisions must be made in order to clarify the legal status of Indians and Eskimos and to ensure that legislation does not help to create marginal groups by excluding people by law from access to institutions of the wider society. Administrative changes must be made to ensure that native people are provided fully with access to these institutions and assistance in using them. These are necessary changes to which the administration have paid increasing attention over the last two decades, but legal guarantees of equality are not sufficient. They are matters for Parliament, local governments and their administrative agencies. The only role that the anthropologist can play in these matters is essentially one of consultant in order to point out the implications for human living that governmental policies and enactments may have. He is a "resource person" with specialized information. He must be prepared to make known to those in power even embarrassing data and interpretations while avoiding the tempta-

tion to harrass. He must also avoid the misguided belief that he can coerce people into changing. He is a "broker" of social data. If he engages in active political behaviour in plural systems such as the Mackenzie Delta, he will probably find himself working within the pattern of social relationships which typify it as a structural mode of interaction between its segments. He will become aligned with one side or the other as defender of one and antagonist of the other. He will not accomplish the aim of changing the structure of inter-segmental relations, and may in fact help to intensify and rigidify the *status quo*. In any case, the fundamental inequalities and disparities which persist between plural segments are of a sort upon which the law, administration, or convential political activity may have only minimal impact, for they consist of the whole range of differentiated cultural ways in which people transact their lives.

People in marginal social positions typically operate with an information deficit about the social system in which they live, often unaware of the alternatives of action that are in fact open to them. Daily they make decisions which influence their own lives and those of others. To the extent that the information deficit due to marginality can be reduced, presumably decisions based on "better" (or more complete) information are "better" decisions. If the anthropologist can communicate to marginal people realistic interpretations of the consequences of their social position, of their responses to it, and the wider implications of any action they may initiate, he may be able to play an important role in social change.

Likewise, in informal interaction outsiders in the Mackenzie Delta interact with native people according to their understanding of who the native people are, of their peculiarities and dispositions, and of their legitimate role in Canadian society. These ideas are often grotesque caricatures of the realities. The overcoming of prejudice is an educational matter, not primarily a political one.

In playing this educational role the anthropologist must, in any social system, make sure that his scientific findings are disseminated "widely and equally among all classes and segments of the public, thereby preventing a monopoly on psychological controls by an unprincipled minority,"[27] whether that minority is the administration, a political group, or a marginal poverty class. This

is perhaps especially true and perhaps simultaneously more difficult to achieve in a plural social system. In the past in the Mackenzie Delta, social scientists have been far more ready (or able) to impart their information to administration and outside political interest groups than to native people. To ensure equal and effective distribution of his information, the anthropologist must be prepared to utilize every medium and technique of communication available (radio, television, movies, newspapers, material for school curricula, community discussions, personal contacts, adult education courses, professional publication, etc.). His aim is to provide as comprehensive a source of social data as possible, by which native people may be aided in the construction of a viable sense of identity and a positive role in Canadian society, and by which outsiders may develop a more realistic appraisal of the native people, their way of life, the causes and implications of their present social position, and their potential role in Canadian society. He can play an important role in the development of an "informed society".

Now this sort of educational activity on the part of the anthropologist is no panacea for the social ills arising from poverty and marginality; but they will not be solved either by the mere establishment of constitutional equality or the injection into a social system of a critical mass of cash and goods. However, these things are certain: the development of the anthropologist's educative capacity is more realistically aligned with his professional competence, with the realities of the social structure within which he must operate, and most especially it focuses upon the change and development of the fundamental resources of human interaction — ideas, sentiments, opinions, values and knowledge.

Notes

Fieldwork in the Mackenzie River Delta, Northwest Territories, was conducted by the author as part of the Mackenzie Delta Research Project during employment as Research Officer, Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in the summer of 1965 and from August 1966 to August 1967. An earlier version of this paper was given at the Society for Applied Anthropology 28th. Annual Meeting, Mexico City, April 9-15, 1969 and subsequently published as "Las

Implicaciones del Pluralismo para los Programas de Cambio Social en una Communidad del Artico Canadiense," Annuario Indigenista 29:73-96 (Dec. 1969). I gratefully acknowledge comments on the earlier version by Mr. A.J. Kerr, Dr. Peter J. Usher, and Prof. Robert Paine.

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