

## INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN "THE INDIAN NEWS" (1954-1982)

MALCOLM DAVIDSON,  
Massey College,  
4 Devonshire Place,  
Toronto, Ontario,  
Canada, M5S 2E1.

### ABSTRACT/RESUME

The author examines the potential of a Canadian Government newspaper for Indians, *The Indian News*, as a source for the study of Indian economic development. He distinguishes four phases in the newspaper's coverage of economic development, and suggests that it is helpful to evaluate this evolution within the framework of the development of *The Indian News* from the status of an Indian Affairs Branch propaganda organ to that of a newspaper controlled by Indians and editorially independent of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

L'auteur étudie la possibilité d'utiliser un journal publié par le gouvernement canadien à l'intention des Indiens, *The Indian News*, comme source pour l'étude du développement économique indien. Comptant quatre périodes distinctes dans les articles sur le développement économique publiés dans ce journal, l'auteur suggère qu'il serait utile d'examiner cette évolution en tenant compte du développement historique de la publication, à l'origine une voix de propagande contrôlée par la Direction des Affaires indiennes, et maintenant un organe dirigé par les Indiens, indépendant du Ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien.

*The Indian News* is essential, though extremely problematic source for research on the economic development of Indians in Canada. Published in tabloid format from August, 1954, through June, 1982,<sup>1</sup> first by the federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration, then in 1965-66 by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, and from October, 1966 to 1982 by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), *The Indian News* is especially valuable because it is one of the very few sources of news on Indians during the period before the appearance and mushroom growth of regional Indian-owned and Indian-staffed newspapers in the late 1960's and early 1970's. It is problematic, however, in that the very fact of government sponsorship poses a serious dilemma for the critical scholar who wants to know the extent to which the news content reflects the full spectrum of economic development initiatives - the failures as well as the successes. This dilemma is made even more complex by the difficulties in determining the extent to which Indian editors (the first was appointed in October, 1965) were successful in realizing their aspirations to independence of departmental direction.

In this paper, one segment of a larger research program on this subject, I propose to delineate the various phases in *The Indian News*' coverage of economic development and to suggest, on the basis of *internal evidence* only, important points for researchers to bear in mind when using the paper as a source. What follows is necessarily somewhat impressionistic; in a more advanced stage of this project it will be possible to offer statistical tabulations of the varying degrees of coverage accorded to different categories of economic development, e.g., career achievements by individual off-reserve Indians, ventures by bands into various kinds of economic activity, and so on.

The term 'economic development' requires careful definition. Given the centrality of economic activities to the totality of human life, there is very little information in *The Indian News* which does not relate directly or indirectly to Indian economic development or the tragic lack thereof. The news items which have been selected for the purposes of the following analysis are those which are explicitly reflective of economic development and bear upon achievements in 'traditional' or 'non-traditional' occupations by individual Indians living off their reserves either temporarily or permanently; businesses which are owned and operated on the reserve by an individual normally resident on that reserve; on- or off-reserve ventures undertaken collectively by bands; on- or off-reserve ventures undertaken by groups of individuals normally residing on their reserves, and coming from one or more bands; and, finally, multi-band ventures pursued either on- or off-reserve.

An understanding of the process by which news was gathered for *The Indian News* is an essential prerequisite to an evaluation of the bias, as well as the completeness and/or representativeness of *Indian News* coverage. Interviews and research in secondary sources will be necessary to further clarify this subject. The first tidbit of internal evidence on the news-gathering process dates to July, 1965, and it seems likely that this evidence also describes the situation in the 1950's. In that issue, in an unsigned editorial entitled 'Gathering

the News', *The Indian News* made the following statement in response to criticism by Aylmer N. Plain, a member of the Chippewas of Sarnia Band:

"Much of our material comes from employees of the Indian Affairs Branch in various parts of Canada and it is natural that the information they provide has something to do with their work - that's why they know about it. If a large part of *The Indian News* has some bearing on Branch programs, that is because we do not often receive information from other sources - but we would like to.

The policy of this publication has always been to report on worthwhile Indian activities and achievements rather than Branch programs... In short, we try to provide our readers with news about Indians, concentrating on stories of Indian success in the hope that other Indians will feel inspired to seek similar success.

We would be delighted to receive news from Indians, for this is intended to be an Indian publication. We cannot promise to print everything we receive because this small paper currently comes out only four times a year. If our Indian readers will write to us, however, we shall use what we can, also gaining wisdom and familiarity with the Indian people from the rest."

The appointment of Indians as editors of the paper from 1965 through 1982 was another response by the Branch to criticism of emphasis on Indian Affairs Branch (IAB) programs in *The Indian News*. The attempts by Indian editors to encourage submission of news stories by Indians from all parts of Canada will be discussed in our analysis of Phase III (see below).

Editors editorialize, reporters report, and newspapers publish, but did Indians actually read *The Indian News*? There is one consideration which towers above all others in this regard: the very fact that *The Indian News* was not published in Indian languages must have severely limited its readership in many parts of the country.<sup>2</sup> Given the small percentage of Indians whose first or second language is French rather than English, it is of secondary importance, though still significant, that scant recognition was given to French in the early years of publication. The first article in French appeared in May, 1956, almost two years after the paper's founding. One or two French-language articles were published in almost every edition between 1956 and 1967, when publication commenced of one full page of French in each edition. Most of the French-language articles concerned happenings in Quebec and the Maritimes. Not until late 1975 did *The Indian News/Nouvelles Indiennes* begin its career as a fully bilingual publication; exactly the same news appeared in both the French and English sections of the tabloid. Not until March, 1970 did a francophone appear on the editorial masthead; this was an Indian, Michele Tetu, identified as an editorial assistant to editor David Monture.

There is important internal evidence, moreover, to suggest that before 1968

distribution of *The Indian News* to Indians may have been rather haphazard. In November, 1967, the paper informed its readers that starting in the New Year "circulation will increase from 29,000 to 60,000 copies to be published monthly. The head of each Indian household will receive his copy direct from Ottawa thus overcoming any difficulties which may have been encountered in the past through agency distribution. This change should result in quicker receipt of your copy of the newspaper." It may have been optimistic to believe that the majority of Indians ever received the paper when delivery was dependent on the agencies. Delivery may have been especially problematic in agencies which were understaffed or included several far-flung reserves within their purview.

In its second issue, published in January, 1955, *The Indian News* identified itself on its editorial masthead as a "quarterly newspaper published by Indian Affairs Branch for free distribution to Canadian Indians". This description was to remain substantially unchanged until May, 1970, when it was modified to emphasize the independence of the Indian editorship from DIAND. Initially, only the names of the minister and deputy ministers appeared on the editorial masthead. Not until the mid-1960's did the name of an editor appear there.

#### PHASE I- "Hammers and Saws" - August, 1954- May, 1956

"Hammers and saws on almost every reserve in Canada sing a song of better housing", ran the first sentence of the headline story in the first edition of *The Indian News*. The clangour and whine of hammers and saws are, in fact, a stronger criterion than any other for distinguishing this first phase of the paper's history from those that follow. There is considerable emphasis during this period on construction of houses, band halls, and water supply systems as the driving force behind Indian economic improvement. These construction projects, *The Indian News* stressed in several articles on the subject, generated employment for band members as construction labourers; as workers in the sawmills which often were built from scratch on the reserves, or *transferred* to reserves from other sites; and as cutters of timber tracts on or near the reserves, to provide the wood supplies necessary to keep the sawmills humming. If, in fact, hammers and saws were a-ringing on almost every reserve, *The Indian News* could select only a few bands for special attention. These were Saugeen, Cape Croker, Christian Island, Sturgeon Lake, Lower French River, Georgina Island, and Moose Factory in Ontario; Betsiamites in Quebec; the Cree bands at Hobbema, the Bloods, the Peigans and the Driftpile Band (near Lesser Slave Lake), all in Alberta; and the bands in the Lytton agency in British Columbia. To be sure, *Indian News* coverage of band construction projects continued throughout the history of the paper, but not to the extent evident in this early period, nor with the same emphasis on the spinoff benefits of construction as the harbinger of miraculour improvements in the Indian condition.<sup>3</sup>

Less detailed coverage was given to on- and/or off-reserve operations by bands in the traditional resource-based pursuits of trapping and fishing. The encouragement of bands' involvement in commercial fishing appears to have

been an important aspect of IAB activity throughout the 1950's. This interest is reflected, for example, in stories on the Deer Lake Band's use of an IAB Revolving Fund Loan to take over the goldeye fishery of Sandy Lake in north-western Ontario, and the Fort Chipewyan Band's successful Winnipeg goldeye operation at Lake Athabasca. Fur trapping too received considerable attention. There were reports on Indians' co-management with the federal government of a beaver conservation project near the Northwest Territories community of Fort Rae; muskrat trapping conditions in the Sipanok area of northern Saskatchewan; and methods of fur preparation for maximization of cash returns. Nor were the farming and ranching activities of bands in the Prairie Provinces ignored. Readers learned about the Peigans' management of their cattle herds and the rapid expansion in the area of land under cultivation on the Piapot Reserve, located just northeast of Regina.<sup>4</sup>

A substantial proportion of *The Indian News* during this period concerned itself not with these resource-based or agricultural pursuits nor with band construction programs but with the success stories of individual off-reserve Indians in non-traditional occupations. Photographs and accompanying stories about Indian nurses, teachers, bush pilots, policemen, hairdressers, business managers, skilled tradesmen, and the rather more rare lawyer, physician, or engineer, were to remain an *Indian News* staple until the mid-1960's. Business ventures by bands, or groups of individuals within bands captured much less copy than did off-reserve Harotio Algers. Nevertheless, the stories about the Walpole Island Construction Company; the artisanal industries at the Village d'Hurons near Quebec City; the lacrosse stick factory on the St. Regis Reserve, near Cornwall; and sweater production by the Cowichan Band, are among the most interesting of all in these early issues.<sup>5</sup>

Contrary to developments in 1962 and after, there is no evidence whatever in this early period of criticism of IAB policies.

#### PHASE II - Ellen-in-Wonderland, or "How Louise Found Her Job" - March, 1957-July, 1964

In her report to Parliament on February 16, 1961, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs Hon. Ellen L. Fairclough, after outlining the achievements of the IAB in encouraging Indians to adapt to off-reserve industrial employment, cautioned: "While economic development activities are extending into new fields the fact must not be forgotten that many Indians still depend on hunting, trapping, and fishing for their livelihood and will continue to do so" (Hansard, 1960-61:2137). Fairclough's comments accurately reflect the tenor of *The Indian News* during this second phase. There is a very clear emphasis in almost every edition during this period on the Branch's program, initiated in 1957, for placement of Indians in industrial or clerical jobs in the cities or in rural seasonal jobs, such as forestry operations or agricultural harvests. Nevertheless, this emphasis on new sectors of employment does not wholly eliminate news on resource-based occupations or reserve-based business ventures.

It is not, however, simply this emphasis on the industrial placement program

which gives this period its unique flavour. The placement program was part of a larger package which included unrelenting emphasis on the importance of formal education, and enthusiasm about the establishment of friendship centres, where the edge might be taken off the loneliness experienced by Indian newcomers to the concrete jungles. All of these elements merged in the concept of 'integrationism', the merits of which were extolled by Indian and non-Indian alike on *Indian News* editorial pages for much of the period.

For the IAB, 'integrationism' was a sugar-coated variation of the age-old Canadian Government policy of assimilating Indians. Integrated schools, said *The Indian News*, would foster an understanding both by Indians and non-Indians of the essential sameness of their races. "In the still higher circles of advanced institutions of learning", continued the paper, "Indian and non-Indian outlook is tending toward a common Canadianism" (February, 1965). In a guest editorial in March, 1959, W.I.C. Wuttunee, an Indian later famous for his support of the 1969 White Paper (Wuttunee, 1971) advocated "assimilation or integration", and encouraged Indians "to look to the new and forget the old." For another guest editorialist, a 17-year-old Indian high school student, integration meant not assimilation but "becoming part of a whole without loss of identity" (June, 1961).

In *The Indian News*, the placement program aspect of integrationism exudes a simple-minded optimism, reflected in headlines such as "Through Their Own Efforts . . . They are Succeeding" (the story of a teacher and an apprentice shoemaker in Saskatchewan); "Young Men Reveal Growing Power of Education" (three Indians who became a land surveyor, a lawyer, and a physician); and "Nuclear Engineer Indian in the 21st Century" (about an engineer employed at Ontario Hydro). A similar simple-mindedness marks stories headlined "How Louise Found Her Job" (a girl from The Pas Band finds a job as a hairdresser in Portage-la-Prairie through the National Employment Service) and "Cowichan Women are Good Nurses". Enthusiasm also was lavished on placements of Indians in mining, in harvesting sugar beets in southern Alberta, and in clearing land for highway construction in the Northwest Territories.

The Alice-in-Wonderland quality of this avalanche of copy on Indian employment in industry, mining, forestry, or casual labour is further indicated by the fact that no attention whatever was given to informing Indian workers about the safety net against gross exploitation in an industrial capitalist economy: minimum wage laws, workmen's compensation, industrial safety standards, and labour unions.<sup>6</sup>

Stories about trapping and fishing managed to infiltrate the interstices of this effervescence about off-reserve placements. Commercial fisheries were the subject of most interest in this regard. Coverage was given to expansion of this industry among bands in northern Manitoba; construction of new boats by Haida deep-sea fishermen; and the formation of an Indian fishermen's cooperative at Big Cove, New Brunswick.<sup>7</sup>

*The Indian News* also provided some space during this period to business ventures undertaken by bands or individual reserves. Among these items, I have

selected two as the most interesting examples of the genre. One concerns the lease by a Fraser Valley band - Seabird Island - of 1,200 acres of their reserve land to a land development company in return for cash to fund Indian housing construction and for a guarantee that Indians would receive preference for jobs and skilled trades training in construction projects on the leased land (January, 1962). The other item reported the timber-cutting operations of the Dokis Band in northern Ontario in the following glowing terms:

"Previously, the men of Dokis, like other Indian woodsmen, worked as employees for non-Indian operators who leased timber land on the reserves. Now the Indian is working for himself, learning the responsibility of running his own business and the need to conserve the forest resources for perpetuity. Above all, he is getting much more money than he did working for somebody else." (May, 1960)

It was in this period that *The Indian News* reached its nadir as an outright propaganda sheet for the IAB. Towards the end of this period, however, an important change occurred in editorial policy. For the first time, views which were critical of the IAB saw the light of day. The first broadside against 'integrationism' was fired in April, 1962, by Clive Linklater, an Indian, and, at that time, a schoolteacher in Alberta. The paper published it, without comment, on its editorial page. Linklater suggested that:

"The Indian cannot decide whether this integration is a good or bad thing, whether desirable or undesirable, unless he can understand exactly what is meant by the word itself. He wonders just how this business of integration is going to affect him. He has never really been told, and he wants to know . . . .

The Indian wonders what motivates the agitation for integration. He wonders why the white man who has long wanted to 'keep the Indian in his place' suddenly turns around and wants to put the Indian in his 'rightful place'."

In the very next issue (July, 1962), *The Indian News* published a more direct criticism, this time from George Manuel, president of the North American Indian Brotherhood:

"I agree only to a certain extent with the experts who claim that education and integration are important above all. Many non-Indians are inclined to believe that the Indian question can be solved by abolishing the reserve system and assimilating the Indian into the non-Indian society. This would not be a solution. It would be the greatest tragedy that could befall the Indian people. If this complete integration were to take place, I feel that we

would be unable to compete with non-Indians on equal terms. We would be condemned to live in the squalor and filth of the ramshackle slums that would spring up at the outskirts of our cities, a burden to the taxpayers and to ourselves. In spite of enjoying 'full citizenship' we would be shunned by the non-Indian society, and instead of being assimilated into that society we would simply rot away."

The publication of these criticisms is significant because it is probably indicative of an appreciation on the part of the IAB that it could no longer use *The Indian News* as a propaganda organ and expect the paper to enjoy credibility among the Indian people. This realization was the thin edge of the wedge from which ultimately developed the concept of *The Indian News* as a paper funded by DIAND, but independent of DIAND policy under Indians' editorship. This development (to be examined in more detail in the following sections) in the long run was to have an impact on the process of selection and presentation of stories about economic development, as well as other subjects.

#### PHASE III- Oo-za-we-Kwun, Eskasoni Oysters, and the Spirit of 'Ksan - December, 1964- December, 1973

In her *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda 1968 - 1970*, Sally M. Weaver has provided a thumbnail sketch of one of the IAB's major undertakings in the 1960's - the community development program begun in 1964 under the direction of Walter Rudnicki, then chief of the Social Programs Division. As Weaver indicates, this program unleashed such ferment among Indians for self-determination that the Indian Affairs bureaucracy both in Ottawa and in the field was profoundly shaken, so much so that in 1968 Rudnicki's program was terminated. Given the wide-ranging impact of the community development initiative, it is not altogether surprising that *The Indian News*, beginning in December, 1964, should undergo a re-orientation away from the industrial placement program and towards detailed coverage of economic ventures at the band or reserve level. This was a turning point from which the paper never looked back. Though in less substantial numbers than before, stories would continue to appear about the successes of Indians in industry or the professions. But the integrationist ideological package in which these stories had been dressed up in the previous period had vanished. In Phase III and the subsequent phase, Indian workers might even read about the application of provincial labour laws to reserves, the findings of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, the federal Fair Employment Practices Act, and rights to vacation pay.<sup>8</sup>

During Phase III, *The Indian News* provided such wide-ranging coverage to local initiatives both by bands and by individuals that it is difficult to decide which projects to select for emphasis. The following summary was designed as a partial solution to the problem. A whirlwind introduction to the major stories in each sector, it does not pretend to be definitive.

## TRAPPING

The coverage of this sector is very poor. The only exceptions to this judgment are the following:

- trapping by Crees northwest of Gogama, Ontario (April, 1968)
- involvement by Indian trappers in the Ontario Trappers Association (Vol. 14, No. 12- 1972).<sup>9</sup>

## FISH AND OTHER SEA PRODUCTS

- progress of Crane Cove Oyster Farm Ltd., operated by the Eskasoni Band, Nova Scotia, in the Bras d'Or Lakes (May, 1973; December, 1973)
- progress of P.M. Packers crab harvesting and processing operation on the Mingan Reserve, Quebec; owned by the Mingan Band, a local non-Indian businessman, and A. Roy Clouston and Sons, a sea products marketing firm (December, 1973)
- construction of a fish processing plant at Port Simpson, B.C., to be owned and operated by the Pacific North Coast District Council, which in 1973 represented 5,000 people on seven reserves, and 5,000 people living off reserve (December, 1973)

## FORESTRY

- formation of Berens River Pulpwood Cooperative by the Berens River Band, Manitoba (December, 1964)
- Bersimis Band, Quebec, takes over the pulpwood operations on its reserve from the forestry corporations which had previously held the leases to them (August, 1969)
- Widjitiwin Corporation, a cooperative of approximately 30 Indian households founded in 1960, receives a grant from the Ontario Department of Social and Family Services to expand its pulpwood cutting operations at McIntosh, near Dryden, Ontario (April, 1970)
- successful inauguration of a logging Operation in the forest stands of the Chilcotin Military Training Area, B.C., by Caribou Indian Enterprises Ltd., owned by the Anahaim Band (January, 1973)

## MINING

- Whitefish River Band, near Little Current, Ontario is awarded a contract by Terra Tile of Canada to mine quartzite slabs from a quarry on their reserve for use in making quartzite tile for the Montreal subway flooring (August, 1967)

## AGRICULTURE

- Alexander Band of Crees, northwest of Edmonton, take over the 45 leases held by non-Indians on reserve land and establish a trust company to manage band farming Operations (January, 1966)
- review of operations of the Muskoday Band Farm, Saskatchewan, founded in 1962 and continuing to expand August, 1967)

- commencement of a \$715,000 program to break, clear, and sow 15,000 acres of prime farm land on the Saddle Lake Reserve, Alberta, by 1970 (October, 1968)
- success of a year-old potato farming operation owned by a six-family cooperative based in the Qu'Appelle Valley on the Cowessess Reserve at Broadview, Saskatchewan (December, 1969)

#### COMMERCE

- opening on the Blood Reserve near Standoff, Alberta, of Standoff Superette, a supermarket owned and operated by a cooperative based on the reserve (September, 1970)
- finalization of arrangements for construction of a \$250,000 retail and office complex on The Pas Reserve (September, 1973)
- opening of Native Metals Industry Ltd., a native-owned salvage business in Regina, founded after consultations between the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, the Saskatchewan Metis Society, and a group of non-native businessmen (July, 1970)

#### MANUFACTURING

- commencement of a small operation on the New Credit Reserve, near Brantford, Ontario to shape contour pads for new car seats (February, 1969)
- construction and opening of a garment manufacturing training facility to be operated by the Peguis Band on its reserve in the Interlake region of Manitoba, in cooperation with Monarch Wear of Canada (March, 1969; March, 1970)
- a survey of the ten manufacturing plants and nine stores and small businesses operated by individuals in the Village d'Hurons (September, 1969)
- agreement between the Bloods at Standoff and Haico Manufacturing Ltd. for construction on the reserve of a factory to employ more than 100 Bloods in the manufacture of mobile homes and sectional housing (February, 1970)

#### TOURISM AND RECREATION

- opening of Canada's first Indian-owned and -operated marina, by the Moose Deer Point Band, at Mactier, Ontario, on Georgian Bay (August, 1969)
- takeover and subsequent expansion of the facilities of the Fort William Ski Club of Ojibway Resorts, owned by the Fort William Band, Ontario (June, 1972)
- construction by the Sawridge Band of a motel to be owned and operated by the band on a parcel of land at the entrance to the town of Slave Lake, Alberta (July, 1972)
- opening in 1970 and subsequent development of the 'Ksan project, an

Indian museum and craft village near Hazelton, B.C., built and operated by the neighbouring Gitskan and Hagwilget Carrier people (February, 1973)

#### INDUSTRIAL PARKS

- subdivision in 1963 by the Kamloops Band of 400 acres of its reserve for the purpose of leasing to industries from nearby Kamloops, B.C. (March, 1965)
- industrial park planned by the Chippewas of Samia for their reserve (mentioned in a letter by Aylmer N. Plain in July, 1965 issue)
- establishment by Base International (Scientific) Ltd., a prefabricated homes manufacturing firm, of the first industry at Oo-za-we-Kwun Centre, Inc., a DIAND-subsidized private corporation which in the 1970's operated an industrial park and 'life-skills' training centre for Indian workers and their families at the former air base at Rivers, Manitoba (June, 1972)
- establishment at Oo-za-we-Kwun of a bicycle assembly factory by Sekine Canada Ltd., (June, 1973)

#### HANDICRAFTS

- opening by Clifford and Eleanore Whetung of one of the largest private commercial handicraft centres in Canada at the Curve Lake Reserve, near Peterborough (March, 1965)
- opening of a rug-hooking cooperative by 23 Sioux women on the Standing Buffalo Reserve, Saskatchewan (November, 1967)
- review of the successes of a recently-organized Cree woodworking artisans' cooperative at Whale River Post, Quebec (April, 1970)
- various handicraft projects undertaken by the Kehewin Band on its reserve northeast of Edmonton (July, 1972)

There were two developments of outstanding importance in the managerial operations of The Indian News during this period. Both were the two sides of the same coin. One of these developments was the attempt to broaden the focus away from IAB programs to other matters of importance in Indian communities by bringing Indians onto the editorial staff and charging them with the responsibility of cultivating contacts with Indian people across the country. The first such appointment was announced in the issue of October, 1965. As roving editor, said the paper, Russell C. Moses, a Delaware of the Six Nations Band, "will spend much of his time visiting Indian reserves and meeting Indians elsewhere in order to report on Indian activities for this newspaper." Moses' career as roving editor was short; he simply disappeared from sight, with no reason being published, after the April, 1966 edition. The appointment of his replacement - Keith Robert Miller, a Tuscarora also from the Six Nations Band - was announced in the December, 1966 issue: "An important part of his new duties will be to establish closer liaison with representatives of Indian communities across the country while gathering the news." Moses, Miller, and Miller's suc-

cessor,<sup>10</sup> 19-year-old Six Nations Mohawk David Monture (appointed in November, 1969), all made editorial page appeals to Indians to consider the paper as their own and to submit articles on community events. In April, 1968, Miller expressed concern that *The Indian News* featured so much news from Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta. "That's because the people in the regional offices, friendship centres and on the reserve", he explained, "take a more concerned interest in this paper and go to great lengths to have their events publicized." In February, 1969, the paper tried to broaden its base by announcing that it would pay stringers from British Columbia, the Yukon, Quebec, and the Maritime Provinces \$2.50 per column inch for stories on current Indian events.

There developed in close association with this grass-roots emphasis a tendency for the Indian editors to emphasize their independence from the Indian Affairs bureaucracy. This was evident in a mild form from the time of the very first editorial by Russell Moses, but became more pronounced in the feverish period before and immediately after the Government's release of its controversial White Paper in June, 1969. By February, 1969, both Miller and his co-editor, Jean Goodwill, a Saskatchewan Cree, were feeling the heat from Indians who had branded them as 'sellouts'. In an editorial in that month's issue, Miller attempted to distance himself from DIAND without at the same time identifying himself with Indian militants:

"I got to talking with a friend one morning over coffee, about the Indians and the problems which they confront everyday . . . The question of whether or not we were in fact selling out to the non-Indian also came into focus. The logical answer to that was we are not any more doing that than a person who sells his particular skill to a factory or a high steel rigger who sells his to a steel erecting company. Because we work here doesn't make us any less Indian than he who stays and commutes to his job off the reserve . . . While we would all like to call ourselves free agents and work independently on our own respective reserves there are limitations to how many people can do this . . . We feel that by working for the government we are contributing in a very minor way to the betterment of our people. This is considerably more than some people are doing."

It was during Monture's editorship that the claims to independence were given formal expression in a change in the editorial masthead. In March, 1970, Monture made the following appeal under the headline "What Do Native People Think of *The Indian News*?"

"A recent check with the Department's regional directors indicates that *The Indian News* is considered by some Indian readers as merely another 'Departmental Publication' and as a propaganda organ of Indian Affairs . . . Do you feel *The Indian News* is

ignoring the real issues of the time, or is it a worthwhile forum for opinions on current problems, a source of information on services available to the Canadian Indian and as a record of their achievements?

In brief, do you feel it is *your* paper?"

Perhaps partly in response to letters condemning the paper as indeed a mere mouthpiece of DIAND (June, 1970), the editorial masthead was altered so as to emphasize distance between the editors and the Department. The May, 1970 masthead ran as follows: "A free monthly newspaper published by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for distribution to Canadian Indians and other interested people." By contrast, the masthead in the June, 1970 issue pronounced:

*"The Indian News* is a publication devoted to news about Indians and Indian communities in Canada and is a vehicle for the free expression of viewpoints and opinions held by Indian people. The opinions and statements contained in its pages are not necessarily those of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, which produces this publication each month for free distribution to Indians and other interested persons and organizations."

This evolution towards editorial independence influenced the content of *The Indian News* in important ways. Miller, in a letter to the editor in May, 1971, made far-reaching allegations about the extent of interference which previously had prevailed in the paper's operations:

"Even before my arrival on the Ottawa scene, a system of undeniable censorship was in effect, prohibiting a clear and concise view of what was taking place on the native scene.

I can cite many instances of having to re-edit articles because certain phrases made your department aware of its mishandling of Indian affairs.

As a result, the Indian editors took the blame merely because they happened to be put in positions which, everyone assumed, carried all the elements of decision-making powers."

If these allegations are indeed an accurate reflection of the historical reality (and verification of this from other sources would be required), the situation during Monture's period as editor (November, 1969-June, 1971) would appear to have improved. In an interview in October, 1983, Monture stated that there was some "pushing and shoving" between himself and DIAND, but that the decisions he made on editorial policy and news content were not challenged.

Rather than attack his DIAND employers on the editorial page, Monture preferred an indirect approach.<sup>11</sup> This took the form of an excellent series of interviews with Indian leaders often very critical of DIAND and the introduction of a monthly feature entitled 'Historical Notes' which (as Monture recalled in 1983) "allowed anyone who wanted to read between the lines to see that not a hell of a lot had changed in 100 years of colonialism."<sup>12</sup>

It was only towards the very end of Phase III, however, that any news item was printed which directly criticized DIAND's economic development programs. In the issue of September, 1973, editor Theresa Nahanee printed a National Indian Brotherhood report the heart of which was an indictment of the federal government for its piecemeal, rather than comprehensive approach to the economic development of reserve communities. This criticism forms the bridge to Phase IV.

#### PHASE IV - "Developing Total Community" - January, 1974 - June, 1982

This final phase is not distinguished by any shift in emphasis from community economic development initiatives. Stories continued to roll from the press about Indian-owned marinas, shopping centres, housing subdivisions, industrial parks, handicraft cooperatives, Okanagan vineyards, and so on. What was new, however, was a consciousness of DIAND's performance in the economic development sector as a distinct policy area for debate. This new awareness was made manifest in several ways. The introduction into several issues in 1974 and 1975 of a full page headlined 'Economic Development' may seem like a merely superficial innovation, but in fact it was an indication that the subject had achieved an unprecedented degree of publicity and recognition. Icing on the cake was the publication in 1976 of six special supplements entitled 'Ideas', each devoted entirely to coverage of economic development. Five of these were devoted to individual provinces or regions (British Columbia, Alberta, the Maritimes, and two issues on Ontario), and one to an analysis of the Operation Improvement Process, the comprehensive assessment which DIAND had undertaken to identify the reasons for failure in the projects of its Economic Development Division.<sup>13</sup> These supplements are especially valuable because, for the first time in Indian News reporting there is evident a refreshing frankness about the problems many ventures were experiencing. Moreover, throughout Phase IV, publication of news stories on criticisms of DIAND's economic development programs was not infrequent, though certainly not a feature of every issue. These criticisms were made by Indian organizations, spokesmen for the Progressive Conservative and New Democratic parties, and, ultimately, in 1982, by DIAND's own minister, Hon. John Munro.<sup>14</sup>

Phase IV is also marked by considerable emphasis on those ventures which were based on the concept of the "total community approach". Perhaps taking a cue from the NIB report, Nahanee in January, 1974 published an unsigned four-page feature under the headline "Developing Total Community". One of the articles, entitled "The Total Community Approach", charged that "past programs have created a patchwork of development as program staff functioned

in their own area of concern and were unable to tackle related problems." The author proposed the following as a more effective approach:

"Indian development is a collective term rather than sporadic individual endeavours. No part of a community can be changed either positively or negatively without ultimately changing the whole. As Indian communities sunk deeper and deeper into the welfare trap, sports events and cultural activities disappeared also and in their place came the devastating social problems that have wrought havoc among our people . . . .

The keys to development are found in local control and total involvement on behalf of the community members.

The total community approach draws people together and involves the total life of the community including economic, spiritual, cultural, education, health, political and leisure activities . . . ."

The example of a total community approach which received most frequent coverage in *The Indian News* was that of the Kehewin Reserve, near Bonnyville in northeastern Alberta. In 1971, Kehewin's chief, Theresa Gadwa, and band manager Joe Dion, set the ball rolling for social and economic improvement by designing a comprehensive winter works program which included not only the usual tasks of cleaning ditches and cutting firewood but a handicraft program, a tannery, and a social development program which employed family counselors and published a newsletter. "They created an atmosphere of total employment", observed the paper in February, 1974, "and the job spectrum included all the areas of concern to the reserve." Kehewin was the subject of further laudatory reports in 1975. By that time, Dion, as chief, was working with DIAND to create a more stable economic base - including plans for a steel manufacturing operation - by designing with the assistance of the Edmonton firm of Halgard/venture Analysis Ltd. a "functional economic model" of the reserve economy over a ten- to twenty-year period. Though Kehewin held the spotlight, the paper reported the long-range development plans of a few other communities as well, namely, Shubenacadie Band, Nova Scotia; Big Cove Band, at Rexton, New Brunswick; Village d'Hurons at Lorette; and, the Bella Bella Band, at Waglisla, B.C.<sup>15</sup>

A few other topics under the rubric of economic development received noteworthy coverage during Phase IV. For the first time in the history of the paper, the law of hunting and fishing rights became a matter of lively interest. Several articles focussed on the tensions in British Columbia between coastal Indians and the federal Department of Fisheries, and on similar problems in Nova Scotia between Fisheries and the Kingsclear Band. Indian lawyer Bill Badcock, in his regular column on "Indians and the Law", offered valuable analyses of the Moosehunter and Batisse hunting rights cases. Articles on the pollution of the Serpent River near Elliot Lake, Ontario, by uranium tailings

drew attention to the effects of environmental destruction of an economic resource of the Serpent River Band. There also was considerable interest in DIAND's job retraining program, private employers' programs for recruiting native people into the labour force (e.g., Bechtel Canada's recruitment of native workers for the Athabasca tar sands projects), and in the federal government's efforts to increase employment of native people in the federal civil service. Towards the end of the period, coverage was given to a trend which appears to be building steam in the 1980's, namely, cooperative planning for economic development by multi-band organizations or tribal councils. This development is reflected in Indian News articles about the formation in 1981 of the Dakota Ojibway Development Group, a subsidiary of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council (an organization consisting of eight Manitoba bands); and the formation in 1979 by ten bands in the area of Fort Frances, Ontario, of a district government to manage economic development and social services.<sup>16</sup>

In June, 1982, *The Indian News* reached the end of the line. Editor Howard Bernard (an Algonquin from Golden Lake, Ontario), in a front-page editorial in that issue announced that both he and DIAND held the view that "if an independent, non-political national newspaper is required to serve Indian people then it should be published outside the Department." Bernard also cited as reasons for the paper's demise rising production costs beyond DIAND's ability to sustain and a problem of accountability which he expressed as follows: "where resources of the government are expended the normal accountability for those resources has not been present. As the publisher of Indian News, the Department and the Minister of Indian Affairs are accountable to Parliament for this expenditure. Yet to exercise that accountability places in jeopardy the independence of *Indian News*." DIAND was prepared, continued Bernard, "to turn over *Indian News*' assets - the name and the subscription list - and, perhaps, a small amount of seed money, to get the enterprise started on a new life in the hands of Indian publishers who will undertake to carry on the tradition of independence."<sup>17</sup>

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The foregoing has been a summary of the differing emphases in the coverage of Indian economic development in *The Indian News* between 1954 and 1982. It also has been a study of how the paper presented reality, and how this presentation was influenced across time by behind-the-scenes pressures tending toward the appointment of Indian editors and their increasing independence from DIAND. Still in its initial stages, research in the field of Indian economic history will have to determine the extent to which historical reality corresponds to the version of it presented in *The Indian News*. The initial steps on the 'Ksan project, for example, date to the early 1950's, and in 1958 the Skeena Treasure House, an integral part of the future 'Ksan, was constructed. Yet *The Indian News* did not even mention 'Ksan until February, 1973.<sup>18</sup> I suspect that research into recent Indian history will reveal other such instances of important, but neglected undertakings. Only after that kind of detailed research

has been completed will history have come closer to fulfilling its responsibility to the Indian past.

#### NOTES

1. The Indian News, from its inception through September, 1980, is available on microfilm through Micromedia Ltd. Subsequent issues presently are being filmed. Only one issue was published in 1954. In the next issue - January, 1955 - *The Indian News* indicated that it would publish quarterly. In fact, the paper appeared very irregularly. The following chart indicates the number of issues which appeared annually, from 1955 through 1982:

1955	4	
1956	2	
1957	2	
1958	2	
1959	2	
1960	2	
1961	3	
1962	4	
1963	3	
1964	3	
1965	3	
1966	5	
1967	5	
1968	5	
1969	11	(plus special issue on the White Paper)
1970	12	
1971	10	
1972	10	
1973	11	
1974	6	
1975	4	
1976	4	(plus special issue on James Bay Agreement)
1977	9	
1978	9	
1979	11	
1980	12	
1981	11	
1982	6	(terminated with June, 1982 issue)

2. Unfortunately, there are no statistics indicating the percentages of the adult status Indian population capable of reading English or French during the period of this study.

3. On the construction program at Saugeen, see August, 1954, and April, 1955; Cape Croker: August, 1954; Christian Island: January, 1956; Sturgeon Lake: May, 1956; Lower French River: April, 1955; Georgina Island: January, 1956; Moose Factory and the James Bay Agency: July, 1955; Betsiamites: April, 1955; Hobbema: April, 1955; Blood Reserve: August, 1954, and May, 1956; Peigan Reserve: April, 1955; Driftpile: August, 1954; and the Lytton Agency: August, 1954, and January, 1956.
4. On the fishery at Sandy Lake, see August, 1954, at Lake Athabasca: January, 1955; beaver conservation at Fort Rae: January, 1955; Sipanok: January, 1955; and methods of fur preparation: January, 1956; Peigans' herds: April, 1955, and July, 1955; and Piapot Reserve agriculture: January, 1955.
5. For an example of the success story genre, see "Indian Magistrate Holds Respect of All", July, 1955. On Walpole Island Construction Company, see August, 1954; Village d'Hurons: July, 1955; St. Regis: April, 1955; and Cowichan sweater production: May, 1956.
6. For "Through Their Own Efforts... They are Succeeding", see January, 1962; "Young Men Reveal Growing Power of Education": January, 1962; "Nuclear Engineer Indian in the 21st Century": July, 1962; "How Louise Found Her Job": May, 1960; and "Cowichan Women are Good Nurses": May, 1960. For Indian placements in mining, see September, 1957; sugar beet harvesting: March, 1959, and November, 1959; and land clearing for highway construction or oil pipelines: June, 1958, and March, 1959.
7. On northern Manitoba fisheries, see June, 1958, November, 1959, and January, 1962; Haida boats: October, 1958; and the Big Cove co-op: June, 1961.
8. On application of provincial labour laws, see February, 1980, and July, 1980; Royal Commission on the Status of Women: December, 1970, and January, 1971; Fair Employment Practices Act: August, 1970. and vacation pay: November, 1967.
9. The month is not indicated on this edition.
10. The announcement of Miller's resignation appears in the November, 1969 issue. The only reason offered for his departure was a decision to take a position with the Union of Ontario Indians. It is possible, however, that conflict between himself and DIAND was a factor in this decision. That such conflict existed is indicated in a letter to the editor by Miller in 1971, excerpts of which I reproduce at a later point in this article.
11. Monture's editorials, in fact, were characterized by scrupulous moderate-

ness.

12. Author's notes from personal interview with David Monture, October 27, 1983.
13. See also the entire issue of *The Indian News* on the arts and crafts industry: Vol. 17, No. 6, 1976 (month not indicated).
14. For Munro's characterization of DIAND's response to the challenge of economic development as "pretty inadequate", see the issue of March, 1982.
15. On Kehewin, see July, 1972, January, 1974, February, 1974, April -June, 1974, September, 1975, October - December, 1975, January, 1976, and Vol. 17, No. 10, 1976 (month not indicated); Shubenacadie: Summer, 1975, and January, 1979; Big Cove: October - December, 1975; Village d'Hurons: Vol. 18, No. 6, 1977 (month not indicated); and Bella Bella: Vol. 17, No. 9, 1976 (month not indicated).
16. On conflicts between B.C. coastal Indians and the Department of Fisheries, see September, 1975, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1978 (month not indicated), Vol. 19, No. 5, 1978 (month not indicated), and June, 1980; Kingsclear Band: Vol. 19, No. 6, 1978 (month not indicated), November, 1978, and December, 1978; Moosehunter and Batisse cases: January, 1979, March, 1979, and July, 1981; Serpent River: Vol. 18, No. 5, 1977 (month not indicated), and February, 1979; job training and civil service employment programs: Vol. 17, No. 8, 1976 (month not indicated), Vol. 18, No. 2, 1977 (month not indicated), Vol. 18, No. 5, 1977 (month not indicated), Vol. 18, No. 6, 1977 (month not indicated), Vol. 18, No. 8, 1978 (month not indicated), December, 1978, and April, 1982; Dakota Ojibway Development Group: September, 1981; and Fort Frances district government: December, 1979.
17. The wheel seems now to have completed the circle. In September, 1982, DIAND began publication of a quarterly 12-page bilingual newsletter - Minister's Letter - which has an insipid tone reminiscent of *The Indian News* at its nadir in the late 1950's as a propaganda organ. Globe and Mail reporter Robert Sheppard described the first issue as "containing eight pictures of Indian Affairs Minister John Munro and other Cabinet ministers, as well as first-person articles from the minister promoting his plans and the work of the department" (*Globe and Mail*, September 28, 1982).
18. The foregoing details on the inception and progress of the 'Ksan project in the 1950's are drawn from this article in the February, 1973 issue.

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