

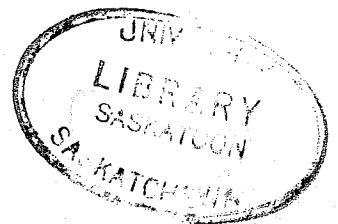
"THE ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL INDIAN AID
IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES, 1879-1885"

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

In 1879 the buffalo disappeared from the Canadian North-West, leaving the Plains Indians in an extreme state of destitution. In accordance with its treaty commitments to the Indians, the federal government undertook the responsibility of feeding the Indians of Treaties Four, Six and Seven. The government, in addition, introduced the reserve agricultural program, which it was hoped would transform the Indians into a self-supporting agrarian people. While the initial costs of rationing the Indians and assisting them in farming operations were high, it was hoped that within a few years the government would be largely relieved of such expenditures.

In spite of the promising early returns made on reserves in the early 1880's the agricultural program did not succeed quickly enough to suit the government. One of the major reasons for the delay of the program was in fact the government's preoccupation with maintaining economy in Indian administration at all costs. When the government undertook a general reduction of expenditures on Indian administration in the North-West in 1883, any possibility of the reserve agricultural program succeeding was ended.

The actions of various Indian bands and leaders in the North-West during these years were characterized by a desire

to achieve suitable terms which would permit their people to make the transition to the farming way of life. The general cutbacks in spending introduced in 1883, however, sparked the formation of an Indian political movement seeking improved conditions. This movement grew rapidly, and likely would have unified Indians from all sections of the North-West in insisting upon the renegotiation of the treaties during the summer of 1885, had the Metis not rebelled. Although Indian participation in the North-West Uprising of 1885 was limited, it prompted the adoption of a policy of repression by the government in dealing with the Indians. The plan of assisting the Indians in becoming self-sufficient farmers was forgotten, and they became the charges of the Department of Indian Affairs.

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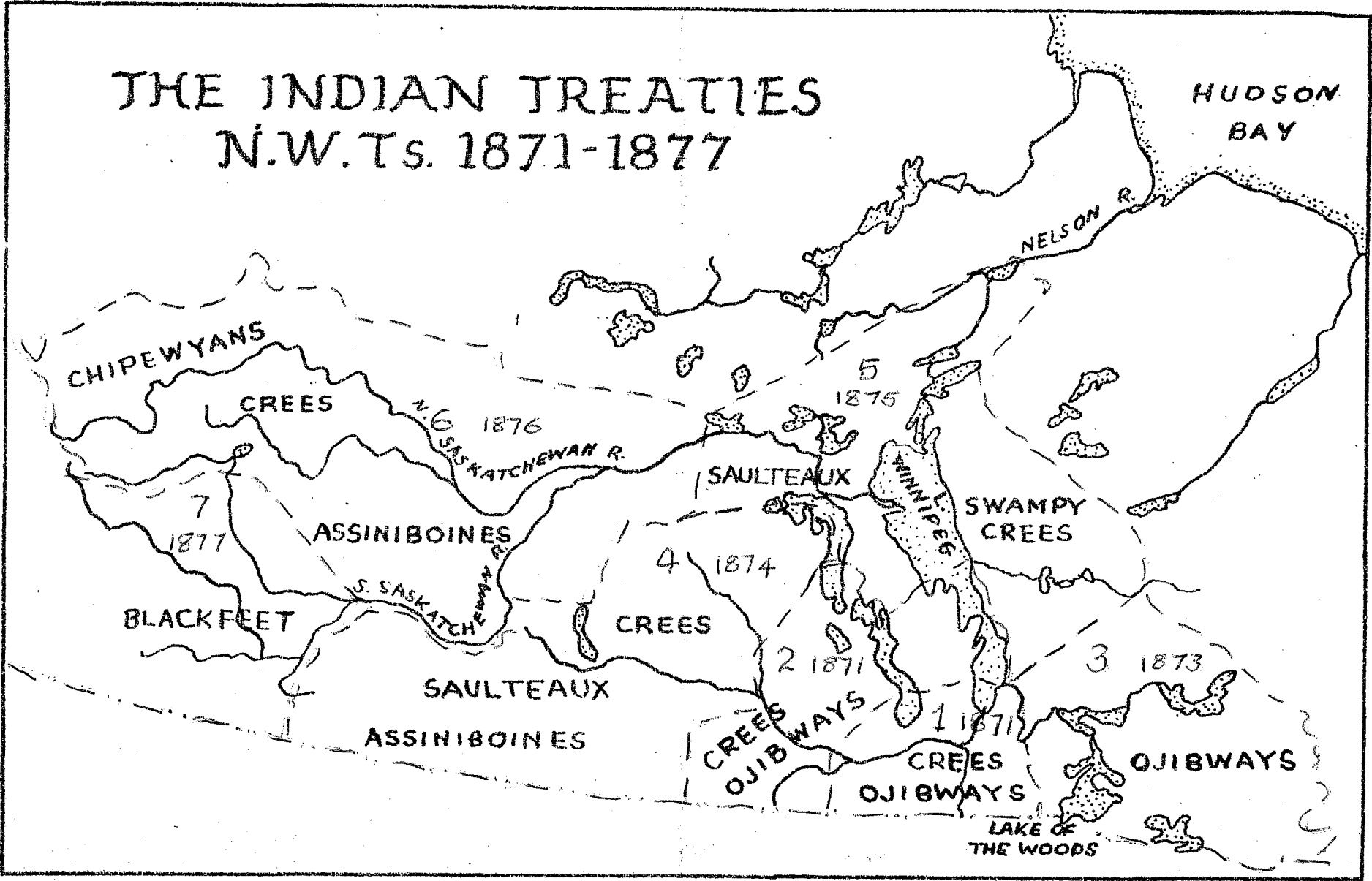
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSP	Canada, Sessional Papers.
DHC	Canada, Debates of the House of Commons.
Glenbow, Dewdney Papers	Edgar Dewdney Papers, at the Glenbow Alberta Institute.
MG26A	Sir John A. Macdonald Papers.
RG 10 Black	Records of the Department of Indian Affairs. (Black Series includes papers dealing with Indians of the North-West).
RG 10 PLB	Private letterbooks of the Deputy-Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs.
RG 10 LB	Letterbooks of the Department of Indian Affairs.
RG 18	Records of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

THE INDIAN TREATIES N.W.Ts. 1871-1877



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PREFACE

On July 15th, 1870, the Dominion of Canada formally took possession of Rupert's Land and the North-West territory from the Hudson's Bay Company. The annexation of this territory marked the completion of one of the common goals agreed upon four years earlier in the federation of the Canadas, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The transfer of this vast area, however, was only the first step in the integration of the North-West into the Dominion. The lengthy and difficult task of settling and developing the various regions of the North-West was to consume a major part of the young country's energies in the coming years.

The gravest problem encountered in the settlement of the North-West Territories between 1870 and 1890 involved relations between the native Indian tribes and the steadily increasing white population. During this twenty year period the North-West underwent a tremendous transformation. The region that in 1871 had been popularized as "The Great Lone Land" had by 1890 been connected by rail with both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The plains that twenty years earlier had been inhabited by magnificent herds of buffalo, were by 1890 dotted with growing settlements. In less than two decades the nomadic way of life of the Plains Indians had been terminated.

The relationship between Indians and whitemen in the North-West Territories in the twenty years after 1870 was significantly different from previous experiences in either Eastern Canada or the American West. The degree of involvement entered into by the federal government in aiding the transition of the Plains Indians from a nomadic to a sedentary agricultural way of life was unlike anything that had happened previously in the administration of Indian affairs in British North America. Moreover, the violence and bloodshed that characterized the settlement of the American West was for the most part avoided in the Canadian North-West. The course of Indian administration in the North-West Territories was shaped by the peculiar political, social and ecological development of that area.

The purpose of this study is to examine the actions of the federal government in providing aid to the Indians of the North-West Territories following the disappearance of the buffalo in 1878-1879. What the government proposed was to transform the Indians in Treaties Four, Six and Seven into self-sufficient farmers. While it was hoped that this could be accomplished in a matter of a few years, the government in the meantime unwillingly undertook the expense of feeding these Indians. To understand the successes and failures of this program, and the growth of Indian agitation prior to 1885, it is necessary to investigate the administration of federal aid to the Indians included in these treaties.

CHAPTER ONE

THE OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP

Within a year of the acquisition of the North-West, the Canadian government was actively engaged in the administration of Indian affairs in the new territory.¹ During the summer of 1871 the first Indian treaties entered into by the Dominion government were negotiated with the tribes of the eastern section of the territory. By 1877 the government had concluded seven such treaties, involving virtually all tribes between the Lake of the Woods and Lake Winnipeg on the east and the Rocky Mountains to the west.

Throughout these early years the federal Indian branch made considerable efforts to gather information concerning the nature of the North-West and its native inhabitants. As late as 1878 David Mills, the Minister of the Interior,² noted that "the amount of information in reference to the Indians of the N.W.T. is extremely scanty, and every agent and public officer should lose no opportunity of obtaining all he can and of furnishing it to this Department".³ Information came into the Department from a wide range of sources, including Hudson's Bay Company officials, missionaries, Indian Branch employees and travellers. Among the many reports received from these sources, there were two especially interesting descriptions of the Indians of the North-West: Lieutenant

Butler's report of his journey across the territory in the winter of 1870-1871,⁴ and a memorandum submitted to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories in 1875 by an Oblate missionary, Father Lacombe.⁵

Father Lacombe's memorandum was based on more than twenty years residence among the Indians of the Saskatchewan Valley. In the memorandum he divided the Indians of the North-West into three main groups. The first group consisted of the Cree and Saulteaux tribes, whose language and customs, noted Lacombe, were quite similar. The Plains Cree and the Saulteaux occupied the area around the North Saskatchewan River and part of the area above the South Saskatchewan River. There were also Wood Cree, Swampy Cree and Ojibwa to the north and the east.

The second group listed by Lacombe was the Assiniboin tribe, or the Stoney Indians, as they were otherwise known. The Assiniboin ranged from the valley of the South Saskatchewan River as far north as the North Saskatchewan, west to the Rocky Mountains and southwest to the Bow River. Linguistically they were similar to the Sioux, though distinct from the Cree and Saulteaux. They had lived in peace, however, for many years with their neighbours to the north.

The third group, the Blackfoot or "les hommes de la prairie", was divided into three bands. The Blackfoot proper, lived in the valley of the Labiche River. The Blood Indians occupied the area between the Labiche and the Bow Rivers. The third

band, the Piegans ranged between the Belly and Missouri Rivers. As well as these three main bands, which shared a common Blackfoot language, there was a small fourth tribe, the Sarcees. The Sarcees had 'many years before' come from the Peace River area by foot to the plains where they had united with the Blackfoot. From time immemorial, related Lacombe, the Blackfoot nation had been at war with its neighbours, and had gained a great reputation for barbarism and thievery.

Lieutenant Butler's description of the Indians of the North-West was based upon geographic and economic considerations rather than those of linguistic affiliation. For the purpose of Indian administration in subsequent years, the Canadian government for the most part utilized the classification outlined by Butler. In his report Butler suggested that the Indians could be divided into two categories. The first group, which he called the "Thickwood Indians", included the Woods and Swampy Cree, the Stonies of Rocky Mountain House, and the Saulteaux, or Plains Ojibwa. For the most part these people depended on fishing and the hunting of deer and moose for their livelihood. Generally they were organized into small bands.

The second group Butler called the "Indians of the Prairie". This group consisted of the Assiniboin at Qu'Appelle, the Plains Cree and the different tribes in the Blackfoot Confederacy. The way of life shared by these Indians was marked by an almost entire dependence on the buffalo. Moreover, their

chronic participation in intertribal warfare had encouraged more sophisticated and complicated forms of leadership in their society than were found among the "Thickwood Indians".

There was a good deal of discrepancy in various estimates of the native population of the North-West. The report of the Palliser Expedition, which was based on the exploration of this vast area between 1857 and 1860, had placed the Indian population at 28,510.⁶ Lieutenant Butler in 1871 estimated the population at slightly less than 17,000.⁷ A "Census of the Districts of the North-West Territories" prepared for the Department of the Interior by the Hudson's Bay Company placed the native population at about 9,700 as of January 1st, 1872.⁸ This last figure was close to the estimate of 9,340 submitted by Father Lacombe in 1875.⁹

By 1881, however, the government had more accurate statistics for the native population of the North-West Territories.¹⁰ The report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1882 revealed that as of December 31st, 1881, there were some 26,050 treaty, non-treaty and Sioux Indians resident in the North-West.¹¹ While several factors might be advanced to explain the extreme conservatism of earlier estimates,¹² the fact remained that the Canadian government was dealing with a considerably larger number of natives in the North-West Territories than it had been led to believe. This early confusion regarding the size of the Indian population clouded the government's conception of the magnitude and expense involved

in Indian administration in the North-West on several occasions in the following years.¹³

From the various reports received by the government it was also evident that during the 1870's the North-West Territories was in a state of turmoil. Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, in his instructions to Lieutenant Butler, commissioning his journey across the plains in the winter of 1870-1871, observed that, "Representations have been made from various quarters that within the last two years much disorder has prevailed in the settlement along the line of the Saskatchewan, and that the local authorities are utterly powerless for the protection of life and property within that region."¹⁴ Lieutenant Butler's Report confirmed these representations:

As matters at present rest, the region of the Saskatchewan is without law, order, or security for life or property: robbery and murder for years have gone unpunished; Indian massacres have gone unchecked even in the close vicinity of Hudson's Bay Company posts, and all civil¹⁵ and legal institutions are entirely unknown.

Butler indicated that the recent increase in disorder in the North-West was directly related to the loosening of the Hudson's Bay Company's control over the area. In the past the Hudson's Bay Company had exercised considerable authority in the region. As the employees of the Company had been virtually the only white men in contact with the Indians, the natives had tended to associate the technological trappings of white civilization found in the various Company posts with individual officers. Company employees had carefully

nurtured this respect in order to facilitate the fur trade. Since the 1820's the Company had provided a paternalistic form of government for the territory.

In the 1860's and 1870's, however, the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly over the fur trade in the North-West was challenged by American trading interests. The trail of the free traders stretched from Fort Benton on the Missouri to Fort Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan. With the advent of the free traders into the North-West, the Indians quickly formed less favourable views of the whiteman's nature.

Lieutenant Butler described the activities of the free traders as being fundamentally short-sighted. Their aim was to accumulate the maximum number of furs and buffalo robes at the least expense on each expedition. Essential to their operations was the practice of trading liquor for buffalo robes, a practice the Hudson's Bay Company had long since dispensed with.¹⁶ According to the Reverend George McDougall, a Methodist missionary, some fifty thousand buffalo robes had been obtained in this manner in 1873.¹⁷ Though many Indians expressed the desire to end the whisky trade they often found themselves unable to resist the temptation of liquor.¹⁸ During these years there were innumerable reports of drunken brawls, beatings and killings among Indians unable to cope with the whiteman's "firewater".

In addition to their unscrupulous use of liquor in the fur trade, the free traders also took every opportunity to engender in the Indians bitterness towards the Hudson's Bay

Company. As a result, the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1860's found itself unable to exercise repressive powers in the plains region even if it had been willing to do so, to the detriment of its commercial interests. In reality the cession of Rupert's Land and the North-West territory in 1870 had relieved the Hudson's Bay Company of the uncomfortable burden of pretending to govern the area.

Equally distressing for the Indians was the tremendous pressure exerted on the buffalo herds by the arrival of white traders and hunters seeking buffalo robes for eastern markets. One observer summarized the situation in the following manner:

On the south are the Americans, on the east the Sioux, the Assiniboines [sic], the Cree and the halfbreeds from Fort Pitt, Whitefish Lakes, Victoria, Edmonton and Big Lake, on the west sides of the Rocky Mountains and from them come several small tribes of Indians....

When it is remembered that the Plains Indians live on buffalo alone it may be seen at a glance where this slaughtering will end.¹⁹

The gradual disappearance of the buffalo resulted in an increasing incidence of starvation among the Plains Indians. Butler noted that in travelling from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains he had not encountered a single buffalo. The Indians were not slow to attribute this steady reduction in the numbers of the buffalo to the advent of white hunters and traders.

The Plains Indians' contact with white men was not, however restricted to Hudson's Bay Company employees and free traders. During this period small parties of miners and

surveyors entered the North-West Territories. Often these groups showed little restraint in their dealings with the Indians. Surveyors, laying out the reservations around the Hudson's Bay Company posts in the winter of 1873-1874, were reported to have made the Indians very angry.²⁰ Yet in the long run, the most important group of white men coming into the North-West were the settlers. Though relatively few settlers came into the area in the 1870's, nevertheless, they were the advance guard for the great numbers of settlers who would one day turn the plains into a vast farming region. The prospect of western settlement understandably made the Indians more unsure of their future. As one observer paradoxically concluded,

... the Indians are generally... well disposed towards white people, and would have no objection to their settling on the land and cultivating it, if in doing so they did not encroach on the Indian hunting grounds.²¹

The impossibility of such an arrangement being maintained was to become all too apparent in the coming years.

Another source of Indian discontent was the treatment accorded Indian tribes south of the Boundary Line. Bands of Piegans, Blackfoot and Bloods, which regularly travelled south of the Line in search of buffalo, on several occasions found themselves victims of a war of extermination being undertaken by the United States army to clear the region for settlement.²² One example was that of an attack carried out by the United States army in the summer of 1870 against a

band of Canadian Piegans camped south of the border. Although the camp was suffering from a small-pox epidemic, one hundred and seventy men, women and children were wiped out by the Americans.²³ Incidents such as this, though they occurred on American soil, cast a shadow over Indian-white relations in the North-West Territories which remained throughout the 1870's and early 1880's.²⁴

The Canadian government's treatment of Indians in the North-West Territories was based on the assumption that that area would soon be thrown open for settlement. One of the first steps taken was the creation in 1873 of a corps of mounted riflemen known as the North-West Mounted Police for the establishment of law and order and federal supervision of the North-West.²⁵ The need for such a police force in the North-West had been outlined in the reports of Lieutenant Butler and Colonel Robertson Ross.²⁶ Butler had suggested that a force of one hundred and fifty men would be necessary in order to eliminate the obnoxious whiskey trade, an obvious starting point if law and order was to be introduced into the region. While Robertson Ross granted the necessity of ending the whiskey trade, he also envisioned the supervision of Indians as being one of the major responsibilities of such a police force. Robertson Ross plainly considered the Indians a barrier to the agricultural settlement of the North-West:

Indeed, the white men dwelling in the Saskatchewan are at this moment living by sufferance, as it were, entirely at the mercy of the Indians. They

dare not venture to introduce cattle or stock into the country, or cultivate the ground to any extent for fear of Indian spoilation.²⁷

It was generally recognized that the North-West Mounted Police would be quite different in nature than the American military authorities operating south of the border. Unlike the American West, the North-West Territories of Canada was virtually unsettled during the 1870's. The tremendous ratio of native population to white population made it obvious that if the Mounted Police were to establish order in the region, it was essential that the force receive co-operation from the Indians. From the time of the entry of the force into the North-West in 1874, its dealings with the Indians were characteristically marked with restraint. The size of the force - initially numbering three hundred officers and men - ensured that the Mounted Police would act as policemen rather than soldiers.²⁸

Nevertheless, the Mounted Police played a major role in the administration of Indian Affairs in the two decades following 1870. Mounted Police escorts accompanied government commissioners in the negotiation of both Treaties Six and Seven.²⁹ In addition, the Mounted Police carried out annuity payments in some regions of the North-West throughout the 1870's. In spite of their small numbers, the North-West Mounted Police were confident of their ability to restrain the Indians of the North-West. On several occasions various officials of the Department of Indian Affairs advocated the use of the Mounted Police as a coercive force to be used in

pressing the Indians into accepting conditions otherwise unpalatable to them.³⁰

But the establishment of the North-West Mounted Police was merely the first step in the Canadian government's development of the North-West. At an early date it was apparent that the future settlement of the region would depend largely on the Canadian government's ability to achieve a workable arrangement with the Indian population. The management of Indian affairs in the North-West involved a number of difficulties quite different from anything previously experienced in British North America. It was anticipated that the North-West would be settled in a matter of a few decades. Difficulties arising from Indian-white contact had in the East been gradually worked out over two centuries. The Indians of the North-West had only twenty years in which to adjust themselves to an entirely new way of life. Moreover, the culture of the Plains Indians, based as it was on the buffalo, was to undergo a transformation more rapid and more complete than any other Native population in British North America. The experience of the American West had proven that the continuation of a nomadic hunting economy was impossible in areas capable of supporting agricultural communities.

The negotiation of treaties between the Canadian government and the various tribes in the North-West served two purposes. First, the treaties brought the Indians into an official relationship with the government. By identifying

the Indians as 'Subjects of the Queen', the treaties formally brought the Indians under the jurisdiction of the Dominion of Canada. In defining the position of the Indians vis a vis the government a further move was made towards the introduction of the rule of law into the North-West. Henceforth the Indians were to be subject to Canadian law, British justice, and the North-West Mounted Police.

The treaties also provided some idea of the position that the Canadian government expected the Indians to assume in the new agricultural society to be established in the North-West. Through the treaties the Indians were to surrender their aboriginal land title to the region, thus enabling the development of settlement. In return the Canadian government undertook the responsibility of providing some assistance to the Indians in adapting to an agrarian sedentary society. It was hoped that in the future the Indians might achieve self-sufficiency through agricultural pursuits.³¹

While it was commonly believed in Canadian government circles that the Indians of the North-West were anxious to enter into treaties with the Dominion it did not seem to be understood that the Indians had a rather different idea of the purpose of the treaties than did the whiteman. There is little doubt that the Indians were in favour of reaching some agreement with the Canadian government which would restore order in the North-West during this troubled period. During the negotiation of Treaty Seven, one chief expressed

this sentiment:

Before the arrival of the Police, when I laid my head down at night, every sound frightened me; my sleep was broken; now I can sleep sound and am not afraid.³²

Whether or not the Indians were in favour of, or even understood the future implications of the treaties is not clear.³³

It would seem that a good number of Indians, at the time of the negotiation of the treaties, were primarily concerned with the immediate implications of achieving a formal relationship with the Canadian government.

From the point of view of the Canadian government there were two modes by which treaties might be negotiated with the Indians of the North-West Territories. The alternative approaches were summarized by Indian Commissioner Provencher in his report to the Secretary of State.

Treaties may be made with them simply with a view to the extinction of their rights, by agreeing to pay them a sum, and afterwards abandon them to themselves. On the other side, they may be instructed, civilized and led to a mode of life more in conformity with the new position of this country, and accordingly make them good, industrious and useful citizens.

Under the first system the Indians will remain in their condition of ignorance and inferiority, and as soon as the facilities for hunting and fishing disappear, they will become mendicants, or be obliged to seek refuge in localities inaccessible to immigration or cultivation.

Under the second system, on the contrary, they will learn sufficient for themselves, and to enable them to pass from a state of tutelage, and to do without assistance from the government.³⁴

In fact, there was little question but that the government

would accept Provencher's second alternative. The inanity of attempting to settle a region in which no provision had been made for the future maintenance of the Indians had been amply demonstrated south of the border.

The government received advice from a number of quarters regarding the most advantageous method of assisting the Indians during the coming period of transition. By and large it was agreed that the government should take some steps to preserve the dwindling buffalo herds. Father Lacombe optimistically predicted that if stringent measures were taken the buffalo might be preserved indefinitely for the use of the Indians.³⁵ Though other observers warned that the buffalo would probably disappear within five years,³⁶ it was generally accepted that efforts taken to preserve the game in these last years would at least ease Indian-white relations. Another idea put forward was that the government might supply fishing nets to encourage the Indians to take advantage of the fish found in the rivers and lakes of the North-West Territories.³⁷

One of the most ingenious plans submitted to the government came from Charles Bell, who in later years headed the Geological Survey of Canada.³⁸ Bell suggested that the territories of the various tribes be formed into large temporary reservations, taking in the hunting grounds as they were at present and keeping them until such time as the game disappeared. Bell predicted with amazing accuracy that the buffalo would disappear by 1879; at that time the smaller

final reserves could be given to the Indians. Bell did not believe that the settlement of the North-West would be seriously retarded if settlers were kept out of the temporary reservations for five years.

It was also suggested that in districts where the buffalo had already been completely exterminated domestic cattle might be introduced whereby the Indians could be provided an unlimited supply of food.³⁹ The rich pasturage of the country, untouched in recent years, could be used to maintain these herds, which, it was hoped, might be thoroughly acclimatized within a few years. In this way, the Plains Indians would gradually adapt to raising cattle for their living, as they had previously raised horses for hunting purposes.⁴⁰

It was also proposed that in lieu of paying the Indians annuities, an emergency fund be created.⁴¹ This fund could be used to assist the Indians in times when the hunt failed, or when there was no other work available for them. As early as 1874, it was obvious to some people that there would come a time when the Indians would need extensive government assistance. For others such as Mr. Meredith, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, "the great aim and object of Indian policy would be to teach the Indians the habits of industry and self-reliance and to prevent them from becoming a permanent state pauper, a perpetual tax on the country and an obstacle in the way of all improvement."⁴² Meredith also advocated that the Indian's services as guides be fully

utilized by the Mounted Police, the surveys and the railways.

The most important aspect for the Canadian government to bear in mind in its future dealings with the Indians of the North-West, in Father Lacombe's opinion, was that it consider itself as the father and teacher of all Indian tribes.⁴³ In order to prevent more of the misery which had beset Indian-white relations so often in the past, Lacombe deemed it essential that the government adopt an attitude of paternalism that would allow it to act as the protector of 'the disinherited of nature'. Lacombe also took the opportunity to recommend that it might be wise to employ missionaries in dealing with the Indians.

While the individual proposals outlined above presented the government with several different approaches, in the end, the basic structure of the treaties negotiated with the Plains Indians was determined by the government's previous experience in making treaties in the eastern section of the North-West Territories. Treaties One, Two and Three had contained a government commitment for 'instructing and civilizing' the Indians by attaching them to agriculture. At the same time, the difficulties arising out of the negotiation and renegotiation of Treaties One and Two had cautioned the government to frame future treaties in quite definite terms in order to avoid misunderstandings. In most aspects, Treaties Four, Six and Seven were similar to the treaty negotiated with the Indians of the Lake of the Woods district in 1873.

In entering into these treaties⁴⁴ with the Canadian government the Plains Indians accepted two conditions. First, they would become 'good and loyal subjects of the Queen'. They would maintain the peace and observe the laws of Canada, as well as assisting officers of the law in bringing offending Indians to justice. Second, the Indians ceded to the Dominion all rights, titles and privileges pertaining to the various portions of land claimed by the different bands. With the signing of the treaties, aboriginal land title in the North-West was extinguished.

In return the Indians were to receive a number of considerations from the government. Reserves of land were to be set aside for each band at the rate of one square mile for every family of five. The reserves were to be legally encumbered so that the Indians could not sell or alienate this land. The treaties also guaranteed the Indians' right to continue hunting, trapping and fishing on lands surrendered to the Crown, subject to government regulation.

At the signing of the treaties money payments were to be made to the Indians at the rate of twenty-five dollars to each band chief, fifteen dollars to each headman (a total of four headmen being allowed for each band), and twelve dollars to each of the other members of the bands taking treaty. Chiefs were to be awarded silver medals, suits of clothing and flags; powder, shot, blankets and some provisions were to be distributed among the bands. The government further agreed to make annual payments to the Indians, at the same rates as above

for leaders, while the remaining members of the bands would receive five dollars.

While the government assumed some responsibility for helping the Indians to maintain themselves in the coming years, this responsibility was carefully limited by the terms of the treaties. Small grants for the purchase of twine, shot and ammunition were to be made each year.⁴⁵ It was intended that these supplies should be used by the Indians in hunting and fishing, which were expected to provide a part of their living. Limited amounts of seed, agricultural implements and stock were to be issued to each band as they settled on reserves. The treaties also stipulated that liquor would be banned from the reserves and that the government would undertake the responsibility of maintaining a school and teacher on each reserve.

While these terms appeared in each of Treaties Four, Six and Seven there were, however, several unique provisions included in Treaty Six. One of these provisions was that a medicine chest would be kept at the house of each Indian agent for the use and benefit of the Indians. An even more important stipulation was included near the end of that treaty:

That in the event hereafter of the Indians comprised within this treaty being overtaken by any pestilence, or by a general famine, the Queen on being satisfied and certified thereof by her Indian Agent or Agents, will grant to the Indians assistance of such character and to such an extent as her Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs shall deem necessary and sufficient to relieve the Indians from the calamity that shall have befallen them.⁴⁶

This celebrated 'famine clause' was to figure prominently in the administration of Indian affairs in the coming years.

Another unique provision of Treaty Six was that the government agreed that each spring it would expend the sum of one thousand dollars for the purchase of provisions to assist the various bands in seeding their crops. The explanation for the inclusion of these special terms in Treaty Six was that without them the Indians of the Saskatchewan would not have signed the treaty. Lieutenant-Governor Morris reported that several Saulteaux Indians from the Qu'Appelle district had been on hand to stir up opposition to the government's proposal.⁴⁷ The bands that met the government commissioners at Forts Carlton and Pitt in the autumn of 1876 had apparently been forewarned that the terms offered by the government were not sufficiently generous to permit them to settle on reserves. As a result the Cree insisted upon these special provisions, and received them. There were, however, a number of bands for whom the treaties, even with these additional provisions, were not acceptable. Nearly seven years passed before Big Bear's band agreed to Treaty Six. By that time the government was prepared to offer Big Bear more favourable conditions than it had in 1876.

While the treaties provided a general outline of the form government policy towards the Indians was to take in the coming years, the actual administration of Indian affairs in the North-West was to be greatly affected by a number of

underlying principles. It was the intention of both Liberal and Conservative governments to maintain the utmost economy in the administration of Indian affairs. The terms of the treaties would be strictly observed. It was clearly the intention of the government to commit itself no further in aiding the Indians than was stipulated in the treaties.

At the same time government policy was directed towards the overall objective of assisting the Indians to self-sufficiency so that they would not be dependent on the government for their living. The difficulty of achieving this goal and at the same time maintaining economy in government expenditure was to plague Indian administration in the coming period. Nevertheless, the Canadian government was determined that its actions towards the Indians would be very different from those practised by the United States government under similar circumstances. David Mills, the Minister of the Interior in the latter years of the Mackenzie administration, made it an article of faith that the Canadian government would afford the Indians of the North-West a more humanitarian treatment than the Americans had provided their Western Indians.⁴⁸ This principle was maintained by the subsequent Conservative administration, and was repeated so often by government officials that the proud boast of the humanitarianism of Canadian Indian administration came to reek of a certain smugness.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE BUFFALO

The immediate problem confronting the Canadian government in its administration of Indian affairs in the North-West concerned the decline of the buffalo herds in that area. The ramifications of the wanton slaughter of buffalo by robe hunters in the United States extended across the border, for the buffalo knew no national boundaries. As early as 1874 the Canadian government had received warnings that the numbers of the buffalo were diminishing.¹ The significance of this development was clearly defined by the Deputy-Minister of the Interior, Mr. Meredith:

Heretofore, the Indians of the West have relied exclusively on the buffalo. Some few years ago this supply of food seemed practically inexhaustible. But owing to the increase of white and half-breed hunters, the buffaloes have in the last few years been rapidly diminishing in numbers, and there seems every reason to expect under the existing state of things they will within the next decade of years be entirely exterminated. To the Indians extermination of the buffalo means starvation and death....

Should the slaughter of buffaloes be continued at the same rate for only two or three years, we may expect serious disturbances among the Indians, and possibly an Indian war or a repetition of the Sioux massacre.²

In subsequent years it became increasingly apparent that the buffalo were facing an early extinction, leaving the Indians to starve or raid Hudson's Bay Company posts and the

cattle and provisions of incoming settlers.³

By 1876 the situation in the North-West had become critical. The influx of large numbers of Sioux Indians - refugees from the Battle of the Little Big Horn - into the southwestern section of the territories had increased pressures on the buffalo herds. In a meeting between Sub-Inspector Denny of the North-West Mounted Police and a council of Blackfoot chiefs in July 1876, Crowfoot, the Blackfoot spokesman, explained the Indians' dilemma:

We all see that the day is coming when the buffalo will all be killed, and we shall have nothing more to live on, and then you will come into our camp and see the poor Blackfeet starving....We are getting shut in, the Crees are coming into our country from the north, and the White men from the south and east, and they are all destroying our means of living....⁴

The question posed to the Canadian government was whether any measures could be taken to avert or retard the extermination of the buffalo. Individual members from both Liberal and Conservative parties suggested that the preservation of game in the North-West constituted part of the government's treaty obligations.⁵ It was hoped that if the extermination of the buffalo could not be entirely prevented, that it could at least be delayed for several years.⁶

In October of 1875 the Department of Justice prepared a report relating to the protection of the buffalo which was referred to the North-West Territorial Council. A Sub-committee of the Council examined the report, heard suggestions

from various persons and then submitted its findings to the federal government.⁷ In the introduction to the report it was noted that the "threatened early extinction of the Buffalo is a question of grave importance to the North-West Territories", and that the Indians' ignorance of agriculture and dependence upon the buffalo made it necessary that the buffalo should be preserved for them until they could gradually provide their own subsistence.

The Sub-Committee received a variety of recommendations from several sources. Commissioner French of the North-West Mounted Police, and Father André, an Oblate missionary who lived among the half-breeds of the South Saskatchewan, both suggested that an export duty be imposed on buffalo robes and pemmican.⁸ Moreover, French advised that severe punishment be imposed in cases where buffalo had been killed and less than half the meat removed. Father André proposed that a closed season on buffalo hunting be enforced for the whites and Metis between the first of June and the first of November, and that these two groups be forbidden to pass the winter on the prairie under a heavy penalty and confiscation of their robes.⁹

Suggestions submitted by a Select Committee of the North-West Territorial Council were based on the premise that the decline of the buffalo had resulted from certain half-breeds and whites indulging in a wanton slaughter of whole herds, "without being able to make use of any but a small proportion of the flesh for food".¹⁰ The Select Committee offered several

recommendations by which this indiscriminate slaughter might be ended. It was advised that the buffalo hunting season be restricted to the period falling between the first of July and the first of January. Moreover, the use of buffalo pounds or similar contrivances was to be strictly prohibited for the hunting of buffalo. The select Committee also urged that it be made unlawful to kill any buffalo under the age of two years.¹¹ In order that the Indians might be provided for during the closed season, the Select Committee put forward the suggestion that the Dominion government should make some provision for their maintenance, supplying them with necessary food or other aid in conformity with treaty regulations. This recommendation was, however, rather awkwardly qualified later in the report:

It cannot be expected that the Dominion government can undertake to do much more for the Indians than carry out their treaty engagements unless it can be accomplished in the direction of protecting their staple article of food from destruction until they have to some extent mastered the arts of civilized life.¹²

In its summation of the various recommendations received, the Sub-Committee took exception to the suggestion that an export duty on buffalo robes be introduced. Not only were export duties objectionable in principle to Liberal members of the Council, such as David Laird, but it was argued that even if these duties could be effectively carried out, this would do nothing to prevent the wanton destruction of the buffalo. The export duty was also opposed

on constitutional grounds. As the protection and care of game was one of the powers assigned to the Territorial Council by the North-West Territories Act of 1875, and as export duties could only be imposed by the senior government, the Sub-Committee could not recommend that the Dominion Parliament legislate upon the subject in this manner. The constitutional argument was spurious as there was nothing preventing the Territorial Council from requesting that an export duty on buffalo hides be imposed by the federal government. In the end, the Sub-Committee advised that local legislation and regulation of the hunt would provide the best mode of protecting the buffalo.

The question of the preservation of the buffalo was once more raised in March 1877 in the House of Commons. In reply to a query from a Conservative member, David Mills informed the House that

He was of the opinion that it had better be left to be dealt with by the government of the North-West rather than by Parliament... The local government ... could probably devise a cheaper and better plan than this Parliament, it being on the spot and more familiar with the matter.¹³

For whatever reason, the Dominion government had clearly abdicated responsibility for preservation of the buffalo by referring the problem to the North-West Territorial Council. While an unsuccessful ordinance based on the recommendations of the Select Committee was passed by the Territorial Council,¹⁴ its measures proved both ineffective and too late to prevent the disappearance of the buffalo.¹⁵

During the years 1878 and 1879, the buffalo herds which had previously ranged freely between the North-West and the bordering American territories of Montana and North Dakota, were driven from Canadian soil. The disappearance of the buffalo from the North-West was complicated, however, by the fact that large numbers of buffalo remained south of the border until 1883.¹⁶ The dictates of nature and the hunger of Canadian Indians proved more decisive in determining the ultimate fate of the buffalo than either the white politicians in Ottawa or their counterparts in the North-West Territories.

In the spring of 1878, unusually mild weather fostered the spread of prairie fires in the south-western section of the Territories, and a good deal of the buffalo's usual pasturage was destroyed.¹⁷ As a result, the buffalo herds were forced to winter on the plains between the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers. Being confined to this small area, the buffalo came under tremendous pressure from travelling bands of Blackfoot coming from the west, the Crees from the north and east, and the Sioux and Assiniboines in the Cypress Hills district. In the course of that winter, the buffalo headed south to the western part of the Montana territory to escape this ever tightening circle.

In the summer of 1879 the buffalo herds once again began moving towards the North-West. Before they reached the Cypress Hills they were met by large bands of hunters from the various tribes in the North-West, and were forced to return south.¹⁸

On each occasion in the following years when the buffalo attempted to head north they encountered large forces of Indians whose spirited hunting in effect created a cordon between the buffalo and the North-West. While small herds of buffalo did occasionally slip into the North-West Territories following 1879, they were quickly exterminated by the hungry native population.¹⁹

In spite of previous warnings regarding the gradual decline in the buffalo herds the final disappearance of the buffalo in the North-West struck observers with its suddenness and finality. In December of 1878, Commissioner MacLeod of the North-West Mounted Police had predicted that the buffalo would not last as a supply of food for the Indians more than three or four years.²⁰ In his annual report for 1879 MacLeod expressed his surprise that the buffalo had been so quickly and completely driven out of the Territories.²¹ At the same time, occasional incursions of small herds of buffalo into the North-West encouraged some government officials to express the hope that the buffalo might yet return some day.²² This type of wishful thinking contributed largely to the inconsistency of subsequent government action.

With the disappearance of the buffalo from the North-West there were numerous accounts of widespread starvation among the Plains Indians. Both the Cree and the Blackfoot were reported to be in a starving condition during the spring and summer of 1878.²³ By the next summer the state of the Plains Indians, and particularly the Blackfoot had become

desperate. One government official reported that the Blackfoot Indians were

selling their Horses for a mere song, eating gophers, mice, and for the first time have hunted the Antelope and nearly killed them all off ... Strong young men were now so weak that some of them could hardly walk. Others who last winter were fat and hearty are mere skin and bone.²⁴

One Blackfoot woman told the local trader that "if I can't get any food for my two children I must kill myself, I live only for them and I can't bear to see them starve".²⁵

In response to the buffalo's disappearance from the North-West, there resulted a general southward movement among the Plains Indians in pursuit of the herds. A number of Cree bands which normally resided in the valley of the North Saskatchewan River moved to the Cypress Hills. From this location they were able to mount hunting expeditions south of the border. A great many of the Blackfoot Indians also pursued the buffalo into Montana Territory.

The critical situation of the Plains Indians during this period greatly increased the anxiety felt about Indian matters in the North-West. Though various government officials remarked on the Indians' generally submissive behaviour, nevertheless, several incidents underlined growing unrest among the native people. In March 1878, some four hundred Indians in the Qu'Appelle district, having requested provisions from the officer in charge of government stores at that point and having been refused, took forcible possession of the provisions.²⁶ Owing to the miserable condition of these Indians,

no action was taken by the government in response to the seizure. There were also numerous reports that the Indians were killing large numbers of cattle in the Bow River district and some in the neighbourhood of Fort Walsh. Commissioner MacLeod was inclined to dismiss these charges:

It is undoubtedly the case that they killed some, but nothing like the numbers claimed. It is the opinion of many respectable stockmen that whites had more to do with it than the Indians. A great many cattle must have strayed back to Montana and a great many more must have perished in the storms which have passed over the country in March last [1878].²⁷

Despite the restraint exercised by the Indians, it was clear that with the disappearance of the buffalo the relationship of the Indians with the government had changed. In a meeting in November 1878, between the Lieutenant-Governor Laird and some twelve hundred Cree Indians at Sounding Lake, the Cree spokesman, Big Bear, pointed out that as the Great Spirit had supplied the Indians with plenty of buffalo for food until the whiteman came, and as that means of support was about to fail them, the government ought to take the place of the Great Spirit and provide the Indians with the means of living in some other way.²⁸ This view was further conveyed to the government in a letter from James MacKay, a prominent Scotch half-breed, to the Deputy-Minister of Public Works, Colonel Dennis, in February 1879:

Formerly we were mere visitors to their country; recently we have incurred obligations towards them of an extensive and binding nature. They had no claim on us

before; now they look to us in everything ... Our arrival in the country leading to the disappearance of the buffalo is regarded by them as the foundation of any want they may suffer....²⁹

Clearly, the time for government action had arrived.

The responsibility for meeting the famine crisis of 1879-1880 fell to the newly elected Conservative government of Sir John A. Macdonald. The significance of the development and settlement of the North-West in the program of the new administration was emphasized by the Prime Minister assuming the office of the Minister of the Interior himself.³⁰ Yet, while the importance of Indian affairs in the settlement of the North-West was recognized, the new government was quite unprepared for the crisis of 1879. For the most part the government's administration of Indian affairs during that year was characterized by a lack of direction and by desperate efforts to avoid Indian depredations.

The speech given in the House of Commons on May 1, 1879 by Macdonald demonstrated the government's bewilderment with the events then unfolding in the North-West.³¹ He noted that as long as the pressure for food existed it was entirely possible that unfortunate consequences might ensue. While the government was aware of the scope of the problem, the solution proposed by the Prime Minister - that of inducing the Indians to undertake agricultural pursuits - was merely a repetition of the vague program written into the treaties. But, in spite of the lack of inspiration in Macdonald's statement there were included two significant departures from

previous government thinking about Indian administration. First, he predicted that a good deal of money would have to be expended on Indian affairs in the North-West. The government would have to develop patience and forbearance in dealing with the Indians. Equally important was his announcement that it was impossible to govern Indian affairs satisfactorily from Ottawa. Great care, vigour and prudence would have to be exercised in the management of Indian affairs in the region east of the Rocky Mountains to Lake Superior. The best method of achieving these aims, Macdonald stated, lay in greater local supervision of Indian administration. The burden of carrying out these responsibilities fell to Edgar Dewdney, who was appointed Indian Commissioner for the North-West Territories in May of 1879.

The events of 1879 demonstrated the need for more effective local control of Indian administration. Arriving in the North-West in July, Dewdney discovered that the Indians' condition was much more serious than had been imagined in Ottawa. Fortunately, the instructions issued to the new Indian Commissioner by the government were quite flexible, allowing him a fair degree of latitude in dealing with these difficulties.

The immediate problem in the North-West was that of massive Indian starvation.³² The necessity of supplying the Plains Indians with at least limited provisions had been recognized earlier that spring. Lieutenant-Governor Laird in March of 1879 had applied for and received a credit of ten thousand dollars which enabled him to extend temporary relief

to the Indians at Battleford, Duck Lake and Qu'Appelle. As well, he gave the following instructions to Dewdney:

You will find, on arriving at Forts Walsh and MacLeod, that steps have already been taken to provide a supply of food for pressing emergencies. These supplies you will cause to be distributed in such a manner as may be most expedient and so as to afford the maximum amount of relief.³³

One hundred bags of flour and fifty cattle were to be provided the Indians at each point.

The decision to provide the starving Indians of the North-West with relief had been prompted by a joint sense of obligation and fear. The inclusion of the famine clause in Treaty Six had morally, if not legally committed the government to this course. It was, however, difficult to separate the motives of responsibility and fear in justifying the feeding of the Indians. As James MacKay stated

We should not be much in excess of our duty were we to provide in some measure for those destitute Indians who at the present moment are driven to choose between starvation and killing the settlers' cattle.³⁴

By the end of June, it was apparent that the provisions issued to the Indians at various points were wholly inadequate to satisfy their needs. In a letter to the Minister of the Interior, David Laird reported that there had been virtually no game in the Battleford district during the last two months.³⁵ While the Indians had been fortunate in acquiring fair quantities of fish and berries, supplemented by limited government provisions, their situation was nonetheless wretched. Laird also stated that the local Indian agent had

nearly exhausted his relief supplies; at the same time he noted that greater economy could not have been safely exercised. Although the Indians' conduct had been remarkable, considering their desperate condition, Laird felt it necessary to request an increase in the Mounted Police force and to ask that some steps be taken to fortify the Police post at Battleford.³⁶

In response to this critical state of affairs the federal government in August 1879 called for a council to meet in Battleford later that month, "to consider the whole situation and concert measures to avert the apparently impending calamity of famine among the Indians".³⁷ The council was to include the Lieutenant-Governor, the Indian Commissioner, the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police, and several other local officials.³⁸ Laird and Dewdney were authorized by the government to give full effect to the meeting of the Council in case telegraphic communication with Ottawa was not possible.

The Battleford Council met for the first time on August 26 and 27, 1879. After a day and a half of discussion, the Council passed the following resolution

Resolved - That the Conference having maturely considered the state of the Indians in the North-West Territories, and the sources from which they can supply themselves with food, is of opinion that the fears entertained of an approaching famine are only too well grounded, and that unless a very large supply of provisions is furnished by Government, for issue during the coming Winter, a great number of Indians will be without the amount of food absolutely necessary to sustain life. Should this state of

affairs arise, and it appears to the Conference to be inevitable, it will be fraught with such dire consequences not only to the Indians themselves, but to the many settlers scattered throughout the Territories, that immediate steps should be taken, ³⁹ if possible, to avert, so great a calamity.

The Council gave effect to this resolution by ordering that large quantities of beef, bacon, flour, fish and pemmican were to be distributed at various points in the North-West.⁴⁰

At a subsequent meeting of the Council on the 15th and 16th of September it was decided that further quantities of bacon and flour should be stored at Qu'Appelle before winter set in. It was further resolved that recommendations concerning the establishment of new Mounted Police posts and the change of existing ones should be left to the Police Commissioner. Nevertheless, the Council suggested that the number of Police at Qu'Appelle and Battleford should be increased before winter.⁴¹

There remained the necessity of adopting some system for the administration of regular rations to the Indians. Prior to the meetings of the Battleford Council, Dewdney had taken great care to avoid leaving the Indians with the impression that they would be fed whether they worked or not.⁴² Yet, as the summer progressed, the impracticality of consistently applying this rule became obvious to him. Until the Indians were settled on reserves, there was, in effect, no work that they could do. In the meantime, the starving condition of the Indians rendered the operation of such a proviso impossible. In talks with a Cree band, including

non-Treaty Indians, that Dewdney met with near Battleford on August 20, he promised that the government would not let them starve.⁴³ The following year, when the threat of an Indian uprising had subsided, the government re-imposed the dictum that rations were to be issued to able-bodied Indians only in return for labour.⁴⁴

Although the government had been forced to ration the Indians of the North-West in 1879, this large expenditure had not been undertaken without considerable soul searching. Maintenance of the strictest economy was a prime consideration of Indian administration during this period. Even though the government realized the absolute necessity of feeding the Indians during the famine crisis,⁴⁵ the dedication to economy in Indian affairs was so deeply engrained in federal politicians that the Conservatives were making serious efforts to justify their actions. In a letter to the Prime Minister in September 1879, Dewdney advised that while he anticipated no serious trouble with the Indians during the coming winter, he did not propose to make light of exaggerated reports appearing in the newspapers.⁴⁶ "I think it better that the people should have the 'brazen side of the shield' at present exhibited to them and then they won't grumble at the large expenditure the new system involves."⁴⁷

The difficulty of defending the increased appropriation for Indian administration in the North-West, put together with the questionable value of the buffalo as a future source of subsistence, made it imperative that the government

proceed with its program to convert the Indians to agricultural pursuits.⁴⁸ Some efforts had already been made in this direction under the Mackenzie Administration. Limited farming operations had been initiated on Indian reserves in the Qu'Appelle district in 1877, and in the Battleford district in 1878. Early returns, however, had not been promising.

The extension of the farming program constituted a major part of the Conservative reorganization of Treaties Four, Six and Seven in 1879. An outline of this program was contained in the instructions issued to Indian Commissioner Dewdney. It was proposed that fifteen farming agencies be established throughout the North-West Territories. At these agencies the Indians would be instructed in agricultural operations by farming instructors. On the two agencies which were to be located within Treaty Seven, farming would be carried on on a larger scale, in an effort to produce cheaply a large quantity of the rations being issued. The implementation of the program was unfortunately delayed for a year, as the farming instructors and farmers did not arrive in the North-West until July 1879, too late to do much more than prepare land for seeding the following year.

The government had nonetheless committed itself to a policy of agricultural development for the Indians of the North-West Territories. Alarmed by the prospect of footing a massive appropriation for feeding the Indians of the North-West, the Conservatives had eagerly seized upon the agricultural development program, which promised to make the Indians

more or less self-sufficient in a few years. Though grave doubts were expressed by some politicians whether the Indians could be suddenly converted from a nomadic, hunting way of life to a sedentary, agrarian existence,⁴⁹ the government seemed unable to formulate an alternative program.⁵⁰ Thus, the Prime Minister, who himself harboured misgivings about the feasibility of the reserve agricultural policy, found it expedient to promote the program in Parliament.⁵¹ Inevitably, it was the Indians and not the politicians who suffered the consequences of the farming program during the next five years.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RESERVE AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM

Fresh initiative and great optimism became evident in Canadian Indian administration in 1880. In May of that year, the importance of Indian affairs in the plans of the government was formally recognized with the creation of the Department of Indian Affairs. Previously Indian affairs in Canada had been administered by the Secretary of State and by the Department of the Interior.¹ 1880 was also marked by the initiation of the government's reserve agricultural program in the North-West Territories.

During that summer, over eleven thousand Indians settled upon reserves, built houses and fenced and broke land for cultivation.² Over four and a half thousand acres of land were added to the thirty-five hundred acres then under cultivation. The harvest yielded moderate though promising quantities of wheat, oats, barley and potatoes. Included in Indian Commissioner Dewdney's report for 1880 was an extract describing the agricultural progress achieved that summer on Red Pheasant's reserve near Battleford in Treaty Six:

The crop on this reserve was magnificent. The potato yield was very heavy, Early Rose and Early Round the only two kinds grown. The barley and wheat I am happy to say came to maturity. The turnips and beets cannot be surpassed, but the carrots,

owing to not being thinned in time are in some cases small. These Indians are intelligent, peacefully inclined and good workers. I took pride in helping them and with the assistance of ex-Indian Instructor, McCord they have advanced materially in farming.... When you come to consider sir, that this band had but some ten acres of land under crop and four houses built in 1879, I think it will appear to you that they have not done badly.³

In spite of the optimism generated by initial farming operations in the North-West there was no question of discontinuing the rationing of bands settled on reserves. Though a few of the bands were in a position to eke out an existence, Commissioner Dewdney reported that eight-tenths of the Indians of the North-West were helpless.⁴ In the Speech from the Throne opening the 1880-1881 Session of Parliament the Governor-General reported that he greatly regretted "being obliged to state that the entire failure of the usual food supply of the Indians in the North-West, to which I called your attention last session, has continued during the present session and has involved the necessity of a large expenditure in order to save them from absolute starvation."⁵ If the Indians were to be encouraged to settle on the reserves and take up agriculture it was essential that they be issued rations by the government. For the first few years at least the Indians would not only have to be clothed to a certain extent but they would have to be fed.⁶ If the government was to expect a fair day's work from the Indians it was necessary that they be provided

a fair day's rations. Though the expense of these provisions would at first be great, it was pointed out by the Commissioner that the government would at least have the satisfaction of knowing that it was obtaining value for its money.⁷

There remained the task of justifying ration expenditures in Parliament. The Liberal opposition, headed by Indian Affairs critic, David Mills, had made a ritual of examining the very considerable expenditures for the Indians of the North-West with the utmost scrutiny.⁸ Inquiries as to how long the government proposed to supply the Indians of the North-West with rations emerged repeatedly in debates.⁹ On the Government's side Sir John A. Macdonald countered that it was no fault of either the Government or the Opposition that the buffalo had disappeared.¹⁰ Given this situation the government had the alternative of either feeding the Indians or letting them starve. Though Macdonald denied that the government was feeding the Indians in order to keep them quiet, he did suggest that, "If an Indian is starving and sees a white man's cattle grazing he will not starve; he will shoot the white man's ox for food, and it is not unlikely that the white man's ox will shoot down the Indian"[sic].¹¹ Macdonald also noted that Parliament, as one man and without objection, had voted the supplies necessary to enable the government to assist the Indians to settle on the lands and to undertake the raising of cattle and the cultivation of the soil.¹²

Opposition criticism of expenditures in the North-West had the effect of making both the government and the Department of Indian Affairs acutely conscious of the political necessity of maintaining economy wherever possible. In letters to the Prime Minister, Sir Leonard Tilley, the Minister of Finance, frequently expressed grave concern with the seriousness and expense of Indian administration in the North-West.¹³ As early as 1881, he proposed that the Indians be employed in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway in order to offset ration expenditures. Tilley suggested candidly that the Indians be informed that "they must work or starve".¹⁴ The drive for economy was also reflected in the correspondence of Department officials both in Ottawa and in the North-West. The assurance that 'everything will be done to keep expenditures down as much as possible' appeared constantly in Departmental reports and memoranda.

At the same time various officers in the North-West, including the Commissioner, warned of the danger of pressing considerations of economy to the detriment of the farming program. While Dewdney confessed to the Prime Minister that the massive ration expenditure had given him many a sleepless night he firmly believed that the only solution was to have plenty of food on hand in the North-West for the next few years.¹⁵ Though Dewdney promised to take every opportunity to keep expenses low, he could see no better course than to purchase adequate supplies ahead of time by contract and thus be

prevented from buying at high local rates when requests were made.¹⁶

This view was also shared by T.P. Wadsworth, the Inspector of Farming Agencies in the North-West:

I think it will be better for the Department, the Government and the country to bravely "face the music" - to make their minds to the expenditure [sic] and prepare for it ... for as the Globe said the other day in its editorial upon the report of our Department "It is better to feed than to fight them" - and the difference between what they are now receiving and what they could probably be brought down to would be so very trifling it will at this time be hardly worth the risk. If we put the newcomers upon half-rations they will never settle to work. There is absolutely no game or other resource for an Indian here in the south to honestly get food except what the Government gives him.¹⁷

It was difficult to object to Wadsworth's reasoning in practical terms. Even though the government was rationing nearly 18,000 Indians in Treaties Four, Six and Seven, the average daily ration per person was a mere three quarters of a pound of flour and three quarters of a pound of beef, and did not cost the government more than eight cents per head per day.¹⁸ This was in marked contrast to the fifty cents per day spent by the Department to feed white farm labourers.¹⁹

Another important feature of government ration policy in the North-West was the stipulation that the Indians not be given something for nothing. As was explained in the Department of Indians Affairs' Report for 1880, "The system pursued in affording relief to the Indians is calculated to

accustom them to habits of industry; and at the same time to teach them to depend on their own efforts for subsistence. Under that system all able-bodied Indians are required to work for the food given themselves and families."²⁰ In return for the relief afforded them the Indians built houses, fenced fields and cultivated crops under the supervision and direction of the farming instructors.²¹ The Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Lawrence Vankoughnet, was particularly zealous in insisting that this rule be strictly adhered to. There was, however, some difficulty in rigidly maintaining the "no work no food" policy in the field. As Commissioner Dewdney was well aware, it was not always possible to find work for all of the Indians, nor were they adequately clad for working during the winter months.²² Still, they could not be and were not denied rations in such circumstances.

The position adopted by the government was that while the rationing of the Indians in the North-West would initially incur great expenditure, the Indians would within two or three years achieve some degree of self-sufficiency.²³ In an application to the Privy Council, in June of 1881, for a supplementary grant to meet departmental over-expenditures in the North-West, the Prime Minister predicted that that year's harvest in Treaties Four and Six would be sufficient to feed Indians settled on reserves for three, if not four months of the coming year.²⁴ Although certain officials

expressed the opinion that ration expenses and overall costs would not soon decrease, and that they would in all probability sharply increase during the next few years,²⁵ an attitude of optimism prevailed in government circles. Any doubts that may have been harboured by Macdonald and his subordinates were glossed over by official pronouncements that everything was proceeding satisfactorily in the North-West.²⁶

Prior to 1883, participation in the reserve farming program was generally restricted to bands residing within the boundaries of Treaty Six and in the eastern section of Treaty Four. There remained in the southern section of the North-West a large portion of the native population, whose involvement in agricultural pursuits was either extremely limited or non-existent.²⁷ Centered around Fort MacLeod and Cypress Hills, these Indians had in 1879 chosen to follow the buffalo, even though this necessitated travelling south of the border.

Many of the southern Indians, and especially those in Treaty Seven, did not wish to settle on reserves until they were assured that they would receive adequate assistance from the government in undertaking farming operations.²⁸ The Indians in the Cypress Hills district, on the other hand, were as Dewdney noted, "very independent and won't think of settling until the buffalo are gone and they are convinced they won't come back".²⁹ The determination of the southern

Indians to continue hunting the buffalo proved quite advantageous to the federal government. As long as the buffalo remained the government would be relieved of the expense of feeding these Indians and assisting them in farming. In the meantime, government efforts and resources could be concentrated on developing existing reserves.³⁰

Dewdney had very early recognized the expediency of encouraging the southern Indians to remain with the buffalo. In the fall of 1879, he had strongly advised the Blackfoot to follow the buffalo and had even given them some provisions for the southward journey.³¹ The next year the Blackfoot sent messengers from their camp in Montana to ask Dewdney whether or not they should return to receive their annuity payments. Once again the Indian Commissioner advised them to remain with the buffalo.³² Dewdney wrote to the Prime Minister that according to his calculations the absence of the southern Indians during this period had saved the government at least \$100,000.³³

While Dewdney obviously appreciated the manner in which the southern Indians had helped themselves during this period, other officials were not of the same mind. As the herds steadily decreased in the United States, Lawrence Vankoughnet suggested that the buffalo were in fact acting as a hindrance to government objectives as they served only "to unsettle the Indians and prevent them from cultivating the soil".³⁴ Although Commissioner Irvine of the North-West Mounted Police

and a number of cabinet ministers tended to agree with Dewdney that "the buffalo are our best allies",³⁵ the government was unable to decide between these two opposing views. Thus, an ineffectual and uneasy compromise existed between these two essentially irreconcilable viewpoints.

The ambivalence of government thinking resulted in an attempt at farming in the Cypress Hills district which was ultimately given up due to the unsuitability of the area for agriculture.³⁶ The supply farm established in 1880 near Fort MacLeod also encountered difficulties. Promising crops were destroyed by frost in both 1880 and 1881,³⁷ and a cattle raising venture on the Blackfoot reserve was discontinued in 1883 for lack of success.³⁸ Presented with the extreme difficulty of introducing agriculture in the south, the government continued encouraging the Indians to follow the buffalo. This course had the advantage of at least providing them with fresh meat at a cheap rate.³⁹ Accordingly Dewdney instructed C.E. Denny, who assumed duties as Indian Agent at Fort Walsh in October of 1881, that "as long as the Indians are with the buffalo there will be no occasion to interfere with them except so far as keeping yourself posted as to their movements".⁴⁰

The amount of "fresh meat" available in the United States unfortunately declined rapidly during these years. The pressure exerted upon the remaining buffalo herds in Montana by bands of both American and Canadian Indians was steadily increased as the herds decreased in size. In the

summer of 1880, Canadian Blackfoot south of the border were unable to kill a sufficient number of buffalo for the making of their new lodges.⁴¹ Bands of Canadian Indians reappeared North of the Line from time to time in a terribly weakened and starving condition. The desperate condition of the returning hunters created a potentially explosive situation in the south; as Commissioner Dewdney succinctly stated "As long as there is food in the country and they are starving they will have it"⁴²

Bowing to the dictates of necessity, the government in 1881 initiated a system of providing rations to supplement hunting returns in the south. Interestingly enough, the assistance extended to the Blackfoot Indians was considerably more generous than that granted Indians in the Cypress Hills district.⁴³ It would seem likely that the Blackfoot's reputation for "ferocity and lawlessness"⁴⁴ was partially responsible for more liberal provisions. Another reason for the lower rate of rations issued in the Cypress Hills lay in the government's awareness that at some point in the not too distant future, it would become necessary to move Indians from that district to reserves along the North Saskatchewan and Qu'Appelle Rivers.

Relations between the Canadian and American governments had been sorely tried during the late 1870's and early 1880's by Indian matters in the North-West. While the American government had been annoyed by the Canadian decision to grant

American Sioux, under the leadership of Sitting Bull, asylum following 1876, it was greatly upset by the well founded suspicion that the Canadian government had deliberately encouraged some of its Indians to hunt buffalo south of the border.⁴⁵ Assistant Commissioner Galt was informed by American army authorities in March of 1880 that it was "absolutely necessary that we should make our Indians go home as soon as possible".⁴⁶ While it was admitted that up to the present they had behaved themselves very well, the Americans feared that some indiscretion might be committed in which case they would have to forcibly remove the Canadian Indians from American soil.⁴⁷

While the Canadian Government reasoned that Indians of either country had since the time of the Boundary Commission been allowed to roam at will in pursuit of the buffalo,⁴⁸ it soon became apparent that, if the Canadian Government would take no action with regard to this matter, the Americans were fully prepared to send out troops and drive the Canadian Indians across the border. Finally, in the summer of 1882, the American Government acted unilaterally to end the movement of Canadian Indians in American territory by forcing them to return to their own hunting grounds, destroying their lodges and confiscating their goods.⁴⁹ Still as long as a sizable population of unsettled Indians remained in the Cypress Hills it was certain that there would be occasional forays by these Indians into the United States to hunt buffalo and to steal

horses. Canadian fears of further altercations with the American Government made it imperative that the Cypress Hills Indians be moved to the north and to the northeast.

Unfortunately for the Indians, the Canadian Government was prepared to delay this move as long as possible, and thus made no consistent effort to have them settle on reserves in the north until 1882.⁵⁰ Although both the Commissioners of the North-West Mounted Police and the acting Indian Agent at Fort Walsh had in 1881 strongly urged the abandonment of that post and the termination of rationing there⁵¹ - an action which would have forced the Indians to settle in the north - the government refused to act with such finality. In fact the Department adopted a policy of issuing the Indians rations just sufficient to prevent starvation and to avoid an outbreak.⁵² The result of this decision was that the Indians remained in the Cypress Hills and continued to enter the United States in search of the rapidly vanishing buffalo, an occurrence which inevitably produced friction with the American military.⁵³ Although there is some indication that the Canadian government was under pressure from the C.P.R. not to abandon Fort Walsh,⁵⁴ it would appear that the major reason for the uncomfortable delay was the government's willingness to put off the date at which it would have to assume the heavy financial responsibility of settling and feeding these Indians.⁵⁵ Perhaps the considerable difficulties encountered in moving the Cypress Hills

Indians in 1882 and 1883 might have been alleviated had the government been more concerned with the Indians' welfare than with maintaining economy.⁵⁶

Even as the Cypress Hills Indians were being moved to reserves in the northern and eastern sections of the Territories, the government was aware that the farming program was not proceeding according to plan. In spite of impressive early efforts in Treaties Four and Six, the Indians by 1883 were far from being self-sufficient. In Treaty Seven, agricultural development had only been half-heartedly attempted by the Department with the result that the ration expenditures there were more than twice as large as in the other two Treaties combined.⁵⁷ Although agricultural reports for the North-West superintendency indicated steady progress both in terms of the amount of new land being cultivated and in crop returns, the necessity of providing rations to the reserve Indians remained.⁵⁸

The failure of the reserve farming program - for it did fail to meet the goals set for it - was not due to a lack of effort on the part of the Indians. Agents and instructors from all sections of the Territories praised the Indians' attempts to make a success of farming. While the degree of enthusiasm necessarily varied from band to band, the following statement included in the report from the farming instructor in the File Hills Agency (Treaty Four) was not untypical:

Little Black Bear and his men kept the oxen steadily at work and three families who came last fall have broken up enough land with

their hoes for gardens and potatoes. The Chief set his men a good example by staying close to his reserve though not able to work himself. It is encouragement to the men to see the Chief around.⁵⁹

Considering that prairie agriculture was then in its infancy and that the development of suitable crops, farming techniques and agricultural equipment for the northern climate still lay ahead, the progress made was not inconsiderable.⁶⁰

It has been suggested that the "failure" of the Conservatives' agricultural policy was due to the "restlessness ... inherent in the Indian disposition"⁶¹ and to the Indians' "dislike of uncongenial work"⁶²; this interpretation is woefully superficial. The reserve farming program "failed" in the North-West not only because it was unrealistic in what it expected to achieve within two or three years, but for lack of real commitment to its objectives within government administration itself.

The reserve farming program was undermined by the government's determination to place economy above all other considerations. As a result the administration of the program was from the beginning plagued by inconsistency. The government was unable to resist encouraging reserve Indians to hunt and fish whenever this reduced ration expenditures. Though Deputy-Superintendent-General Vankoughnet in the spring of 1881 recommended that Indians in the Battleford district trap muskrats in the spring and fall, and thus save the Department the expense of provisioning them,⁶³ he was

most upset when in the summer of that year Indians under the leadership of Poundmaker neglected to seed crops and headed south to hunt buffalo.⁶⁴ While it was perfectly clear to Vankoughnet that farming activities should always take precedence over hunting, he failed to realize that the Indians' experience as hunters did not lead them to the same conclusion. Moreover, as early as 1881 Macdonald enquired of Indian Commissioner Dewdney whether it was not possible that the Indians might be employed in cutting railroad ties or even labouring on C.P.R. construction gangs.⁶⁵ The Superintendent-General's readiness to employ Indians as wage labourers did not bode well for the ultimate success of the farming program.

The drive for economy in Indian administration retarded agricultural development in other ways as well. In interviews with the Governor-General during his tour of the North-West Territories in the summer of 1881, Indians in the Battleford, Fort Pitt and Peace Hills districts requested that the Department construct a grist mill in that region so that they might turn their grain into flour.⁶⁶ The Department, however, spent three years considering the cheapest method of constructing such a grist mill, which would in any case cost only a few thousand dollars to construct. In the meantime, the Indians in the western portion of Treaty Six were left over a hundred miles away from the nearest grist mill.

A further illustration of the government's engagement in

false economies appeared in a memorandum from Commissioner Dewdney to Indian agents in the North-West Territories concerning the reduction of agent's travelling expenses.⁶⁷ The memorandum dated 13 November 1883 read as follows:

Sir,

The expenditure incurred every month for travelling allowances by the agents has lately grown to such large proportions that it is found necessary to notify each agent that their visits to the reserves must be less frequent than heretofore.

Numbers of the reserves throughout the Territories are now in such a shape that they do not require as heretofore the constant supervision of the agent; and in the future no allowance will be paid for travelling when the time exceeds two weeks in the month unless under exceptional circumstances. This circular is to take effect after December, next.⁶⁸

There was sharp reaction to this regulation, for as one agent noted "If I see them so seldom they will become disheartened and neglect their work at the proper seasons."⁶⁹ The regulation, nevertheless, was implemented and a saving of six dollars and twenty-five cents per day for each agent was realized by the Department.⁷⁰

The desire to maintain economy, which became almost compulsive within the Department, offered considerable opportunity for less scrupulous agents to engage in corrupt practices. While great attention was paid to lowering overall expenses, the manner in which this money was spent on the reserves was not always closely supervised. As was demonstrated in the case of C.E. Denny, Indian Agent for Treaty Seven, rigid adherence to the policy of economy, at

least in one's reports, paid off handsomely. It was discovered by Inspector Wadsworth in August 1882 that not only were farm labourers, hired by the Department, working on Denny's own ranch, but that Denny had also advised the Department to purchase a team harness and wagon for the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars, which Wadsworth noted was worth at the very most eighty dollars.⁷¹ Wadsworth also reported that Denny had had a half interest in one of the horses purchased. Though Denny was retained in the Department's employ for undisclosed reasons his early actions constituted mere petty fraud compared to disclosures made of his administration of Treaty Seven, the following year. A doctor hired by the Department to attend to Indians in Treaty Seven reported to Vankoughnet in the fall of 1883 his suspicions that the fatal sickness that prevailed among those Indians during the past year had resulted from the quality of flour supplied by contractors.⁷² An examination of the flour delivered by I.G. Baker and Company at the Blackfoot Crossing and at the Sarcee reserve revealed the following results:

1. Sample of Flour from the Blackfoot Crossing:

This sample marked Number One is not sound and should not pass inspection for grading. Either the wheat has been full of weeds or the cleanings of the wheat have been ground into the flour as there is a strong smell and taste of tares etc. in it. We think there is frozen wheat in it also but would not say so positively. We do not consider this flour wholesome and cannot put a price on it.

2. Sample of Indian flour from the Sarcee reserve branded "Ogilvy's Superfine":

This sample marked Number Two is the lowest

grade of flour and is known by the trade name as "Red Daub". Its value (in Ottawa) is about one dollar and twenty-five per hundred pounds compared with Superfine at two dollars and twenty-five or Strong Bakers at two seventy-five to three dollars per hundred pounds. It is just one grade above mill feed.⁷³

The flour which had been contracted by the Department was to be equal in quality to Number One Superfine, and cost the government over forty-one thousand dollars.⁷⁴ The flour delivered was worth a fraction of this sum and resulted in the death of thirty-five to forty persons on different reserves in Treaty Seven.⁷⁵ Denny's connivance with contractors in receiving this flour forced his resignation from the service. Ironically he had been considered one of the best agents in the North-West because he kept total expenditures in the area of his jurisdiction low. He had greatly impressed both Dewdney and Vankoughnet by suggesting that it was not so much provisions and annuities that would help the Indians to adapt to civilization but rather kindness from their agents and instructors.⁷⁶

The Conservative government's fixation with economy in Indian administration was not, however, unrepresentative of contemporary Canadian political thinking on that subject. Indeed, compared to the Liberal Opposition which maintained that the government was responsible only to the extent of meeting the narrow terms of the treaties, the Conservative program seemed exceedingly generous and perhaps a little extravagant. Though Macdonald had accepted the necessity

of assisting the Indians of the North-West Territories in 1879 and the following years, and had seen this as an essential aspect of the overall settlement of the region, he was too perceptive a politician to ignore criticism of the great expense involved in Indian administration.

During the first few years Macdonald was able to counter Liberal attacks on the large appropriation for the Indians of Treaties Four, Six and Seven by appealing to a sense of humanitarianism among Members of Parliament.⁷⁷ Moreover, the Prime Minister regularly assured the House that the government was doing its best to keep expenditures low:

When the Indians are starving they have been helped, but they have been reduced to one half and one quarter rations. But when they fall into a state of destitution we cannot allow them to die for want of food ... I have reason to believe that the Agents as a whole, and I am sure it is the case of the Commissioner, are doing all they can by refusing food until the Indians are on the verge of starvation to reduce the expenses.⁷⁸

As the years passed and the Indians still remained far from self-sufficiency, Macdonald grew increasingly sensitive to Liberal criticisms.

One of the Liberal's major targets since 1879 had been the supply farms established in Treaty Seven. These farms, which were worked by white farm labourers, had been expected to produce a large part of the food necessary for rationing the Indians in that Treaty. The supply farms were not, however, a success as they failed to even pay for themselves let alone produce a surplus. With grim regularity the

Liberals brought this fact to the attention of the House during supply debates.⁷⁹ By 1883 the government decided that the supply farms were too great a political liability and discontinued them.⁸⁰ Oddly enough the conclusion that if white farmers could not succeed then Indian farmers could hardly be expected to do more did not occur to either the Government or the Opposition. The announcements of the closures was justified by a statement that the Indians there had had sufficient opportunity to see how a farm should be conducted.⁸¹

In 1882 and 1883 Liberal criticism of Indian expenditures increased,⁸² as the country slid into a sudden and drastic recession.⁸³ From the time that government revenues began to dip in the last quarter of 1882 the reserve agricultural program was doomed. The expenditure for Indian affairs in the North-West, which in 1882 had reached a peak of \$1,106,961 was in 1883 reduced to \$1,099,796 and to \$1,025,675 in 1884.⁸⁴ As a result of these cutbacks, provisions for destitute Indians in the North-West Territories were reduced by almost \$80,000 per year between 1882 and 1885.⁸⁵ There was a surprising lack of hesitation within the upper echelons of the government in making this reduction so crucial to the state of affairs in the North-West. On September 17th 1883, the Prime Minister wrote to Commissioner Dewdney that he wanted expenses in the North-West to be kept down as much as possible, "but still life and property must be protected".⁸⁶ Dutifully Dewdney made the required reductions

in his estimates of expenditures for the following year. On November 17th, Macdonald replied to Dewdney that

[I] am very glad to find that you can begin a reduction of Indian expenses. Parlt. is summoned for the 17 January⁸⁷ and we hope to make it a very short session.

Dewdney's willingness to reduce expenditures at Macdonald's request, marked a complete reversal from the stand he had taken two years earlier, when he had warned that although expenditures would be high the final results of the reserve farming program would justify them.⁸⁸ Perhaps Dewdney believed that the Indians of the North-West had achieved self-sufficiency. If he did he was dead wrong, for that year a general crop failure occurred in the North-West.⁸⁹

CHAPTER FOUR

HER MAJESTY'S LOYAL SUBJECTS

The response of Indians in the North-West Territories to the reserve agricultural program reflected the diversity of native cultures in that area. Though faced with the common problem of adapting to the disappearance of the buffalo - which in effect meant a more or less complete change in life style - there was no single or general course followed by the Indians in making this transition. The dealings of individual bands and leaders with the government in its reserve program were based on widely varying interpretations of what would be best for their people both in the present and in the future.

Crowfoot, the head of the Blackfoot Confederacy, pursued a policy of co-operating with the government right from the signing of the treaties. During the negotiation of Treaty Seven in October 1877, Crowfoot expressed his gratitude for the treatment extended his people by the North-West Mounted Police, and asked that the government continue to treat them with kindness.

While I speak be kind and patient. I have to speak for my people, who are numerous, and who rely upon me to follow that course which in the future will tend to their good. The plains are large and wide. We are the people of the plains, it is our home, and the buffalo has been our food always. I hope you will look upon the Blackfeet, Bloods and Sarcees as

your children now, and that you will be indulgent and charitable to them. They all expect me to speak now for them, and I trust the Great Spirit will put into their breasts to be a good people - into the minds of the men, women and children, and their future generations. The advice given me and my people has proved to be very good. If the Police had not come to the country, where would we all be now? Bad men and whiskey were killing us so fast that very few, indeed, of us would have been left to-day. The Police have protected us as the feathers of the bird protect it from the frosts of winter. I wish them all good, and trust that our hearts will increase in goodness from this time forward. I am satisfied. I will sign the treaty.

Crowfoot's dealings with the government were tempered with a deep feeling of responsibility for the future of his people and an ability to communicate with white officials. In his first meeting with Dewdney in July of 1879, Crowfoot greatly impressed the newly appointed Indian Commissioner, who noted that Crowfoot had spoken "very well, and reasonably".² After hearing Dewdney's explanation of the government's plans to assist the Indians in undertaking farming operations, Crowfoot enthusiastically replied, "I will farm; this is the first time I have said it; I mean it, I want to farm."³ At the same time Crowfoot made it clear to Dewdney that the Blackfoot expected immediate assistance from the government:

If you will drive away the Sioux and make a hole so the buffalo can come in we will not trouble you for food. If you don't do that you must feed us.⁴

He went on to point out that because of his people's starving condition he was encountering a great deal of

difficulty in keeping the young men from going to Fort MacLeod, where he feared they would commit depredations and kill the ranchers' cattle. Though some of the young men had criticized him for making the Treaty, Crowfoot diplomatically suggested that now that Dewdney was in the West the government would vindicate the stand he had taken with his people.

The Blackfoot spent the next two years hunting buffalo in the United States; when they did settle on reserves in 1881 Crowfoot once again stated his readiness to undertake farming operations provided the Department granted his people sufficient assistance. In a conference with the Governor-General in September 1881, Crowfoot opened his comments by observing that since he had signed the Treaty he had become poorer and poorer, and was today starving:

I have a good heart. Everyone round here loves me. I never go anywhere to trouble people, I remain quiet. Try and help me I cannot make a living now. I went last year the other side of the Line [sic], and saw no buffalo. Help me to keep my young men alive. And this petition is as strong as the ground on which I stand. I cannot get my living now. Hear my prayer.⁵

Crowfoot requested more liberal rations, explaining that the people could not live on what they were presently being granted.⁶ In addition, he asked that his people be given clothing and more agricultural implements. The Governor-General thanked Crowfoot for having spoken freely to him, adding that he had "always heard of him as a good chief ... even from the time of the treaties".⁷

While Crowfoot sought better treatment for his people through patient co-operation with the government, other Indian leaders pursued a more militant course of action. For instance the Cree chief, Poundmaker, who was one of the most influential leaders in the North-West during the 1880's, was known in government circles as "a very troublesome Indian",⁸ due to his spirited opposition to the Department's economical administration of the reserve farming program.

Although Poundmaker had been among the first to settle on a reserve in 1879, he was conversant with the difficulties involved in becoming a farmer. As early as 1876, during the negotiation of Treaty Six, he had cautiously pressed the government commissioners for a more detailed statement of what assistance the Indians could expect in the future.

From what I can see and hear now, I cannot understand that I shall be able to clothe my children and feed them as long as the sun shines and the water runs. With regard to the different Chiefs who are to occupy the reserves, I expect they would receive sufficient for their support, this is why I speak. In the presence of God and the Queen's representative I say this, because I do not know how to build a house for myself, you see how naked I am, and if I tried to do it my naked body would suffer; again, I do not know how to cultivate the ground for myself ...⁹

In the two years after taking a reserve Poundmaker and his band made considerable progress in breaking land and constructing buildings, working "like Trojans", their farming instructor reported.¹⁰

The government's ration policy, balanced as it was

between keeping the Indians from starvation on the one hand and maintaining economy on the other, however, offered scant encouragement for their efforts. Discouraged with the treatment accorded his people, Poundmaker in the spring of 1881 sent out messengers to different parts of the North-West inviting the chiefs to gather in Battleford that summer so they might press the government for better terms.¹¹ The bands settled in the Battleford district refused to seed crops that year and the agent was told that unless he issued rations they would take the cattle out on the plains and kill them for food.¹²

Government reaction to the proposed conference and threats was predictably indecisive. Poundmaker was roundly denounced as a trouble maker who would have to be shown that he could not do "exactly as he may please",¹³ but in the end the Department was left hoping that the Governor-General's tour of the North-West Territories that summer would quiet the Indians. As a precaution Dewdney recommended that a large force of North-West Mounted Police be sent to Battleford.¹⁴ In June, Poundmaker and part of his band left their reserve and headed south to meet with the Indians in the Cypress Hills, thus relieving the government of the responsibility of acting.¹⁵

When the Indians were granted an opportunity to discuss their grievances with the Governor-General later that summer Poundmaker forthrightly outlined the difficulties and hardships they were encountering on the reserves.

Ever since the white man made the Treaty the white man always talks of how they are to make their living. I am striving hard to work on my farm that my children may benefit but, I am not accustomed to work on a farm and am short of implements. I mean the same thing used by the white man. A reaper, mower, that is what we want. We don't know the use of the flail and when good crops come we want a thresher. I ask for this that when my children come of age they may have learned the use of them ... I ask help of the government to assist them all they can. We want animals also. I hope they will be given now so as to have enough for the spring ... We cannot work in the winter. It is cold and we are naked. There is always much sickness on my reserve and I would like a Doctor there.¹⁶

In the fall of 1881 Poundmaker returned to his reserve and once more energetically engaged himself in farming.¹⁷

Taking this as a sign of submission, the government largely ignored Poundmaker's requests with the result that the Indians' grievances remained unsettled. In the summer of 1883 Poundmaker again left his reserve to speak with other Indian leaders.¹⁸ Assistant Indian Commissioner Reed explained Poundmaker's action as part of an effort to make himself "a great man" in the eyes of other Indians and suggested that he be deposed as chief if he did not set a better example for his band.¹⁹ The government had no better understanding of the reasons for Poundmaker's discontent with reserve life than it had of the Plains Indians' political structure. An Indian leader could not be "deposed" by administrative order, for his leadership was based on the consent of his people, not on the twenty-five dollars

the Department paid each year to recognize chiefs. The discontent expressed by Poundmaker was not that of a mere self-seeker but the voice of his people.

Whereas Crowfoot and Poundmaker worked to achieve better terms for their people from within the treaty structure, Big Bear, the Cree chief whom Dewdney considered the most influential Indian on the Plains²⁰ chose to remain outside the treaty for several years, believing he would in the end accomplish more in this way. Big Bear did not intend to place his mark on the treaty when he travelled to Fort Pitt in September 1876 to meet the government commissioners.²¹ He was familiar with terms of Treaty Four accepted by the Indians at Qu'Appelle two summers previously and refused to submit himself to government domination without a guarantee of better arrangements than were being offered.²²

Big Bear - What we want is that we should hear what will make our hearts glad and all good peoples' hearts glad. There were plenty of things left undone and it does not look well to leave them so.

Governor - I do not know what has been left undone.

Big Bear said he would like to see his people before he acted. "I have told you what I wish that there be no hanging."

Governor - What you ask will not be granted. Why are you so anxious about bad men? The Queen's law punishes murder with death and your request cannot be granted.

Big Bear - Then these chiefs will help us to protect the buffalo that there will be enough for all.²³

The burden of Big Bear's argument was that if the government was to be given the power of life or death over the Indians then it should also be prepared to preserve the buffalo and to provide the assistance that his people would require in future years. Lieutenant-Governor Morris replied to Big Bear that the government had no intention of interfering with the Indians' daily life. It would only help them to make a living on the reserves by giving them means of growing their own food. Nevertheless,

The only occasion when help would be given would be if Providence would send a great famine or pestilence upon the whole Indian people included in the treaty. We only looked at something unforeseen, and not at hard winters or the hardships of single bands ...

Morris' reply came nowhere near satisfying the questions troubling Big Bear's mind.

During the next six years Big Bear remained a non-treaty Indian, maintaining his struggle for more favourable government treatment. His efforts were not in vain, for as long as he remained on the Plains, demanding more liberal terms from the government officials who regularly sought his adhesion to Treaty Six, he demonstrated to those Indians already settled on reserves that they were not obligated to meekly surrender their future to the Department of Indian Affairs.

Nor could the government afford to ignore Big Bear. Year after year the government persistently sought his adhesion, and with equal persistence Big Bear refused to sign

unless he was promised more adequate assistance. Meeting with Lieutenant-Governor Laird at Sounding Lake in August 1878, Big Bear, who acted as a spokesman for both treaty and non-treaty Indians, reiterated that, the Treaty did not furnish enough for the people to live upon.²⁵ In the summer of 1879, Big Bear held conferences in the southern part of the territories with both Crowfoot and the Sioux chief, Sitting Bull. Although a spectacular rumour that Big Bear and Sitting Bull were planning to fight the North-West Mounted Police in the Cypress Hills²⁶ was vigorously denied by the officer in charge at Fort Walsh,²⁷ Big Bear was henceforth known in the Department as not only a troublesome but, perhaps, even a dangerous Indian.

Between 1879 and 1882, Big Bear and his band travelled between the Cypress Hills and the Judith Basin in pursuit of the buffalo. But as the herds dwindled and the Cypress Hills Indians faced starvation various leaders such as Piapot, Little Pine and Lucky Man agreed to settle on reserves. Finally in December of 1882 Big Bear signed the treaty and agreed to go north in the spring.²⁸ It was no longer possible to remain in the south, and at any rate, Big Bear's long standing opposition to the reserve agricultural program, as it was administered by the Department, made it apparent to even the most optimistic government officers that his "troublesome" nature had not been magically transformed.

Although Big Bear and his band moved north in the summer of 1883 and began receiving rations, this did not mark the end of his struggle with the government. Big Bear did not settle on a reserve until 1884. In the meantime he moved from district to district speaking with different chiefs about their relations with the government, and discussing how the government could be forced into offering more assistance. The Department, took great care in handling the newly arrived chief, and even broke the "no work, no food" rule in the case of his band.²⁹ Big Bear continued to have the same unsettling effect upon government administration of the reserves as he had had when in the south.

In December 1883, the Department learned that Big Bear and his cohorts had some undisclosed project in mind, "and it would not be a source of surprise to find that they are making efforts to procure a large gathering from east and west at Battleford or adjacent thereto in the spring in order to test their powers with the authorities once more".³⁰ Assistant Indian Commissioner Reed advised that the force of Police in the Saskatchewan district be increased early in the spring prior to any movement on the part of the Indians, and that the Department officials be instructed to be among these Indians continually "in order to endeavour to frustrate any attempt that might from time to time arise of this nature".³¹

The council which Big Bear was organizing for the summer of 1884 took on a new significance as the reduction of government expenditures for the North-West began to take effect.

The integration of the southern Indians into the reserve agricultural program during the summer of 1883 logically should have resulted in a proportionally larger Indian appropriation. Instead, a general reduction in costs was initiated and rations were cut back.

The decision to reduce Indian expenditures in the North-West resulted from the dictates of a national depression and the government's longstanding practice of placing economy above all other considerations in dealing with the Indians. Although Lawrence Vankoughnet toured reserves in the North-West in the fall of 1883, and reported to the Prime Minister that more rigid control of spending was required,³² he did so knowing that a general reduction of costs had already been ordered. The government chose retrenchment in 1883, but the choice was not inconsistent with its administration of Indian affairs.

Reaction in the North-West to the reduced rations issues came swiftly and violently. In February, the farm instructor at Fort Pitt was threatened at knife point when he refused to grant rations to an Indian who had just returned from an unsuccessful hunting expedition.³³ In the same month Indians in the Crooked Lake district of Treaty Four seized the government storehouse; their leader, Yellow Calf, reportedly explained that "When they stole the provisions their women and children were starving ... and that they were well armed and might just as well die as be starved by the

Government."³⁴ A Police patrol sent to the reserve encountered a band of Indians grimly determined to have the food which they considered to be properly their own, and bloodshed was only narrowly averted.³⁵

The Crooked Lakes incident and the threat of further Indian agitation alarmed Department officials both in Ottawa and in the North-West. Hayter Reed, the Assistant Indian Commissioner, informed the Prime Minister that the Indians would probably congregate in large numbers near Indian Head, Broadview and Battleford that summer.³⁶ There would be a strong inclination, predicted Reed, for the Indians to kill their cattle if the "no work, no food" rule was imposed. Reed therefore thought it advisable that every effort be taken to prevent these gatherings. As a means to this end, he recommended that some of the ringleaders be arrested:

... the law might have to be strained a little to meet a particular case, but in the interests of the country at large as well as the Indians themselves such a course I think would be advisable.

A magistrate before whom these Indians might appear, if at all conversant with Indian character could readily discern his proper course.³⁷

Reed's evaluation of the urgency of Indian matters in the Battleford district was not, however, shared by Commissioner Dewdney, who suggested that these Indians, "only wanted a little talking to".³⁸ Dewdney tended to dismiss rumours that the proposed council would signal the beginning of trouble, countering that the Indians of the Battleford and Carlton districts were working well and were on the whole

more content than ever before.³⁹ On the basis of these conflicting and rather confusing reports from the North-West, it was decided in Ottawa to adopt a dual policy of issuing somewhat more liberal rations to those Indians working on the reserves, while at the same time strengthening the Mounted Police.⁴⁰

The long awaited Indian Council, which was held in June 1884 on Poundmaker's reserve, amply demonstrated the inadequacy of this policy as a means for keeping the Indians working on the reserves, let alone ~~let alone~~ satisfying their demands. In the course of the joint Sun Dance - council the matter of ration policy emerged accidentally and almost ended in pitched battle between the North-West Mounted Police and the assembled Indians. An incident sparked by the assault of a farming instructor who refused to grant provisions to a member of Lucky Man's band - according to the Department's rule - resulted in a tense confrontation between the Indians and a party of Police and volunteers sent out from Battleford to arrest the offender. Except for the efforts of Big Bear and several other chiefs to avoid trouble the show-down would almost certainly have sparked the massacre of the Police party.⁴¹ The government unfortunately interpreted the affair not as an outright rejection of its policy but rather as a warning that some modifications were needed. The practice of feeding Indians only in return for work performed, Vankoughnet informed Dewdney, had "worked most satisfactorily" and

therefore there was no reason for it being changed.⁴² What the government did resolve to change was its method of dealing with such incidents. It would not again be caught in the position of having to face a large body of discontented Indians with an inadequate force of police.⁴³

Because of the ration incident and the hot-headed reaction of the young man, the Battleford Council failed to produce a program for planned political agitation. Nevertheless, Big Bear persevered in his efforts to unite the Indians of the North-West in opposition to the government's administration of the reserve agricultural program. A good deal was accomplished by the Indians in this direction in July of 1884 when Big Bear and chiefs in the Carlton district met with the Metis leader, Louis Riel.

The Duck Lake Council marked a crucial stage in the development of a unified Indian political movement in the North-West. During the course of the Council Big Bear outlined the reason for their unrest in a simple but passionate explanation: the Indians had surrendered their lands and settled on reserves in response to the government's promise that they would achieve a better way of life through farming; the government had not kept its promise and therefore a new and more generous settlement would have to be negotiated.⁴⁴ It was also agreed that a council including bands from every section of the North-West would meet the following summer to demand better terms from the government.⁴⁵

The Duck Lake Council exposed the difficulty of integrating the Indian and Metis political movements. Traditional antipathy between the two peoples and differing political aims made it unlikely that they would co-operate effectively in dealing with the government. The Metis' claims against the federal government revolved around the question of land rights, for they resented being treated as homesteaders. To the Indians these grievances seemed unimportant compared to their own struggle to obtain enough to eat. The Council therefore ended without anything more than general statements of sympathy being exchanged between the Indians and Riel.⁴⁶

Both the Department of Indian Affairs and the North-West Mounted Police anxiously awaited reports of the proceedings at Duck Lake.⁴⁷ While the Agent at Battleford reported that in fourteen years of experience in Indian Affairs he had never before seen the Indians so intent upon a course,⁴⁸ Commissioner Dewdney played down the significance of the Council. With complete disdain for the political movement which Big Bear was nurturing Dewdney predicted in a letter to the Prime Minister that an attempt might be made the next summer to re-negotiate the treaties - "If the Half-Breeds don't get what they want".⁴⁹ He went so far as to suggest that if work was found for the Metis in railway construction, grievances in the North-West would disappear.⁵⁰

If Dewdney's reaction to Big Bear's activities was characterized by disdain, his opinion of Crowfoot's efforts during the summer of 1884 barely fell short of utter contempt.

Crowfoot and several other chiefs from Treaty Seven travelled to Regina in July in order to present the Commissioner with various requests. In particular they asked that the flour ration not be further reduced.⁵¹ Although Dewdney confidentially noted that these Indians had "no substantial grievances"⁵² he elected to appease Crowfoot through a number of inexpensive but impressive measures. Crowfoot visited the North-West Territorial Council in session and was awarded fifty dollars by the Council "as a mark of the esteem in which his nation is held".⁵³ The Blackfoot chiefs were also taken to Winnipeg on the newly constructed railway in an effort to demonstrate to them "the supremacy of the white man and the utter impossibility of contending against his power".⁵⁴ The ultimate solution proposed by Dewdney to meet ration grievances in Treaty Seven was that greater allowances of tea and tobacco be issued to working Indians. In any case, Dewdney believed the cost of the tea could be made up by corresponding reduction from some other ration and still meet with approval of the Indians".⁵⁵

The rations issued in Treaty Seven, nonetheless continued to be entirely inadequate, as less than five ounces of flour per day was provided each Indian.⁵⁶ When Crowfoot complained about the flour ration to Inspector Wadsworth his efforts were attributed to a desire "to show off before his Indians and to show that his trip east had not destroyed his powers of speaking out".⁵⁷ Moreover, as nobody else had complained about

the rations it was assumed that there was no real problem.

An unusual calm fell over Indian administration in the North-West following the turbulent summer of 1884. Although there had been a total crop failure in the North-West that year, the autumn annuity payments were carried off without difficulty. It appeared that Dewdney's analysis had been correct, that there was nothing to fear from the Indians as long as the half-breeds were quiet. Nevertheless, the Department received numerous warnings during the winter of 1884-1885 that a settlement with the Indians and Metis people should be sought without delay.

The Indian Agent at Carlton wrote that while it was not for him to question the government's policy of economy, it should be recognized that a crucial period lay ahead in which Indian discontent would predominate.⁵⁸ In a letter to Dewdney, a settler in the Prince Albert district strongly urged that the Metis' claims be settled quickly as uncertainty and disquietude was deterring homesteaders from entering the district.⁵⁹ Superintendent Crozier of the Mounted Police reported to his commissioner that a settlement should be made without delay, "for as long as these questions concerning the Half-Breeds are left unsettled so long will there be uneasiness, not only among themselves but the Indians as well".⁶⁰

These warnings and reports that the Blackfoot were being invited to participate in the Indian Council planned for the summer of 1885⁶¹ did not move the government to

arrange a settlement or even enter into negotiations with the Indians and Metis. Macdonald did not believe that the situation was likely to clear up easily, for, as he stated, "no amount of concession will prevent starving people from grumbling and agitating".⁶² Instead, the Prime Minister made up his mind to request that parliament increase the size of the North-West Mounted Police Force.⁶³

In February 1885, the Indian Commissioner reported to Macdonald that Indian matters had been generally quiet. Although he had heard "rumours" about an Indian gathering to be held at Duck Lake Dewdney put little faith in these reports for the Indians lacked both the ponies and the provisions to undertake such a journey.⁶⁴ While a few might go there he anticipated no trouble. Towards the end of this letter Dewdney noted that "Last year was a very disheartening one for the Indians and it will be necessary (in the spring) ... to encourage them to fresh exertions."⁶⁵

Neither Dewdney's hope for "fresh exertions" among the Indians nor Big Bear's long awaited Indian Council for the renegotiation of the treaties were realized in 1885. On March 26th a patrol of policemen and armed volunteers from Prince Albert was engaged in battle by Metis riflemen near Duck Lake and ten men from the government side were killed. One week later warriors belonging to Big Bear's band massacred Agent Quinn and eight other white men at Frog Lake. "Even as the old chief rushed forward shouting at his young men to stop their bloody work he must have realized that his

ten year struggle to prevent the complete subjugation of his people had been in vain."⁶⁶

The most remarkable aspect of Indian participation in the North-West Uprising of 1885 was that it was so limited. Apart from the Frog Lake Massacre and the battle fought between government forces and Poundmaker's band at Cut Knife Hill, Indian depredations were restricted to reserves in the Battleford district where two farming instructors were murdered. In both the Battleford and Carlton districts a number of bands left their reserves, and killed their cattle for food. Yet, in view of the unrest that had prevailed among the Indians of the North-West the previous summer, the government should have considered itself fortunate indeed that there was no general Indian uprising.

Government reaction to Indian involvement in the rising was swift and vindictive. Eight Indians convicted of murder were hanged at Fort Battleford, and Big Bear and Poundmaker were sentenced to prison terms at Stoney Mountain Penitentiary in Manitoba.⁶⁷ Moreover during the summer and fall of 1885 the Department considered a number of proposals for the future management of Indian affairs in the North-West Territories. A memorandum submitted to Dewdney by Assistant Indian Commissioner Reed was especially illustrative of the repressive stance assumed by the Department.⁶⁸ While Reed believed that all Indians who had not been disloyal or troublesome during the rising should be treated as they had been previously, he had little sympathy for "rebellious Indians":

... Indian rebels whom it is found possible to convict of particular crimes such as instigating and inciting arson, larceny, murder etc., [should] be dealt with in as severe a manner as the law will allow, and ... no offences of their most prominent men [should] be overlooked.⁶⁹

In addition Reed urged that agents should be particularly strict in seeing that each and every Indian worked for "every pound of provision given to him",⁷⁰ "All future grants should be regarded as concessions of favour not of right, and the rebel Indians [should] be made to understand that they have forfeited every claim as a 'matter of right'."⁷¹

While Dewdney and Vankoughnet generally agreed with the tenor of Reed's memorandum, both recognized the danger involved in pressing such a line too far at that time.⁷² In an effort to calm the Indians, a policy of rewarding 'loyal Indians' was adopted, and blankets, cattle and ponies, which had been confiscated from rebel Indians, were distributed among those who had distinguished themselves during the rising by inaction.⁷³ But the most telling sign of the government's willingness to guard against further trouble was the increase of the Indian appropriation for the North-West. In 1886 the appropriation returned to the level it had been at in 1882.⁷⁴ Although expenditures in Treaties Four, Six and Seven fell off sharply in the late 1880's, it must be noted that this was largely a result of a sizeable drop in population. In 1889, there were 14,456 Indians on reserves in the three treaties.⁷⁵ Even more alarming was the ratio of 41.71 births per thousand

as compared to a death rate of 46.38.⁷⁶ Given a declining native population, it was relatively easy to maintain economy in Indian administration. In the end, the government's bumbling administration which blended ignorance with a willingness to exercise repression, proved adequate to handle the Indian problem.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The disappearance of the buffalo from the North-West Territories in 1878-1879 had forced the Canadian government to feed the Indians of Treaties Four, Six and Seven. While the government had been morally obligated to such a course by the terms of the treaties, its plans for the development of the North-West made it essential that amicable relations be maintained with the native population. There was, nevertheless, some hesitation among both Conservative and Liberal politicians in undertaking this responsibility, for the expense involved in feeding the Indians was large. The government, therefore, initiated the reserve agricultural program by which it was hoped that the Indians would in a few years be converted into self-sufficient farmers.

Although considerable progress was achieved in this direction during the early 1880's the reserve agricultural policy did not meet this objective. Lack of knowledge about the kinds of crops and agricultural practices best suited to the prairie climate rendered farming difficult, even for the Department's white farming instructors. But the greatest obstacle in the way of the reserve agricultural program was the government's willingness to place considerations of economy

above all else. As a result the administration of the farming program in the North-West was almost from the beginning plagued with inconsistencies and the pursuit of what proved to be false economies did little to encourage the Indians. The depression which began in 1882 spelled the final failure of the program, for in the following year massive reductions were made in Indian expenditures for the North-West. Indians who were fed so little that they remained in a constant state of hunger could not become self-sufficient farmers.

Government retrenchment in 1883 merely added fuel to the smouldering Indian discontent with the treatment they were receiving from the Department of Indian Affairs. Though different chiefs used different tactics in seeking better terms for their people, the organization of Indian councils advocated by Big Bear was potentially the most effective. Had a conference of chiefs from all sections of the North-West been held in 1885, it seems likely that the government would have been forced to make concessions to such a unified Indian political movement. The government, however, was not prepared to negotiate with the Indians, and replied by strengthening the Police. The Indians were fully aware of their helplessness in the face of such determined indifference; it was no mistake that only a few of the young hot-heads rose in the spring of 1885.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter One

1. By the terms of its Charter, the Hudson's Bay Company had been responsible for the administration of law and government in Rupert's Land and the North-West territory, subject to supervision by the Crown. With the transfer of the North-West, the Canadian government assumed responsibility for these functions.
2. Between 1874 and 1880 the Minister of the Interior was responsible for the administration of Indian Affairs.
3. RG 10,8904 Black, Mills to Laird, 22 May 1878. See also RG 10,3229 Black, Morris to Min. of Int., 4 Apr. 1874.
4. W.F. Butler to Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, 10 Mar. 1871. (Found in the Appendix to Butler's The Great Lone Land. Toronto: Musson Book Co., 1924, pp.353-386.)
5. RG 10,4518 Black, Lacombe to Morris, 13 Feb. 1875.
6. Irene M. Spry, "The Transition from a Nomadic to a Settled Economy in Western Canada, 1856-96". Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Vol.VI, Series IV, June 1968, p.190.
7. Butler, op. cit., p.385.
8. RG 10,2579 Black, census of N.W.T. prepared by the Hudson's Bay Company, 1 Jan. 1872 (dated 3 Apr. 1873).
9. RG 10,4518 Black, Lacombe to Morris, 13 Feb. 1875.
10. Indian Department annuity records and N.W.M.P. reports provided more accurate population statistics.
11. CSP, 1882, No.6., Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, pp.58-59. The actual figures were as follows: 23,036 treaty Indians, 964 non-treaty Indians, and 2,050 Sioux Indians. While the Sioux did come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Indian Affairs, they were not included in the treaties. The Sioux were American Indians who had fled to Canada following the Minnesota Massacre of 1862 and the Battle of the Little

Big Horn in 1876. While they were allowed to remain in Canada, the Canadian government undertook no responsibility for their welfare, though some assistance was provided to help them undertake farming.

It should, however, be noted that these figures included only the native population resident within the areas of Treaties Four, Six and Seven.

12. It was difficult to estimate the native population during the early years as many bands were continually roaming the plains in search of buffalo. Moreover, these early estimates generally reflected the specific interests and experiences of these persons and agencies in various parts of the North-West. Finally, it was widely believed that the small-pox epidemic of 1869-70 had greatly reduced the numbers of the plains Indians. Lieutenant Butler's Report indicated that there had been considerably fewer deaths than had been rumoured. See RG 10,3278 Black, Rev. G. McDougall to D. Smith, 8 Jan. 1874 on this point.
13. DHC, 18 Apr. 1878, p.1578, and, 23 Apr. 1878, p.2141.
14. Butler, op. cit., p.353.
15. Ibid, p.366.
16. DHC, 18 Apr. 1877, p.1582. Donald Smith outlined the Company's use of liquor in the fur trade in a heated debate with his Manitoba rival, J.C. Shultz. Since the 1830's the Company had expressed an eagerness to dispense with liquor for trade purposes, but had not been able to afford such a step as long as American competitors continued its use. (J.S. Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company As An Imperial Factor, 1821-1869. Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. California Press, 1957. p.54.
17. RG 10,3278 Black, McDougall to Smith, 8 Jan. 1874.
18. RG 10,3229 Black, Selwyn to Meredith, 21 Apr. 1874.
19. RG 10,3229 Black, Bell to Morris, 23 Mar. 1874.
20. Ibid.
21. RG 10,3229 Black, Selwyn to Meredith, 21 Apr. 1874.
22. Following the Civil War, Generals Sherman and Sheridan became supreme military commanders for the American West. Sheridan's gospel that 'the only good Indian is a dead Indian' was well known in the American plains. Sherman summed up his attitude towards the troublesome

Sioux in a letter to President Grant:

We must act with vindictive earnestness against the Sioux, even to their extermination, men, women and children
(quoted in F.G. Roe, The North American Buffalo. Toronto: 1951, p.809.)

It has also been suggested that the American military authorities in the West received tacit approval in seeking to exterminate the buffalo in order to force the Sioux into submission.

23. Butler, op. cit., p.359.
24. Glenbow, G. King to brother (no name), 27 Aug. 1877.
25. Lieutenant Butler had suggested that such a police force could also be utilized for the collection of customs duties on goods entering the North-West from the United States. Butler, op. cit., p.382.
26. Robertson Ross Report, found in CSP, 1873, Vol.9.
The report of Colonel Robertson Ross was based on his journey across the plains in the summer of 1872. In comparing it with the Butler Report, it would seem that Robertson Ross included a good deal of material from the earlier document.
27. Robertson Ross, op. cit., p.27.
28. Butler had noted that, "the military protection of the line of the Saskatchewan would be a practical impossibility without a very great expenditure of money" Butler, op. cit., p.381.
29. An escort of militia, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, had accompanied government commissioners during the negotiation of Treaty Four.
30. RG 10,8904 Black, Laird to Mills, 31 Dec. 1877. In this letter Laird suggested that, "... the Police Force in Northern part of the Territories should be increased, so that at Qu'Appelle and such like places the Agent making the payments may have a sufficient escort to enable him to resist prudently but firmly exorbitant demands for provisions."

In later years the Department of Indian Affairs urged that the strength of the Mounted Police detachment at Fort Walsh be increased so that the government might be in a position to force the Indians to abandon the Cypress Hills, and take reserves in the North.

31. Lieutenant-Governor Morris stated in the preface to his book on the treaties that one of the aims of Indian administration in the North-West would be to induce the Indians "to become, by the adoption of agricultural and pastoral pursuits, a self-supporting community". Alexander Morris, The Treaties of Canada With the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Toronto: Belfords, Clarke and Co., 1880.
32. Ibid, p.270.
33. Though the government had received reports from a number of whitemen in the North-West that the Indians were anxious to conclude treaties (RG 10,3278 Black, McDougall to Smith, 8 Jan. 1874, and RG 10,3229 Black, Bell to Morris 23 Mar. 1874), these did not entirely justify the claim that the Indians were pressing the government to make treaties (RG 10,4490 Black, Morris to Sec. of State, and, CSP, 1876, No.9, p.x.). Indeed, several documents indicate that the Indians were not as 'anxious' as was claimed; (Glenbow, letter from Geo. King to his brother, 25 Aug. 1877) One of the Cree chiefs, Mistawassis, summarized his feelings regarding the treaties in a letter to Morris: "In sending this letter I do not wish it to be understood that I and my people are anxious that the Governor should come and make a Treaty, but if he is coming we do not say to him not to come." (RG 10,4490 Black, Mistawassis to Morris, 16 Jan. 1875).
34. CSP, 1875, No.7, Report of the Department of the Interior, p.56.
35. RG 10,4518 Black, Lacombe to Morris, 13 Feb. 1875.
36. RG 10, 3229 Black, Bell to Morris, 23 Mar. 1874, and Selwyn to Meredith, 21 Apr. 1874.
37. RG 10,3229 Black, Meredith to the Min. of Int., n.d. (probably 1874)
38. RG 10,3229 Black, Bell to Morris, 23 Mar. 1874.
39. RG 10,3229 Black, Selwyn to Meredith, Apr. 1874.
40. Ibid, Selwyn noted in addition that the transition to pastoral pursuits was "the natural gradation from the hunter to agriculturalist".
41. Ibid.
42. RG 10,3229 Black, Meredith to the Min. of Int., n.d. (probably 1874)

43. RG 10,4518 Black, Lacombe to Morris, 13 Feb. 1875.
44. The following discussion of Treaties Four, Six and Seven is based on Morris' Treaties of Canad With the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories.
45. The amount of these grants was as follows: Treaty Four, \$750; Treaty Six, \$1500; and Treaty Seven, \$2000.
46. Morris, p.354.
47. Ibid., p.176-177.
48. G21 Series, No. 2001, V.3, Mills to Privy Council, 23 Aug. 1877, and DHC, 8 Feb. 1877, Vol.III, p.3. Included in the Speech from the Throne given at the beginning of this session was this statement:

The expenditure incurred by the Indian Treaties is undoubtedly large, but the Canadian policy is nevertheless the cheapest, ultimately, if we compare the results with those of other countries; and it is above all a humane, just and Christian policy.

Chapter Two

1. RG 10, 3229 Black, Bell to Morris, 23 Mar. 1874, and Selwyn to Meredith, 21 Apr. 1874; RG 10, 4518 Black, Lacombe to Morris, 13 Feb. 1875.
2. RG 10,3229 Black, Meredith to Minister of Interior, n.d. (probably spring of 1874).
3. A speech by J.C. Shultz in the House of Commons, in March 1877, clearly outlined the alternatives that would face the Indians in the event that the buffalo were exterminated. See DHC, 26 Mar. 1877, Vol.III, pp.990-992.
4. CSP, 1877, Vol.IX, Report of the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police for 1876.
5. DHC, 26 Mar. 1877, Vol.III, pp.990-993: and, RG 10,7530 Black, Report of the North-West Territorial Council Subcommittee on the Preservation of the Buffalo, 15 Apr. 1876.
6. RG 10,3229 Black, Meredith to Minister of Interior, n.d.

7. RG 10,7530 Black, Report of the North-West Territorial Council Sub Committee on the Preservation of the Buffalo, 15 Apr. 1876.
8. Specifically, French suggested that there be an export duty on buffalo robes, and a double duty on cow and calf robes.
9. While Andre argued that radical measures were necessary if the Indians were to continue to subsist on the buffalo, it would appear that his suggestions were as much aimed towards forcing the Metis to settle down, as they were towards guaranteeing the selfare of the Indians. Included in Father Andre's submission was the statement that:

Such a law would oblige the Metis to abandon the life of winter camping, which brutalizes them and makes them savages; and would oblige them to take to the cultivation of lands which would greatly conduce (sic) to their becoming civilized and proving useful citizens of the state; but a severe law is required to prohibit the winter camps on the prairie. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. The implementation of a hunting season for Indians and the prohibition of the use of pounds was contrary, at least in spirit, to the hunting rights guaranteed the Indians in the treaties.
12. Ibid.
13. DHC, 26 Mar. 1877, Vol.III, p.993.
14. The Ordinance included the following measures: the use of "pounds" was forbidden; the slaughter of animals merely to secure their tongues, choice cuts or peltries was prohibited; and a closed season was declared on cows between November 15th and August 14th, and no calves were to be killed under the age of two years. Certain concessions were, however, granted to the Indians for hunting in "circumstances of pressing necessity" or "to satisfy immediate wants". Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, pp.222-223.
15. Stanley's (The Birth of Western Canada, p.222-223) suggestion that the Ordinance finally passed by the Territorial Council in March 1877 embodied the recommendations of French and Andre is somewhat misleading. The Ordinance did not include an export duty on buffalo robes and pemmican, which was the major recom-

mendation of both French and Andre. Furthermore, the measures included in the Ordinance were for the most part taken from the submission of the Select Committee.

It is also worth noting that F.G. Roe's The North American Buffalo (Toronto: 1959, pp.467-488) largely disproves Stanley's suggestion that Indian opposition was in part responsible for the failure of the Ordinance.

16. Roe, The North American Buffalo, p.467.
17. CSP, 1879, Report of the Commissioner, North-West Mounted Police, 1878, p.20.
18. It is difficult to understand why the Indians, being experienced hunters, would have faced the buffalo head on thus forcing them southward. Crowfoot blamed the Sioux under Sitting Bull for preventing the buffalo from coming further north than the district in the Cypress Hills they were then occupying. See Footnote No. 4.
19. Roe, The North American Buffalo, pp.480-481.
20. RG 10,10490 Black, MacLeod to Dennis, 23 Dec. 1878.
21. CSP, 1880, Report of the Commissioner, North-West Mounted Police, 1879, p.4
22. Edgar Dewdney, for example, continued to hope that the buffalo might return to the North-West as late as 1881; See RG 10,30249 Black, Vankoughnet to Macpherson, 24 June 1881.
23. CSP, 1879, Report of the Commissioner, North-West Mounted Police, 1878,p.20 ff.
24. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.IV, Dewdney's Journal for 1879, 17 July.
25. Ibid.
26. RG 10,16142 Black, Confidential Memorandum prepared by Col. Dennis, 6 Aug. 1879, p.1.
27. CSP, 1880, Report of the Commissioner, North-West Mounted Police 1879, p.4.
28. RG 10,10771 Black, Laird to Mills, 12 Nov. 1878.
29. RG 10,10094 Black, James MacKay to Dennis, 11 Feb. 1879.

30. In a letter to Dewdney in May 1881, Macdonald stated:
- I have no intention of giving up my present Department so long as I remain in the Government. Routine matters may be attended to by the Permanent Heads, but Indian matters and the land granting system form so great a part of the general policy of the government that I think it is necessary for the First Minister, whoever he may be, to have that in his own hands. (Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.III, Macdonald to Dewdney, 10 May 1881).
31. DHC, 1879, Vol.II, pp.1684-1685.
32. Due to the lack of reliable population statistics for the Indians of the North-West during this period, it is impossible to determine the exact number of deaths resulting from starvation. Nevertheless, the reports of Laird and Dewdney indicated that the Indians were beset by something more than hunger.
33. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.II, Dennis to Dewdney, 31 May 1879.
34. RG 10,10094 Black, MacKay to Dennis, 11 Feb. 1879.
See also, RG 10,10094 Black, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 17 Jan. 1879.
35. RG 10,16142 Black, Laird to Macdonald, 30 June 1879.
36. Ibid. Laird also added that, "There ought to be some kind of stockade or enclosure to afford a little protection in case of a sudden raid of Sioux or a rising of our Indians, should want drive them to desperation during the autumn or winter."
37. RG 10,16142 Black, Privy Council to Min. of Int., 4 Aug. 1879.
38. The other men named in the Privy Council memorandum were: Lieutenant-Colonel Richardson, Stipendiary Magistrate for the North-West Territories, Indian Agent, M.G. Dickieson, and the Hon. Pascal Breland, a prominent half-breed Member of the Territorial Council. Breland was unable to attend the first session of the Council.
39. RG 10,16142 Black, Minutes of the Battleford Council, 27 Aug. 1879.
40. See Appendix A.

41. Included in RG 10,16142 Black, is a report from Major-General Selby Smythe concerning the fortification of various Mounted Police posts in the North-West. Though the report was dated 30 September 1879, it was based on an earlier report made by Selby Smythe in 1875. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the government thought it necessary to consult Selby Smythe on this matter at this time.
42. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.IV, Dewdney's Journal for 1879, 24 July.
43. Ibid. 20 Aug.
44. RG 10,17680 Black, Vankoughnet to Orde, 21 Jan. 1880. In reply to an enquiry from an Indian agent regarding the issuing of rations, the Deputy-Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, Lawrence Vankoughnet, replied:

I have to refer you to your general instructions in which you were informed that no provisions were to be given to able-bodied Indians unless work for the same had been done by them. The circumstances should, however, be very exceptional, indeed under which relief is extended to non-Treaty Indians.

In regard to sick and aged Indians, whether they come within the Treaty or not moderate assistance should be extended to them.
45. RG 10,16142 Black, Confidential Memorandum prepared by Col. Dennis, 6 Aug. 1879, p.4. The memorandum read as follows:

Apart from the expense which an Indian war would involve, and which it would be next to impossible for the Dominion, single-handed, to meet, the consequences in retarding the settlement of the country, and, as well, the extent to which it would immediately affect the prosecution of the national Railway, would be such as to arrest all progress for years; in fact, we should, practically, for a time, have to abandon the Territories.
46. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.89288-89297, Dewdney to Macdonald, 15 Sept. 1879.
47. Ibid.
48. In the instructions issued to Dewdney, (Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.II, Dennis to Dewdney, 31 May 1879), was included the following statement:

It is hoped that after these farms have been in operation for a reasonable period, the question of subsistence for the Indians, in the absence of large game, will be so far simplified as to render the chance of famine occurring among these people very much less than at present.

49. J.C. Shultz, a Conservative Member for Manitoba, was one of the sternest critics of the agricultural program. He outlined his views in the House of Commons on the 23rd of April, 1880. (DHC, 23 Apr. 1880, pp. 1694-1696).
50. Ibid. Shultz suggested that the government might think seriously about moving the Plains Indians north into the parklands district where they would not only be close to a large supply of fish, but where they would also be out of the settlers' way.
51. DHC, 23 Apr. 1880, p.1693.

Chapter Three

1. Responsibility for Indian Affairs had rested with the Secretary of State's Office between 1868 and 1873, and with the Department of the Interior between 1874 and 1879. (CSP, 1881, No.14, Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1880, p.1.)
2. Ibid. p.1.
3. Ibid. p.83. Orde to Dewdney, 18 Nov. 1880.
4. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89450-89462. Dewdney to Macdonald, 19 June 1881.
5. DHC, 9 Dec. 1880, Vol. I, p.2.
6. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89477-89490, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.
7. Ibid. p.89485.
8. DHC, 23 Dec. 1880, Vol. I, pp.232-233.
9. DHC, 10 Feb. 1882, Vol. I, pp.15-16.
10. Ibid. p.15.

11. Ibid. p.15.
12. Ibid. p.15.
13. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, p.89418, Tilley to Macdonald, 7 May 1881.
14. Ibid. p.89418.
15. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, p.89486, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.
16. Ibid. pp.89486-89487.
17. RG 10,30249 Black, Wadsworth to Dewdney, 12 May 1881.
18. RG 10,22367 Black, Dewdney's Estimate for Indian Expenditures in the North-West Territories, 1881-1882, n.d.
19. Ibid.
20. CSP, 1881, No. 14, Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1880, p.2.
21. Ibid. p.2.
22. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, p.89478, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.
23. Indian Commissioner Dewdney was initially the most loyal supporter of the 'two or three years to self-sufficiency' theme. His letters to Macdonald between 1880 and 1882 regularly mentioned that it would not be long until the Indians would be in a position to care for themselves.
24. RG 10,30249 Black, Macdonald to the Privy Council, 27 June 1881.
25. RG 10, PLB, Vol. 1082, Vankoughnet to Dewdney, 10 Nov. 1882.
26. DHC, 10 Feb. 1882, Vol. I, p.15.
27. It is difficult to determine exactly the Indian population resident in the southern section of the Territories between 1879 and 1883 due to a lack of reliable statistical data, and because of the continual movement across the border during this period. On the basis of various on the spot reports, I would estimate it to be slightly over 12,000 in 1879 and 1880 (excluding the

American Sioux), declining steadily until 1883 when the last of the Cypress Hills Indians were moved to the north.

28. RG 10, 34527 Black, L'Heureux to Dewdney, 24 Sept. 1880.
29. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. III, pp.394-395, Dewdney to Macdonald, 2 Oct. 1881.
30. Ibid.
31. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, p.89481, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.
32. Ibid. p.89482.
33. Ibid. p.89483.
34. RG 10, PLB, Vol. 1081, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 13 Sept. 1882.
35. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. V, pp.1176-1177, Macpherson to Dewdney, 22 Aug. 1881: and, pp.1203-1206, Irvine to White, 25 Sept. 1882.
36. Mg 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89559-89562, Wadsworth to Galt, 3 Aug. 1881.
37. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89361-89370, Dewdney to Macdonald, 3 Oct. 1880: and, RG 10, 570 Black, Dewdney to Macdonald, 11 Feb. 1882.
38. RG10, PLB, Vol. 1084, Sinclair to Macdonald, 20 Aug. 1883.
39. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89571-89574. Dewdney to Macdonald, 13 Sept. 1881.
40. RG 10, 33527 Black, Dewdney to Denny, 30 Oct. 1881.
41. RG 10, 34527 Black, L'Heureux to Dewdney, 24 Sept. 1880.
42. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89485-89486, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.

Inspector Wadsworth also noted that, "The Indians know their strength, and when driven by hunger would use it to have their demands satisfied." (MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89546-89550, Wadsworth to Galt, 25 July 1881.)
43. There is some indication that the government feared the possibility of the Indians from Treaty Seven joining the Cypress Hills Indians and forming a larger group

which would be difficult to deal with. In March of 1880, Assistant Commissioner Galt suggested that the government should induce the Bloods and Blackfoot to go to their country by offering them provisions for the journey (RG 10, 20140 Black, Galt to Dewdney, 22 Mar. 1880)

44. See Chapter I, p.4.
45. Sharp, Whoop-Up Country, p.155. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.
46. RG 10, 20140 Black, Galt to Dewdney, 22 Mar. 1880.
47. Ibid.
48. RG 10, PLB, Vol. 1081, Departmental Memorandum, 24 Apr. 1882; and, MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol. 210, pp.89450-89462, Dewdney to Macdonald, 19 June 1881.
49. Sharp, Whoop-Up Country, p.156. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.
50. A good example of the government's divided motives with respect to the Cypress Hills Indians appeared in a letter to Dewdney from D.L. Macpherson who was supervising Indian Affairs during one of Macdonald's absences from Ottawa:

I trust that everything is being done to promote farming, as it is only by that means that the Indians can be made self-supporting and comfortable.... The government have no objection to our Indians following the buffalo provided they abstain from committing depredations in the United States, and doing anything that could possibly cause International unpleasantness, so that I leave you free to advise the Indians as you may deem most judicious in respect to following the buffalo again. (Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. V, pp.1172-1175, Macpherson to Dewdney, 15 July 1881.)
51. RG 10, LB 4439 Black, Vankoughnet to Galt, 5 Aug. 1881. The Police were in favour of abandoning Fort Walsh, but not before the Indians were moved from the Cypress Hills.
52. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1082. Vankoughnet to Dewdney, 7 Dec.1882.
53. There are numerous examples illustrating this point. In April of 1883, a Canadian Cree raiding party went over the Line in search of buffalo, and no doubt to engage in the time honoured sport of horse theft. As the party was heading back towards Canada, an American patrol

caught up with them; in the ensuing skirmish, two Crees were killed. (RG 18, B1 340, American Commander, Fort Assiniboine to Superintendent Shurtlieff, April 1883.

54. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1081, Vankoughnet to Campbell, 1 June 1882.
RG 10, PLB, Vol.1081, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 10 Aug. 1882.
RG 10, PLB, Vol.1081, Sinclair to Galt, 16 Aug. 1882.
Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. IV, pp.737-740. White to Dewdney, 29 Aug. 1882; Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. V, pp.1201-1202, White to Irvine, 29 Aug. 1882 and Irvine to white, 29 Aug. 1882; RG 10, PLB, Vol.1081, Vankoughnet to Dewdney, 19 Oct. 1882; RG 18, B1 43, Shurtlieff to Irvine, 7 Jan. 1883.
55. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.89477-89490, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.
56. There is some suggestion that certain of the contractors - notably I.G. Baker and Company of Fort Benton, Montana Territory - induced the Indians to remain in the Cypress Hills by means of gifts. The whole question of the relationship of the firms contracting to supply provisions, with the government and with the Indians deserves further study. (See RG 10, PLB, Vol. 1081, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 23 June 1882.)
57. See "Destitute Provisions Chart", Appendix A. At the same time the population of Treaty Seven was approximately half that of Treaties Four and Six combined.
58. See "Industrial and Agricultural Returns Chart", Appendix A.
59. RG 10, 13642 Black, Nichol to Dewdney, 30 May 1884.
60. These returns were encouraging, considering that frost damaged crops in large sections of the North-West each year between 1880 and 1884.
61. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, p.239.
62. Ibid. p.239.
63. RG 10, LB 4434, Vankoughnet to Dewdney, 18 Mar. 1881.
64. RG 10, 30249 Black, Vankoughnet to Macpherson, 24 June 1881.
65. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.III, pp.388-391, Macdonald to Dewdney, 10 May 1881.

66. RG 10, 33642 Black, Report of the Governor-General's Conferences with the Indians of the North-West Territories in the summer of 1881.
67. RG 10, 9834 Black, Dewdney Memorandum, 13 Nov. 1883.
68. Ibid.
69. RG 10, 9834 Black, Herchmer to Dewdney, 26 Nov. 1883.
70. RG 10, 9834 Black, Scott to Vankoughnet, 17 Dec. 1883.
71. RG 10, 3380 Black, Wadsworth to Galt, 13 and 15 Aug. 1882.
72. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1084 Vankoughnet to Dr. Girard, 6 Dec. 1883.
73. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1085, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 3 Jan. 1884.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid.
76. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. V, pp.1141-1163, Denny to Dewdney, 10 July 1883
77. DHC, 10 Feb. 1882, Vol.I, p.15.
78. DHC, 27 Apr. 1882, Vol. II, p.1186.
79. DHC, 11 Mar. 1881, Vol. II, p.1350.
80. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1085, Vankoughnet Memorandum, 31 Jan. 1884.
81. Ibid.
82. There is an interesting letter from one of the senior officers of the Department of Indian Affairs to the Prime Minister, dated 28 Aug. 1883 which would appear to be a description and justification for the government's Indian policy and expenditures in the North-West under the Conservative Administration. The text of the letter gives the government "line" on the reserve farming program, and was probably used by Macdonald for defending the Department. (RG 10, PLB, Vol.1084, Sinclair to Macdonald, 28 Aug. 1883.)
83. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, pp.269-270.
84. Ibid. p.273.

85. See "Destitute Provisions Chart", Appendix A.
86. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. III, pp.445-446, Macdonald to Dewdney, 17 Sept. 1883.
87. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol. III, pp.471-472, Macdonald to Dewdney, 17 Nov. 1883.
88. See footnotes 15, 16 and 23, Chapter Three.
89. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1086, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 25 Sept. 1884.

Footnotes Chapter Four

1. Alexander Morris, Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba, the North-West Territories and Kee-wa-tin. p.272.
2. RG 10, 15266 Black, Dewdney to Dennis, 22 July, 1879.
3. Ibid. Crowfoot's name was also included in an obsequious petition to the Indian Commissioner from the Blackfoot Chiefs, thanking the government for its wise measures. As the petition was drafted by a half-breed interpreter, it is difficult to determine whether the Indians really understood or intended the contents of the petition.
4. Ibid.
5. RG 10, 33642 Black, Minutes of the Governor-General's Tour of the North-West Territories, 10 Sept. 1881.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. MG 26A Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.89498-89503, Galt to Macpherson, 14 July 1881.
9. Morris, op.cit., pp.219-220. Although Poundmaker had acted as a spokesman during the negotiation of Treaty Six, he signed the treaty as a headman in Red Pheasant's Band. By 1879, however, he was recognized by the Department as a chief.

10. CSP, 1881, No.14, Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1880, p.84.
11. RG 10, 29548 Black, Reed to Dewdney, 8 May 1881.
12. Ibid.
13. RG 10, 29548 Black, Galt to Macdonald, 25 May 1881.
14. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.89413-89416, Dewdney to Macdonald, 23 April 1881.
15. RG 10, 29548 Black, Galt to Macdonald, 14 June 1881.
16. RG 10, 33642 Black, Minutes of the Governor-General's Tour of the North-West, n.d. (probably Aug. 1881).
17. After inspecting Poundmaker's reserve in the summer of 1882, Commissioner Dewdney reported that, "It was refreshing to me to find this chief so busily engaged building a house with his Indians as scarcely to have time to talk with me in passing." Dewdney even paid them the compliment that, "Their work would have been a credit to even a white man." (CSP, 1883, No.5, Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1882, p.184).
18. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, p.284.
19. RG 10, 10644 Black, Reed to Dewdney, 28 Dec. 1883.
20. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.89477-89490, Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 July 1881.
21. W.B. Fraser, "Big Bear, Indian Patriot". Alberta Historical Review. Spring, 1966. p.1.
22. Ibid. p.6.
23. Morris, op.cit., pp.240-241.
24. Ibid. p.241.
25. RG 10, 10771 Black, Laird to Mills, 12 Nov. 1878.
26. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.88734-88735, Clare to White, 16 July 1879.
27. CSP, 1880, Report of the North-West Mounted Police, 1879, The Commissioner's Report, p.18.

28. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1082, Macdonald to Privy Council, 24 Feb. 1883.
29. RG 10, 309A Black, Vankoughnet to Dewdney, 24 July 1884.
30. RG 10, 10644 Black, Reed to Dewdney, 28 Dec. 1883.
31. Ibid.
32. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, p.270.
33. RG 10, 311 Black, Rae to Dewdney, 14 Mar. 1884.
34. RG 10, 10181 Black, Herchmer to White, 26 Feb. 1884.
35. Stanley, op. cit., p.279.
36. RG 10, 10648 Black, Reed to the Superintendent-General, 12 April 1884.
37. Ibid.
38. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.3, pp.486-487, Dewdney to Macdonald, 3 May 1884.
39. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.42767-42778, Dewdney to Macdonald, 14 June 1884.
40. RG 10, PLB, Vol.1085, p.535, Vankoughnet to Reed, 19 March 1884.
41. RG 10, 309A Black, Crozier to Irvine, 25 June 1884.
42. RG 10, 309A Black, Vankoughnet to Dewdney, 29 July 1884.
43. The Department of Indian Affairs correspondence in 1884 was studded with recommendations that the Police force be strengthened so as to avoid 'incidents' with the Indians.
44. Stanley, op.cit., pp.290-291.
45. Ibid. pp.290-291.
46. Ibid. pp.290-291.
47. Both Agent Macrae at Fort Carlton, and Sergeant Brooks of the North-West Mounted Police watched the Duck Lake Council closely and made full reports to their superiors.
48. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.42829-42830, Rae to Dewdney, 29 July 1884.

49. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers, Vol.210, pp.42864-42871, Dewdney to Macdonald, 5 Sept. 1884.
50. Ibid.
51. RG 10, 14624 Black, Dewdney to Macdonald, 19 July 1884.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. RG 10, 15040 Black, Wadsworth to Dewdney, 14 Aug. 1884.
57. Ibid.
58. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.5, pp.1218-1221, MacRae to Dewdney, 13 Jan. 1885.
59. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.4, pp.1406-1409, MacDowall to Dewdney, 14 Jan. 1885.
60. RG 18, B1 2527, Crozier to Irvine, 14 Jan. 1885.
61. RG 18, B1 2869, Crozier to Irvine, 29 Feb. 1885.
62. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.3, pp.511-512, Macdonald to Dewdney, 2 Sept. 1884.
63. Ibid. It is interesting to note that in November and December of 1884 the Police prepared an estimate of the number of Indian and Metis men in the Duck Lake District. (RG 18, B1 2265, Statement showing the number of Indians and half-breeds in the environs of Duck Lake, n.d.)
64. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.3, pp.259-260, Dewdney to Macdonald, 2 Feb. 1885.
65. Ibid.
66. Fraser, op.cit., p.1.
67. Both Rig Bear and Poundmaker were released from prison in 1886.
68. Glenbow, Dewdney Papers, Vol.6, pp.1414-1420, Reed to Dewdney, n.d.

69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Dewdney's comments on Reed's suggestions were written on the margin of the memorandum, Ibid. RG 10, PLB Vol.1088, pp.428-442, Vankoughnet to Macdonald, 17 Aug. 1885.
73. Glenbow, Memorandum of rewards to Indians especially distinguished for loyalty during the late rebellion. n.d.
74. See Appendix A, Destitute Provisions Chart.
75. RG 10, 63912 Black, Vankoughnet to Reed, 3 Jan. 1890.
76. Ibid.

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