Slave woman, who made peace between the Chipewyan and the Cree in 1715. From a painting by Franklin Arbuckle for the Hudson's Bay Company.

Northern Alternatives

JIM LOTZ

The late Blair Fraser ended his book *The Search for Identity* with the following paragraphs:

> "Meanwhile, 'development' continues. Canada's standard of living, the second highest in the world . . . is in no danger of losing that proud position. Washing machines and television sets abound, as in no other nation save one. Superhighways devour uncounted acres of fertile land, and the second highest incidence of automobiles achieves, in the metropolitain areas, a second highest air pollution. Ugly little towns prosper, all calling themselves cities and all looking like faithful copies of Omaha, Nebraska.
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> "This is not a Canada to call forth any man's love. But just north of it still lies a different kind of land — too barren ever to be thickly settled, too bleak to be popular like Blackpool or Miami. There is no reason to doubt that it will always be there, and so long as it is there Canada will not die."

Blair Fraser's book covered the period 1954-67, and the last chapter of it is entitled "The once and future Canada". His theme — that somehow the Canadian North will redeem the nation — is one that underlies all discussions about northern development. Criticism of northern development — if the North is treated like some sort of national holy place — then becomes tantamount to treason and heresy. Ever since the new thrust towards northern development began in 1954 with the creation of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, a ding-dong battle has been fought in Canada over the "right" way to develop the North. For a long time, it seemed, development was just a matter of mines and roads, of building schools and educating the native peoples. But over the past few years the process of northern development has become highly politicized. The North has become the ground upon which a number of national conflicts are being fought out: conservationists against developers, modernists against traditionalists, humanists against technocrats, evolutionaries against revolutionaries. From being a remote and romantic land, Canada's North has suddenly become a mirror to the nation. What happens there, whether it is the finding of Franklin relics or an increase in native mortality, is reported in detail in the media. The bright promise and the messy reality are paraded side by side for all to see. From an objective standpoint, there seems to be some great split here in Canadians' views of the North. What is wrong in the North? Why do great dreams and ideals keep crashing to the ground? Why are attempts to "help the native peoples" continually being frustrated? The following two recent Canadian publications help to answer these questions:

Crowe, K. J. *A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada.* Montreal: Arctic Institute of North America and McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974. 226 pp. $4.00 (paper).

Davis, R. and Zannis, M. *The Genocide Machine in Canada; the Pacification of the North.* Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1973. 203 pp. $10.95 (cloth), $3.95 (paper).

Both books clearly indicate the alternatives open for the future development of the North. *A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada* is written from the inside. It documents the integrity of the traditional way of life in the North without romanticizing it and shows how cooperation among people in the North, and between northerners and southerners, occurred in the past. It also tells of the terrible impact of the contact between cultures. It is wise and gentle in tone and has an air of patient explanation about it. *The Genocide Machine in Canada* is a muckraking account of northern development that accuses the Canadian government of plotting genocide in northern Canada — by which seems to be meant the destruction of the way of life of the indigenous peoples. It is a devastating attack upon existing assumptions about the North and the values of the decision makers, and is angry and ideological in tone.

The Crowe book arose out of the Man in the North project of the Arctic Institute of North America. That of Davis and Zannis criticizes the Institute, while acknowledging extensive use of its excellent library. Both books take a broad sweeping view of the North, and fit a mass of detailed information into a framework that will startle many southern Canadians. Basically, the two books present two contrasting views. Crowe's book is informed; that of Davis and Zannis is opinionated. Coming from different directions, both books reach essentially the same conclusions — that the North and its peoples will have to be approached in a different way in the future, and that northern development is basically a problem of southern attitudes.

The Genocide Machine in Canada is published by a left wing house, and comes with an Introduction by Boyce Richardson who has made quite a name for himself by opposing, in print and in person, the James Bay project. Davis and Zannis used only publicly accessible information and data in writing the book. When they stick to the facts, the book reads well. When they start to interpret those facts within a narrow — and, in my view, untenable — ideological framework, the book becomes dull and stodgy. Richardson compares the two authors to Ralph Nader in their "sheer hard work", "relentless accumulation of detail", and "strong sense of mission". This is a reasonable comparison. Nader does not drive a car. And it does not appear as if Davis or Zannis have ever been "north of sixty". To be sure, the Canadian Government has always been keen in the past to fly plane loads of journalists around the North on public relations tours. At least these two authors owe nothing to the Canadian or Territorial Governments.

Their book is an attack on the blind, muscular approach to development in the North. Development has been equated in the past with the exploitation of primary resources. In the process, as the authors show, the old native way of life has been destroyed, and dependency on "outside" experts has been fostered. The book begins with some tedious statements about the meaning of genocide. Like many other current words, this one is badly overworked. The authors imply that the Canadian Government has followed a policy of deliberate genocide in the North. Here I part company with them. In all my time in and out of the North, moving between Ottawa and the Territories, I never saw any evidence of a deliberate plan to destroy the North or its people. Indeed I never came across a deliberate

plan to do anything in the North. I saw instead the continuous reaction to a series of crises, a simple equation of development with resource exploitation, a lot of ego-tripping as individuals pushed their ideas and their programmes as the final solution to the problems of the North, and much bureaucratic in-fighting in government agencies charged with northern development. I also saw a lot of "sheer hard work" and a "strong sense of mission" in the North and in Ottawa. I saw a lot of selfish opportunists make money out of the miseries of the North. I also saw a lot of dedicated, selfless people give a great deal of themselves to help to create, in the North, a saner, more humane society than the one in the South. Whether the exploiters or the idealists did the more harm in the North needs to be determined in the perspective of history. If policy is the sum total of the ideas and actions of individual men and women, then Canada's northern development policy to date is the most schizophrenic creation of the times. Except, of course, that a similar split between idealism and exploitation has marked the whole course of development throughout history, and is a key concept in understanding what is happening in the Third World today.

I agree with Davis and Zannis that the end result of the official non-policy of northern development has been the creation of dependency in the Territories. And this has occurred not only among the native peoples, but also among the white population. These two writers have hit upon a fundamental truth about the North that explains a lot of what is going wrong in the region. The North has been treated as a colonial area where there is "control by one power over a dependent area or people." In such a situation, dependency is created by the colonists, who are the givers of all goods, the source of all benefits. And this encourages manipulation by the colonized, who soon learn how to put the squeeze on their colonial masters. The result is that everyone has to take sides. There is very little middle ground, and those who refuse to play the game get frozen out. In an article in the Toronto *Globe and Mail's* Weekend Magazine of 14 September 1974, for example, a story is told of the Inuit of Repulse Bay who are getting the best both of the white man's world and of traditional life. The Inuit live in houses that are built at a cost of $36,000 each. They still hunt and fish. The Repulse Co-op. received a request for four inukshuks (piles of standing stones) from an art dealer in southern Canada. They picked up some shattered rock, assembled an inukshuk, took it apart again, numbered the stones, and sent them down south, charging the dealer $1,000 for each one. To this was added $1,000 in freight charges for each pile of stones. This combination of gullibility and exploitation has long been a feature of cultural contact in the North. We have come full circle when the Inuit sell stones as art.

In the North I encountered a lot of manipulation. Some people claimed to be helping the Eskimo, and did rather well out of it themselves. But I don't believe that they were ever aware of what they were doing. Or if they were, it was part of the traditional ethic of cleaning up and cleaning out. The hard-rock miners in the old days never claimed they were up North to help the natives. These days we have glossed over the fact of raw human greed with talk of "helping people to help themselves", "helping cultural development", "saving the native people's heritage", and "creating employment for the indigenous peoples."

The Genocide Machine in Canada sets out its premises, and then piles up a staggering amount of information in an attempt to validate these premises. The authors deal with exploration and oil spills. They show how the Government of Canada reacted to the voyage of the *Manhattan*. They provide some information on pipeline damage. They also wonder whether there really is an oil crisis in North America. In their chapter on "Progress and human rights", the authors document how native peoples have been pushed aside when the choice was between respecting their aboriginal rights and developing natural resources. They also attack those who would turn the Indians and the Inuit into museum pieces, and those who use them for experiments. They cite in particular the experiment concerning venereal disease carried out in Inuvik.

The military presence in the North is examined, and then Davis and Zannis turn their attentions to education, health (physical and mental) and justice. All are ripped apart, and shown to be unjust. Then three vignettes are presented: Project Chariot; and the Icefield Ranges Research Project and the Man in the North Project of the Arctic Institute of North America. Again and again the theme that there is a plot against the North and against the people there is presented and "proved".

Their final chapter deals with 'Dismantling the genocide machine'. And what do they suggest? The answer is "to raise the awareness of common humanity to the point of anguish". Davis and Zannis show a sublime faith in "continuing research into the impact of intercultural relations . . ." (Actually, we are already nearly immersed in studies, research, data and information on what happens when cultures collide.) Another goal "might be to explore the ways in which technology and science could be incorporated by groups for their own purposes. Work is also needed to investigate and establish aboriginal land claims". The authors also counsel direct confrontation, a massive education programme, action by counter-culture groups, mobilization of southern support, and the leaking of information to the press and to native peoples to help them confront the established system on their own. In essence, confrontation is seen as the key to future control by the peoples of the North. Such a tactic makes for dramatic headlines and good live television. It is dramatic; it is immediate; and in the long run it is ineffective.

Keith Crowe's book ends with equally stern advice. He suggests that "Canadian society as a whole will have to sort itself out, to come together and work as a whole." He sees the problems of northern development originating in the fractured nature of southern society. Crowe also suggests "that . . . the native northerners (must learn) to see history, present and future, as systems . . . Money, calculation, education and organization can be used, just as nature was used, to plan the best life possible for children and the cultures they carry."

A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada is, quite simply, the best book written on the North in recent years. It is balanced, readable, accurate and human. It was requested by the participants at the Man in the North Conference in Inuvik in November 1970. Keith Crowe was seconded from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to supervise the research for, and to write, the book. He worked with a team of regional researchers: Jacobie Ikeperiar, John Pudnak, Roy Daniels, John T'Seleie and Edwin Scurvey. If the Davis-Zannis

thesis of northern colonialism is correct, then this book would never have been written, especially with the help of two organizations they believe to be helping to operate the genocide machine in the Canadian North: the Arctic Institute and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

The history was written as "a classroom text for northern native students of early teenage", but the audience for this book is much wider. It throws great light on southern and on northern Canada, and puts the history of Canada into a new perspective. It begins with the arrival of man in the Americas, then describes the aboriginal groupings, the physical environment, and the traditional round of life. Survival was the important thing, and this meant infanticide and suicide at times. But, as Crowe notes, the explorer Ross met Netsilik people pulling an old man on a sledge over difficult country. The book contains lots of authentic information on everything from warfare to games. The way of life in traditional times is set against the physical environment. The cultures that developed in the North made use of every available resource. These cultures were all in delicate balance, and the arrival of white outsiders tipped the balance.

The four hundred years of contact unfold in the rest of the book. Crowe settles for the word "foreigner" to describe the newcomers to the North. This history of the period of contact takes on a new dimension when seen from the perspective of the original peoples. The Micmacs had Inuit slaves; they raided the Montagnais and helped Europeans to wipe out the southern Labrador Inuit and the Beothuk Indians. Crowe stresses one theme throughout the book: that of the swamping of the people of the North by foreigners with a superior knowledge of technology that gave them greater control over the environment. At times both sides benefited from it.

> "There were happy times like the day when the trader George Cartwright taught Shadluvinik and his band of Inuit at Cape Charles to play leapfrog, or when Atuiuk and Tuglavinak went fox-hunting on horseback in England".

One of the achievements of this book is that it gives final recognition to the many northern native peoples who were concerned and dedicated — to the interfering foreigners as well as to their own people. Chief Tooma of the Naskapi, Slave Woman who made the peace in the Northwest Territories in 1715 that opened up the area to the fur trade, Chief Robuscan of the Abitibi who carried his crippled wife on his back for twenty years, Tatanoyuk who interpreted for Franklin and Albert One-Eye — all these people have been rescued from obscurity. Stefansson used to say that adventure was what happened when things went wrong in the Arctic. Many arctic adventurers were incompetents who tried to impose their will on the land and on the people. And this just did not work, as Crowe amply demonstrates. He retells the story of Ipilkvik and Tukkolerktuk ("Joe" and "Hannah") who helped the explorer Hall and kept the *Polaris* party alive on its drift south after the ship was wrecked. They were two outstanding Canadians.

The history of contacts in the North in the nineteenth century is discussed in detail. The impact of the missionaries, the whalers, and the traders, the epidemics, the passing of the old way — each new wave of foreigners hit the northern peoples with terrible force. By 1910, only about 130 Mackenzie Inuit were left out of a

population that once numbered 2,000, after the whaling boom ended. The fur boom raised living standards in the North in the nineteen thirties, but it too burst. In the space of forty pages Crowe attempts to sum up what has happened in the North since the end of the Second World War. One section is headed "Government, friend or foe?" The whole spectrum of attempts to develop the North is described — carvings, making ookpiks, raising pigs. All of these provided temporary answers to the problems of the original peoples. As Crowe notes, these schemes "caused headaches for the government officials and laughter for the native peoples".

Crowe brings up the problem of the lost generation — the young people who grew up between 1950 and 1970. He discusses the political realities at the present time — the rise of Inuit and Indian power, the land rights questions, the opposition to the old style of northern development. If the land claims are settled, then the original peoples of the North will be quite affluent. But the message of the North is that wealth creates as many problems as it solves. For all the money pumped into the North, no real answers to the dilemmas of development have emerged. Maybe there are no answers. Would anyone connected with the North be prepared to believe this? Davis and Zannis want to see more confrontation between native and white peoples. Crowe suggests that those charged with northern development should have the courage "to give way and in some cases 'back-off' ". Confrontation, giving way, backing-off — are these the answers?

One thing is certain. The future of the North cannot be merely a continuation of the past. Somewhere there has to be a *qualitative* change in the Canadian approach to the North. And that means that people have to change their minds about the causes of the problems of the North. There are not going to be any easy solutions to the problems of northern development, because development is a process, not a product. And a process implies continuous change, adaptation, movement.

Personally, I am not pessimistic about the North. Nor is Keith Crowe, even after recording so many banalities and so many catastrophes. The original peoples have shown that they can adapt, change, learn and survive. White people in the North too are changing, and so are the southern decision makers. Interestingly enough, neither book suggests that the native peoples vote their candidates on to the Territorial councils, and on to the community councils and town councils in the North. This way — the democratic way — would be one method of bringing about change. Another possibility is for the people of the North to do their own research on Ottawa and on the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Maybe that is where the problems lie.

These two books are essential reading for anyone concerned about the North, and committed to its development. Some people may not like the style of the Davis-Zannis book, and may not care for the conclusions in the Crowe book. But both books will be read by the "lost generation" of the Canadian North, and by those who seek to help them. The information and ideas in both books can be used to stoke up a sense of injustice, and to prove points about past exploitation.

The books clearly present the choice ahead in the Canadian North — between confrontation and co-operation.