

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Lesson 2

FUR TRADE ECONOMICS

Historical Overview

Lesson 2: Fur Trade Economics

I AIM

1. The students will understand the nature of the trade relationship between the mercantile companies of England and France, and the Native People.

II OBJECTIVES

The students will:

1. Define trade, barter, commodity, middleman, mercantilism, colonialism, and underdevelopment.
2. Outline the motivations of both Native and European Peoples involved in the fur trade.
3. Compare the French and English trading systems involved in the early fur trade.
4. Assess the historical significance of the fur trade and its impact on the traditional Native social systems.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Use the core concepts outlined in the appendix to the Teacher's Familiarization Material, page II - II - 4, to 20.
Using these core concepts, discuss the meanings of core words in class. For this discussion, use the tactic of first determining what the students presently understand about the core words. Then, with continued discussion, prompting when necessary, ensure that the students

build up their concepts of the core words until they are in accord with the definitions provided in the appendix, pages

2. Use the handout, EARLY FUR TRADE ECONOMICS, II - II - 27-29 Have the students read the handout, then discuss it in the class until the students have acquired and organized the concepts in a manner that approximates the outline of the essay in the Teacher's Familiarization Material. During the class discussion address the following questions:
 - a) Why was North America "discovered" by Europeans?
 - b) How did the capitalist nation-states of Europe acquire money that was used to build up European industry for that historical period called "the industrial revolution"?
 - c) Who were the first slaves under capitalism?
 - d) What is semi-slavery?
 - e) What group of people benefitted most from slavery in South America, and the fur trade of North America?
 - f) How did mercantilism combine the interests of the ruling merchant class to the interests of the state?
 - g) How did the changeover from a communal economy to a commodity producing economy lead to the destruction of the traditional Indian tribal societies?

3. Visual aids may be used to supplement the written material provided. Following is a list of films. Select any one of these films for use with this lesson:
 - a) AGE OF THE BEAVER (17 minutes, Saskmedia, 1717)
This film gives a brief history of the fur trade in Canada including routes of the traders, and also depicts the warfare carried out by

by the French and British Imperial nations, showing the Indian tribal alliances in this war.

- b) THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LEDGER (19 minutes, N.F.B. 106C 0172 130) This is a rather "dry" film but it deals with the fur trade economics from the Native perspective.
- c) LAVERENDRYE (25 minutes, Saskmedia A469) The story of the famous French fur trader.
- d) Alexander Mackenzie - THE LORD OF THE NORTH (28 minutes N.F.B. 106C 0164 115) The story of the famous Scottish fur traders.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

In a written test, have the students define all the terms relevant to this lesson, (supplied in the Teacher's Familiarization Material, pages II - II - 4 to 20) These terms must be understood by the students both for this lesson, and many of the future lessons in the Course.

TEACHERS FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL

EARLY FUR TRADE ECONOMICS

North and South America were "discovered" as a result of the needs of the European Nation-States' requirements for colonies which were to be used to provide capital through the mercantile system of trade. This capital was used to launch "the industrial revolution" in the European Nation-States, at the expense of the colonies.

What does this mean?

Indeed, our very existence has, from the beginning, been contingent upon the international interplay of various world empires. The discovery and economic development of the "New World" can be understood only in terms of the emerging capitalist states' military and economic competition, both within Europe and overseas, for colonies. The rising class of entrepreneurs and merchants was, even prior to the seventeenth century, strong enough to influence the sovereign state apparatus that existed in Spain.

Various Treaties between conflicting powers in Europe have "granted" vast portions of the Western Hemisphere, already inhabited by people, to this or that European Sovereign or aristocrat.

Territory may have been granted to a head of state by God through his servant the Pope,¹ or by a Sovereign King to his aristocratic friends or allies.²

By the seventeenth century, the capitalist revolution was in motion throughout most of Europe. However, the English revolution was well in advance of the competing European powers. Outright

control of the State by the merchant class began in England when Oliver Cromwell defeated the Stewart Kings, ending the absolute Monarchy and creating middle class "parliamentary democracy." This opened the door for an unprecedented expansion in trade and commerce abroad, resulting in industrial growth in England, as the force of the revolutionary middle class was unleashed onto the world-stage of history.

Sources of Cheap Labour: Slavery and Semi-slavery

In the transition from a feudal to an industrial economy, an immense work-force was required to carry out the myriad of labour-intensive tasks that were characteristic of that epoch, the epoch of "mercantilism." The purposes for the acquisition of colonies by the capitalist Nation-States was the production of abundant raw materials and the control of an abundant source of labour.

When England became a unified Nation-State, under the auspices of middle class parliamentary democracy, it had little difficulty in conquering the highly divided clans of Ireland and Scotland.³ The destruction of the Keltic clan system in Britain by the rising class of merchants had the same genocidal dynamic as the later destruction of the Indian tribes of North America by the same class of people.⁴

Following the subjugation of the Keltic clan system of Great Britain, slaves were obtained from Africa to become a special work force for the production of sugar and cotton staples of the Southern Hemisphere. Thus, Britain's two-pronged economic attack on North and South America utilized the surplus population created

by the destruction of the British clan system primarily as a work-force for the extraction of the fur staple of North America, while the Negro slaves from Africa were utilized as a work force in South America.

The Kelts were used as a "semi-slave" work force of people who were "transported" for minor crimes to the colonies, as workers in the plantations of Virginia and elsewhere.

Sources of Merchant Capital

The chief source of English mercentile capital was the slave trade, or the "triangular trade route." Below, Eric Williams describes how its capital was generated to finance the "industrial revolution" in England:

The triangular trade thereby gave a triple stimulus to British industry. The Negroes were purchased with British manufactures; transported to the plantations, they produced sugar, cotton, indigo, molasses and other tropical products, the processing of which created new industries in England; while the maintenance of the Negroes and their owners on the plantations provided another market for British industry, New England agriculture and the Newfoundland fisheries. By 1750 there was hardly a trading or a manufacturing town in England which was not in some way connected with the triangular or direct colonial trade. The profits obtained provided one of the main streams of that accumulation of capital in England which financed the Industrial Revolution.⁵

Nearly as significant to the accumulation of "merchant capital" was the fur trade of the North. The same processes of the exploitation of colonial "staple commodities" is described by H.G. Aitkin:

In broad outline the story of Canadian economic development until the early years of the twentieth century is a simple one. The rate and direction of developments have been determined by the economic characteristics of

a number of staple products: fish, fur, timber, wheat, and minerals. Each of these staples has posed its own particular problems of organization and marketing, and each has cast Canada in the role of an economic satellite and marginal supplier of other more advanced areas, chiefly Great Britain and the United States. Fish, fur, wheat, and square timber kept Canada within the economic orbit of the former; lumber, metallic minerals, and more recently crude oil drew Canada closer to the latter. Great Britain and the United States have also been the principal sources of capital imports and of the immigrant labour supply.⁶

Slavery was not required for the exploitation of the North American fur staple. What was required was a tightly controlled work force with European skills and a large nomadic class of independent commodity producers, depending on the trading company. For the former, a vast surplus population of people displaced by the destruction of feudalism and the clan systems was available. For the latter, a new commercial system was introduced, designed specifically for colonial exploitation, which presented specific new problems.

The "New Wealth" of the Bourgeois Class Provided a European Market for Furs

The creation of a market for furs was not necessary. In fact, a brisk market existed across Europe for luxury furs prior to the opening of the fur trade in North America. The rising class of merchants and entrepreneurs used furs as ostentatious symbols of wealth.

In medieval Europe common furs of local origin were among the necessary items of everyday life for the common people. Goat-skins, deer-skins, dogs, cats, hares and conies were in everyday use, particularly for the peasants and labourers. The landed

aristocracy and the nascent middle class provided a luxury market for furs from Scandanavia or Russia. These were expensive symbols of wealth and style. Foxes, bears, beaver, sable and ermine were in constant demand and quickly became symbols of class and wealth.⁷

An existing European market for luxury furs created the drive to exploit the fur resource of North America despite the costs involved. This market provided the basis for incredible profits, since the local sources of such furs were becoming depleted by the sixteenth century.⁸

This was a market where:

Sustained demand often led, through victimization and debanching of [sic] primitive tribes, to fantastic profits of 1000% and 2000%—though war, cut-throat competition, losses at sea, and a three-to-six-year lapse between investment and return, demanded high compensation.⁹

The Chartered Company: A Union of the Merchant Class and the State

As can be seen, the time-lapse between investment and return, the distances and risks involved, the potential losses at sea, the need for social control of the Natives of the colony, and the state of war that frequently existed between the contending European Nation-States precluded "private" or "free enterprise" methods of exploitation. For these reasons, the "chartered company" came into being. The chartered company was the materialisation of the union of the bourgeoisie and the state. Through the chartered company the bourgeoisie and the state became one-and-the-same, in order to generate industrial capital from colonial exploitation.

The chartered company became the government of a colony,

controlling the police, the army when it was needed, and it had its own set of laws for the colony to better facilitate its profits from trade and commerce with the colony. Under the chartered company there was not even an ostensible separation between the merchant class and the state. The state was used to enrich this class, as private individuals, while at the same time, public funds were used for transportation and military conquest when required:

The chartered company had behind it both a tradition of usefulness and a capacity for action in the difficult circumstances of seventeenth-century colonial expansion. Those circumstances demanded that the incentives for expansion and settlement should arise from private desires and be supported by private capital; but they also demanded that such desires should be regimented in the interests of the state. For this reconciliation of private incentive and state interest the chartered company seemed invaluable.¹⁰

Indeed, the use of state power for the conquest of colonies was no accident. It was spelled-out to and paid for by the English monarch.. In 1584 the "younger Hakluyt" was granted the Prebend at Bristol when he presented his Discourse of Western Planning to Queen Elizabeth. The treatise marked a new approach to colonization. This treatise outlined the system of merchantilism that was used to create capital through the acquisition of colonies. The treatise emphasized the present saturation of European markets, the need to find fresh outlets for manufactured goods, and the production of new raw materials abroad that could utilize the redundant population left over in Britain by the destruction of the old pre-capitalist societies.¹¹

From this plan grew the mercentile system where domestic manufacturers and colonial trade for raw materials were integrated

into an over-all balance aimed at bolstering the wealth of the ruling class. Rich commented:

So integrated, the imperial economy would become increasingly independent of alien supplies or markets and stronger because, as an imperial unit, it would achieve a balance of exports over imports. Any colonial trade that would supply goods which must otherwise be bought outside the empire, or which could be sold on the European market, would meet with favour, and any project which showed promise of such a reaction would be sure of discussion and of favourable reception.¹²

France Enters the Fur Trade

Initially, France dominated the fur trade of the North, just as England dominated the plantations of America and South America. The mercantile companies of France were structured in the same way as their historical counterparts of England. The company was controlled by the French aristocracy, was designed to produce profit from the colonies, and it combined the military, the Church, and the colonial government, to ensure that the fur trading venture would be a profitable success. W.A. Mackintosh commented:

The institutional development of New France was an indication of the relation between the fur trade and the mercantile policy. The fur trade provided an ample supply of raw material for the manufacture of highly profitable luxury goods. A colony engaged in the fur trade was not in a position to develop industries to compete with manufacturers of the mother country. Its weakness necessitated reliance upon the military support of the mother country. Finally the insatiable demands of the Indians for goods stimulated European manufactures.¹³

J.M.S. Careless wrote, describing the structure of the French chartered company:

It was only at the close of the sixteen century, when a strong king, Henry IV, had restored order to his country, that the French turned once more towards colonizing Canada. Nevertheless, in the years between 1543 and 1600 private French ships had continued to visit Cartier's river of Canada and had extended the fur trade to the St. Lawrence. The feeling was rising that great opportunities for wealth and power might lie in that region, if France would only act.

Henry IV, accordingly, was ready to grant a monopoly of trade in order to establish colonies in America. The practice of colonial monopolies was widely accepted in Europe at the time. Wealthy nobles and merchants, singly or in groups, would seek a royal charter of monopoly granting them sole rights of trade and control in some portion of the new world overseas, in exchange for their undertaking to develop the country and plant a settlement there. The monopoly protected the adventuring group from having to struggle against trade rivals as well as against the wilderness. The crown in return would see its colonial holdings built up. This pattern of monopolies lay behind the early history of New France, as well as that of the English colonies on the American mainland.¹⁴

Again, the union of the ruling class and the state apparatus was for the same reasons of conquest and trade expediency with the colonies.

The French fur trade moreover . . . lent itself readily to monopoly . . . Trade goods had to be carried across the width of the ocean and the furs transported as far back to the uncertain market. Hence a struggle between competing traders might easily wipe out the shaky profits. It seemed that only a group with a monopoly could afford the burden of transportation and stand the risk of bad markets by avoiding the ruinous drain of competition. At any rate, throughout the history of the fur trade in Canada there was a constant tendency towards monopoly control, while strong competition between traders usually ended in the ruin of some and the merging of the survivors in a single organization.¹⁵

England Enters the Fur Trade

However, the regime in New France, with its stifling feudal control over the habitants and traders, coupled with a high degree of official corruption,¹⁶ drove the most aggressive Quebec entrepreneurs into an alliance with the English merchant class. Thus, Radisson and Groseilliers appeared at the English Court and initiated English trade in the Hudson's Bay area. From this union the Hudson's Bay Company developed on the basis of a trade monopoly "granted" to Prince Rupert in 1670.

England now had two different and opposing forces at work in the New World, since settlement was ~~inimical~~ to the fur trade. To the North, the Hudson's Bay Company was involved in the extraction of the fur staple, but in the Thirteen Colonies the English as well as the Dutch were engaged, from the beginning, in settlement, agriculture and industry.¹⁷

Whereas the Alleghanis (mountains) tended to restrict English settlement to the coastal area, French settlements in the lower St. Lawrence were located on a river that was a natural highway to the interior.

New France and New England: Opposing Political Economies

New England was rapidly being settled. However, the French were few in numbers: "only about a hundred habitants [sic] by 1642 and only about three thousand after serious efforts to organize emigration."¹⁸ By 1663 the French were more of a military garrison than a settlement and they were predominantly male, whereas the New

England settlers tended to emigrate in families.¹⁹

From the beginning of permanent settlement the economy of New France was tied to the extraction of the fur staple.²⁰ Small wonder then that it was the predominantly male French inhabitants who, tied as they were to the fur trade, first mixed and married with Indian women.

Opposing Political Economies Lead to Opposing Ideologies Regarding North American Natives

The Thirteen Colonies were only peripherally engaged in the fur trade. Their basic economy revolved around fishing, agriculture and industry, the latter two being inimical to the old Indian tribal way of life.²¹ Thus, the Thirteen Colonies quickly developed an ideology toward the Natives described by E.E. Rich as, "intolerant, puritanical, self-righteous, and increasingly abhorrent of the heathen."²² This led to increasingly vicious conflicts between the Colony and the Natives tribes. These conflicts continued after the American Revolution of 1776.

The new American state continued to develop its own industry, trade and commerce on the basis of land settlement and rapid western expansion. Nomadic tribes of Indians and immense herds of wild animals were incompatible with fences, private property and a sedentary population of agriculturalists. Thus, the intolerance toward Native people that was a component of the British Thirteen Colonies was carried forward by the new nation after its own "emancipation."

Indeed, it seems more than coincidental that the French, dependent on the Indian tribes for the production of the fur staple,

developed an ideology of religious tolerance for them. In New France, furs provided the economic basis for colonial development. Thus, the French priests led one of the most ambitious penetrative missionary endeavours in history, journeying thousands of miles into the wilderness to Christianize (and domesticate) the Indian tribes.²³

The Indians were absolutely necessary to the exploitation of the fur resource, upon which the entire colony depended. Small wonder then, that there was such a high level of missionary zeal by the religious institution of New France. This zeal Catholicised and domesticated an easily exploitable work force from the St. Lawrence through to the western mountains. Small wonder the "womanless" men of New France intermarried with the Indian maidens and created the Metis nation—they were of the same religion and engaged in the same work.

Because the fur trade required the Indian for its ultimate success, no terrible blood-bath occurred north of the border as it repeatedly did in the United States of America. Yes, there was the 1885 rebellion, but relatively few people died in it. As in the United States, a military "solution" to the Native "problem" was attempted eventually, but the Metis and Indian people were far too valuable (for the time) as producers and transporters of furs.

The Basis of Indian Dependency on the Fur Trading Companies

Let us now examine why it was that the Indian people--relatively powerful in terms of military strength, living in a relatively peaceful and co-operative culture, enjoying a physical well-being vastly superior to their European counterparts of the time--were lured into a commodity producing economy that rendered them immediately dependent upon foreign forces that were in opposition to their own long-term interests.

The Indian tribes were drawn into the wars of the eighteenth century between France and England, as they allied themselves with one or the other of the imperial powers on the basis of trade and geographical location. As the tribes became allies of the two contending powers, they were able to obtain guns. When the English armed the Iroquois with guns it became imperative that their traditional enemies, the Hurons, also obtain guns. Failure to do so would result in extermination. For many tribes, guns could only be obtained in exchange for furs. As guns displaced stone weapons, old cultural skills fell into disuse and the old technology was forgotten. But other metal items such as skinning knives, kettles, axes, and awls were coveted because of their labour-saving qualities to a society of people who had not yet entered the iron age.

The production of fur as a commodity to be exchanged for the new metal commodities soon placed stress on the local beaver population, as more and more of the tribes began to trap them. For the agricultural Indians along the St. Lawrence, in close proximity to the French posts, the supply of beaver decreased rapidly, so that

other tribes' territories had to be entered causing inter-tribal warfare where previously there had been peace. Wars that occurred between tribes equipped only with bows and arrows became disastrous when conducted with guns.²⁴

The fur trade, under the French regime, pulled the tribes into the "super-power's" conflict for colonies at the same time as a dependency on a new method of production--commodity production--broke down the traditional Indian communal society.

The French system was, then, despite its ideology of benign acceptance of the "heathen" tribes as potential Christians, detrimental to the well-being of the Indian people and destructive of their old social order. However, since the fur-bearing region of the North was extensive and rich, the Indian social system as a whole survived under the French regime, vastly changed by its encounter with Europeans, but still more-or-less intact.

An examination of the English fur trading company, the Hudson's Bay Company, will show many of the same patterns of development. From this union of French and Indians, and from the union of Scots, Irish, and English employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, came the Metis people.

Summary

The development of the cotton and sugar staples of South America, and the fur staple of North America occurred when the rising capitalist Nation-States of Europe engaged in colonial conquest and

super-exploitative trade relationships (mercantilism) to acquire capital for industrialization. This process ensured that the colonies produced raw materials with slave labour, or extremely cheap indentured labour. Slave labour was taken from Africa, while the indentured labour was taken from the recently conquered Keltic clans of Ireland and Scotland, and to a lesser extent, from areas of England.

The exploitation of the fur resource demanded a highly organized system with both economic and military capabilities. The English merchant class, in control of the state, united both state-and capital through the chartered company, which was uniquely designed to govern, police, administer and exploit colonies. A specific treatise spelled out Britain's colonial policy of mercantialism, using colonies as bases for the extraction of raw materials, as a place to employ redundant populations, and finally, as a market for manufactured materials from England.

France, although not as advanced as England, exploited the colonies in the same way as England. However, from the beginning France was dependent on the fur staple for profits and consequently on the Indian population as commodity producers of furs. Thus, France developed an ideology of religious tolerance, while England engaged more in settlement in the Thirteen Colonies, where Indians stood in the way of progress, developed an ideology of intolerance, leading to genocidal wars against the Indian tribes.

However, the Indians engaged in the fur trade did not fare much better. The movement from the old tribal communalism to a

form of commodity production quickly made the tribes dependent on a foreign technology that led to the beginnings of social breakdown of the old order by creating new wars and turning ancient conflicts into battles of extermination, as well as ending old cultural skills that were lost when the new metal technology displaced them.

FOOTNOTES

¹Erick Williams, Capitalism and Slavery, Low and Brydon, London, England, 1944. On pages 51-52, Williams discussed the Papal Bull of 1455 legitimizing Portugal's colonial conquest, by authorizing the Christian nations to "reduce to servitude all infidel peoples."

²E.E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870, Volume 1, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1966, page 70. Rich described the "gift" of Rupertsland to Prince Rupert by the English Sovereign.

³Karl Marx and Frederick Engles, Ireland and the Irish Question, International Publishers, New York, 1972. This source provides an excellent description and analysis of the colonization of Ireland (and the Highlands of Scotland).

⁴John Prebble, The Highland Clearances, Penguin Books, Harmsworth, England, 1969. This book contains a detailed description of the military and economic conquest of the Scottish Highlands by the British bourgeoisie. This process was similar to the description of the destruction of Native North American tribes as described by Dee Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, Bantam Books, 1973, especially pp. 440-445.

⁵Eric Williams, *ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶H.G.J. Aitkin, Approaches to Canadian Economic History, edited by W.T. Easterbrook and M.H. Watkins, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1961, p. 1.

⁷E.E. Rich, *ibid.*, Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870, Vol. 1.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

¹³W.A. Mackintosh, Approaches to Canadian Economic History, edited by W.T. Easterbrook and M.H. Watkins, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1967, p. 221.

¹⁴ J.M.S. Careless, Canada A Story of Challenge, Cambridge University Press, 1953.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 36-37.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 20-30.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 19-20.

²⁰ E.E. Rich, Ibid., p. 19.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 19-21.

²² Ibid., p. 19.

²³ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁴ For a detailed analysis of the cultural breakdown of the tribes because of the movement away from communal subsistence farming and hunting and gathering, to an economy based on commodity production and dependency on a foreign technology, see Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1970, pp. 18-28.

CORE CONCEPTS

1. America was discovered because the new European Nation states required colonies to provide cheap raw materials, and raw materials, and markets for manufactured goods. The capital for the industrial revolution in Britain was largely obtained from the slave trade and the fur trade.
2. Slaves and indentured labourers were taken from Ireland and Scotland to form a workforce in the colonies. The newly freed serfs of England were driven in to workhouses and they were used as semi-slaves.
3. Blacks from Africa were used as slaves for the sugar plantations, and cotton plantations.
4. Indians were not made into slaves; they were needed as producers of fur.
5. The chartered company combined the power of the state (the army, navy, judiciary, parliament etc.) with the power of the newly dominant merchant class so that capital could be raised in the colonies. The public paid the debt but the merchant class derived the profits.
6. The changeover from a communal subsistence economy to an economy based on the fur trade made the Indian tribes dependent on Britain and France for their new technology. In turn, the overdevelopment of the fur resource led to the impoverishment and social break-down of the old tribal system.

DEFINITIONS1. Capitalism

An economic system based upon the accumulation and investment of capital by private individuals who then become owners of the means of production and the distribution system for goods and services. Capitalism depends upon an extensive system of credit and a "free" labour market. Entrepreneurial capitalism (competing individuals) has historically given way to monopoly capitalism (the concentration of power and money into fewer and fewer hands until the monopoly is so large that it controls international prices and obtains political power over nation-states.

Capitalism, as it developed historically, came to depend upon a working class, a class of its own making, for its profits. Workers are only hired to earn a profit for the capitalists. But workers organize into unions, have strikes, etc., so under capitalism, there has been a historical economic drive to replace workers with machines and automation. This can be paid for by charging more for the commodity produced by the monopoly since competition has ended when a monopoly situation is achieved. Thus, unemployment and poverty for many must always exist under a capitalist economic system.

2. Capital intensive

This is the term used to describe the final phase of capitalism, when a monopoly situation has been achieved and the resulting concentration of capital enables the owners to replace much of their labour force with capital equipment, machinery, automation, etc.

3. Colonization

This was the process by which newly emerging capitalist Nation-States obtained economic and political power over large areas of the world. Colonies were used to supply cheap raw materials such as sugar, cotton, fur, etc., for industrial growth in the capitalist Nation-State. Slave labour was often used, and the colonies were usually super-exploited, while the wealth was brought home to the imperial country.

4. Communalism

Communal ownership of the means of the life-support system. Usually this is the social form of the hunting and gathering cultures. Food, clothings, etc., is shared along kinship lines. Usually everyone in the tribal grouping is considered to be related. In this way everyone shared the bounty of the hunt. here was no real separation of economic and political power in such a society, and there were no class divisions or vast gaps between rich and poor. Everyone worked in such a society, and everyone shared equally in the goods obtained.

5. Commodity

Something produced for sale and profit.

6. Commodity production

This is the form of production that accompanies capitalism as an economic system. In communist societies where things were shared on tribal lines, there was no commodity production. Things were made on the basis of their use value, not their sales value.

7. Culture

The total life-way of a social group of people, the group's total man-made environment including all the material objects and spiritual beliefs that are passed on from one generation to the next. All culture develops from the economic base that provides for the material and spiritual needs of the group. Thus, in a hunting and gathering economy, there is usually a communal culture, in a slave economy a class-

based culture, and in a capitalist economy a class-based culture that is based on individualism.

8. Independent commodity producers

People who, as individuals, produce or procure things to be sold in the marketplace. This class of people is usually rural, and usually produces items that do not require much capital for their production.

9. Ethnic

Belonging to a distinctive or a particular racial, cultural or language division of mankind.

10. Exploitation

The use of other people, or classes of people, or things, for one's own gain or advantage.

11. Imperialism

The highest form of capitalism, where an entire capitalist Nation-State exploits other regions of resources, rapes it of its wealth, leaving as little as possible for the local people.

12. Labour-intensive phase

In capitalist production, this is the initial type of production using massive manpower and little machinery. After much money has been earned in profits by the workers, the capitalist uses these profits to replace the labour force with machinery, automation, etc.

13. Mercantilism

A historically specific economic system that united church and state under the class of merchants who had risen to power by overthrowing the ancient feudal aristocracies of Europe. This is the system that initially exploited colonies, created trade and merchant capital.

14. Mercantile Company

A company of merchants that was given all the power of the state to hold court, to execute people, to control the military and police so that they could efficiently exploit the peoples and resources of a colony.

15. Metis

French for half-breed. Also has Spanish connotations, "Mestizo", referring to the mixture of Spanish and South American Indians. However, the term Metis specifically refers to the French speaking people of mixed European and Indian blood.

The English referred to these people as "half-breeds".

16. Metissage

Act of marriage between Indians and white people.

17. Mode of production

The process by which a society produces, controls and distributes the materials to sustain and enrich the lives of its members.

18. Non-status Indians

People who are of Indian or Metis origin who through reasons of marriage, or bureaucratic red-tape are not considered to be Indian under the Indian Act.

19. Oppression

The act of keeping people down by the harsh or unjust use of force or authority.

20. Status Indian

A person of Indian or Metis origin who is classified as an Indian under the Indian Act.

21. Papal Bull

A decree made by the Pope to justify and legitimize policy.

22. Political economy

The production, distribution and ownership system of a society; it includes the technology used and includes the class relationships such as owner-worker, and use of the state as a means of oppression.

23. Society

A group of people with a common or distinctive culture, who occupy a particular territory and have achieved some degree of political unity.

24. Staple commodity

An item that provides the main basis of an economy. Other commodities may be produced, but only as a means of extracting the main item, usually from a colony.

25. The State

A historically specific institution that came into being when classes developed in human society. The State is the organized authority, domination, and power of the possessing classes over the rest of the people. It includes the royal families, Kings, Bishops, Popes, parliaments, Dictators, armies and police forces as well as the judiciary, the Court system, the educational institutions and the bureaucracy of civil servants.

26. Surplus-population

This refers, not to "overpopulation", but specifically to that class of people that has been displaced by the dominant economic system as it moves from its labour intensive, to its capital intensive phase. Today this includes the "unemployed", people on social welfare, people only working part-time but who would like to work full time. It also includes bankrupt "independent" business people who could not longer compete against the big monopolies and chain stores etc. and found themselves on the labour market. This later group would include small farmers, store owners, etc. who went broke. Many Native people are in this class. This class of people can no longer be fitted in and exploited by the big corporations and therefore they tend to be oppressed by the state ending up in jail or on welfare. Characteristics of this class are poor education, lack of marketable skills etc., alcoholism and a "feeling" that life is without purpose.

27. Treaty

A formal agreement, duly concluded and ratified, between two or more states. Also, a formal agreement duly concluded and ratified between a state and any group, class or race under its jurisdiction.

EARLY FUR TRADE ECONOMICS

The "discovery" of North America in 1492 was not quite as accidental as it seems. The nations of Europe were entering a new historical age. Up until this time there was no such thing as a real nation in Europe. Instead, each "nobleman" had his castle and his own bit of land. The land was farmed by "serfs" or feudal slaves. These noblemen were usually engaged in war with each other for more land. However, by 1492 most of these noblemen across Europe had developed into a national ruling aristocracy. As well advances in farming methods had resulted in the freeing of the serfs because they were replaced by better farming equipment. These people moved to the cities looking for work.

In the cities they were herded into work houses where they were to be used to manufacture cotton goods, fur hats and industrial equipment such as guns, awls and other metal items.

The aristocrats needed markets for these goods, and they needed cheap raw materials such as fur and cotton. So they sent their sailing ships far and wide looking for colonies to provide them with all these things. The Europeans had sailed to China, Africa and India to trade in silks and other commodities. Columbus was looking for a shorter route to China when he accidentally "found" North America. The merchant classes (made up of the old aristocracy and people who got rich trading in slaves) wanted the furs and the natural wealth of the new world. So they used the unemployed serfs of their own countries and the Irish and Scottish people as the labour force in the New World to gather furs through trade with the Indian tribes. The companies employed the Indians and made huge profits from the fur trade. They used this money to build industry in Europe. They then sold the manufactured items such as guns, hatchets, metal pots etc. back to the Indians, again at the very high profit.

The Irish and Scottish had lived in "clans" or tribes, similar to the Indian tribes of North America. When a capitalist nation-state conquered these tribes the people were frequently labelled as "criminals". The judge would sentence them to slavery in America. They would then be shipped accross the Ocean to work the plantations. Some of them received some money for their work. The negroes of Africa were used as purse slaves. They never received any money and were considered to be "owned" by the ruling merchant class.

Many of the Scottish clansmen were used by the Hudson's Bay Company as "indentured" labourers. They would have to work for seven years for the Company at very low pay. They came to Canada and worked the fur trade. Many of them married Indian women. They did not really benefit from the fur trade. The owning merchant class got all of the profits.

The owning merchant class used the Nations army and navy to capture colonies. The common people paid for this, but the merchant class got all the profits from the colonies. They used this money to build industry in Europe while the wealth was drained out of the colonies.

After the Indian tribes got guns and metal equipment in exchange for their furs, they forgot how to make and use their stone tools, Consequently they became dependent on the fur trading companies. As well, the tribes were pulled into the war between France and England because of the fact that they depended on one or the other of these Nations' fur trading companies.

The wars and the fur trade began to break-up the old Indian way of living. Later on, after the tribes became dependent on the fur trade economy, more and more furs were taken to be exchanged for guns and metal things, until nearly all the fur bearing animals were gone. Then the

tribes went hungry and many people starved. The fur trading companies did very little to help the people when this happened. All they really cared about was making money from the colony.

Historical Overview

Lesson 3,4,5.

The Fur Trade and Metis Nationalism

Historical Overview

Lesson 3,4,5, THE FUR TRADE AND METIS NATIONALISM

I AIM

1. The students will understand the importance of the Metis to the history of Canada through an examination of the rise of Metis nationalism.

II OBJECTIVES

The students will:

1. Define nation, nationalism, merger, monopoly, free trade, over development and technology, as well as other concepts such as surplus population.
2. Describe the events that created the concept of a Metis nation in the west.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Read the TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL.
2. Use the core concepts outlined in this material. Discuss the meanings of the core words in class. For this discussion, use the tactic of first determining what the students presently understand about the core words, then with continued discussion, prompting when necessary, ensure that the students build up their concepts of the core words until they are in accord with the definitions provided.
Pages II - III - 22 to 28
This approach will be used for the entire three lessons. Be sure all core words are defined before starting each new lesson.

3. Use the handout (or lecture) provided for each lesson. Then have a class discussion ensuring that core words and core concepts are understood.
4. Since these lessons contain vital core concepts, no films are recommended. Lessons 3, 4 and 5 must be understood.
5. If time remains, spend it on a revue of lessons 3, 4 and 5, as a package.
6. This packet contains lesson 3, 4 and 5. The Teachers Familiarization Material contains the storyline of the three lessons, along with the bibliography and cross-referenced material from which the lessons were derived.

The teacher should read the the historical material provided prior to the presentation of the three lessons. The teachers should then begin the session with the core words, building up to the students' understanding of the core concepts.

(Both contained in the familiarization material). Then the teacher might use the students' material either as handouts or lessons. Class discussions should both sharpen the students' understanding of the concepts and the historical events, and provide the basis of the evaluation of students' performance by listing their responses on a flip chart or blackboard. Note - If the students have acquired an in-depth understanding of the definitions provided, this, in itself, will go a long way toward ensuring a good understanding of the three lessons.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

As part of the review of lesson 3, 4 and 5, hold a class discussion ensuring that the concepts have been grasped by the class. List the important concepts on a flip chart or the blackboard.

V MATERIALS

1. TEACHERS FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL p. (prepared by Gabriel Dumont staff.
2. Essays, Lesson 3, METIS TECHNOLOGY, page II - III - 29,30.
Lesson 4, ECONOMIC MERGER & FREE TRADE page II - II 31 - 32
Lesson 5, THE GOOD YEARS FOR THE METIS NATION
The essays were prepared by Gabriel Dumont Inc staff.

TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL METIS NATIONALISM:
ITS HISTORICAL SOURCES

The Metis, as a people, came in to being because of the fur trade between French and British companies, and the Indian tribes of North America. Not only were the Indian men necessary as suppliers of furs, but the women were utilized as a vital work force. Indeed, the fur trade could not have been carried out at all without the specialized skills of the Indian women. In a land with such a ^{limited?} technology, women's labour and their special work skills made life and trade possible. (see Jennifer Brown, Strangers in Blood, University of British Columbia Press, 1980.)

Hudson's Bay Company employees tended in the main to abandon their Native wives and children when their terms were over in Canada, and they returned to Britain alone. On the other hand, those voyageurs, both Quebecois and Scottish, engaged as workers in the North West Company tended to remain here, and these were the people who eventually formed the European, paternal side of the Metis nation. From these liaisons, some formed on the basis of love or lovelessness, some on the basis of trade requirements, and some on the basis of slavery, a robust, and highly efficient work force developed, X (one that became so efficient that it very shortly depleted the west of furs and buffalo for the greater profits of the fur companies, and thus depleted its own economic "raison d'etre." (reason for being).)

It was the Metis union of Indian hunting skills and European technology that led to such inventions as the red river cart, used to transport the tons of buffalo meat taken from the highly organized hunt, and the york boat, used to replace the canoe for the transportation of furs and trading goods.

With the massive growth in the fur trade, came a corresponding growth in the Metis population. Brown describes the process and the growth of Red River as a Company-governed town.

"Certain socio-economic and political changes beginning in the 1820's had important effect upon the implications for company families in the fur trade country from the time of the merger until the end of company rule and the annexation of the Northwest by Canada. One was the reorganization of the new company both as a monopoly and as a de facto colonial government engaging in more administrative activities with more authority than either of the old companies had had. Further, Red River itself became at least an outpost of civilization with its schools, churches, and other appurtenances. Communications with Canada and Britain improved, and British and American culture also began to penetrate the fur trade country from the west as settlers and missionaries entered the Oregon Territory and British Columbia.¹

explain how -

The expansion of the fur trade brought about by competition between the Canadian owned North West Company and the British Hudson's Bay Company greatly increased the number of Metis people in Ruperts Land. From the mid-eighteenth century up until the merger of the two companies in 1821, the Metis became more and more the majority in the fur trade's workforce. Brown wrote of this:

"Other developments, particularly the continuing steep growth of the mixed-descent population and company retrenchments, also had important effects. The pruning of surplus population in the 1820s was predictable; the number of servants employed by the contending parties was triple the number required in quiet...times, and, more especially, when the business came to be managed by one firm. But even after the pace of post-merger cuts and early retirements slowed, other problems confronted those dependent on the fur trade--shortages of furbearing animals in once rich areas, increased incursions of American and other independent trappers and traders as transport routes improved, and, finally, changes in fashion and market demand, notably the rising preference for silk hats after 1839..."²

Above, Borwn had indicated that economic merger of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company followed by overdevelopment of the fur resource reduced the need for Metis people as labourers and traders for the Companies. Not only had the Metis been predominant as a work force for both companies, but the North West Company had trained the Metis as a very efficient army as well. Indeed, the Metis had defeated the mighty Sioux in a resounding victory against overwhelming odds at the battle of The Grand Coteau in 1851. (see William Morton, "The Battle of The Grand Coteau", in The Other Natives the Metis, Vol. 1. edited by A. Lussier and D. Sealey, Manitoba Metis Federation Press, 1978.)

As well, the North West Company had used the Metis as an army in their own trade war against the Hudson's Bay Company. It was through these actions that the seeds of Metis nationalism were sown. In this war, the people with the most to gain through competition were the owners of the North West Company. The voyageurs and workers had little to gain; they would be working for wages regardless of who the owners were. The Hudson's Bay Company had little to gain; theirs was a defensive action to maintain control of the vast properties that were theirs by law. Competition or open warfare could benefit only one class, the merchant class of Montreal who did not own shares in other international monopolies such as the Hudson's Bay Company. Indeed, the Montreal-based company was the most aggressive combatant in this struggle. But they needed an army to win against the powerful Hudson's Bay Company. For this, they systematically co-opted and recruited the Metis buffalo hunters of the Red River.

To ensure a sound ideological basis for their campaign, the merchants of Montreal challenged the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly at the legal level:

This claim to jurisdiction and proprietorship the Nor'Westers flatly denied. The Red River country, they claimed, was French-Canadian by right of

French exploration and occupation. It had passed with Canada to the British crown by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Almost at once it had been reoccupied by their predecessors from Montreal - twenty-five years before a servant of the Hudson's Bay Company had set foot in the Red River country. They could point to the Canada Jurisdiction Act of 1803, by which crimes committed in "the Indian country" were to be tried in the courts of Canada. If Macdonnell could arrest and deport for that cause, so could they under commissions as Justices of the Peace obtained in Lower Canada.³

While this legal claim was issued by the North West Company, its management recognized that the struggle with the Hudson's Bay Company would be won or lost not in court but in the arena of the business world of their day. Consequently, the Northwest Company created its own militia under the leadership of Cuthbert Grant, a Scottish Metis whose father was an aristocrat from the Highlands, and a Wintering partner of the North West Company. They gave Grant the title Warden of the Plains.

While the directors of the North West Company consisted of Highland and English aristocracy, the work force was almost entirely made up of French-Canadians. They were to become the progenitors of the "Metis nation", as it was perceived during the heyday of its power. These people became the nomadic buffalo hunters, the voyageurs, the adventurers and traders who loomed so large in Metis history and culture. Following is a statement summarizing the relationship between the North West Company and the Metis work force of Red River:

The Metis more than any other group, had been the providers of food for the fur trading companies. They combined Indian skills with European organization. They hunted buffalo using military tactics. Some hunts utilized hundred of people and they were so successful that the Metis

began to go into business for themselves, selling buffalo not only to the fur companies, but to the Americans as well. McLeod and Morton wrote:

At the posts on the edge of the plains, Esperance, LaSouris, Brandon, Pembina, and pemmican was collected. The buffalo were hunted in the summer by the engages of the posts and by their friends and relatives, the "freemen" and their half-breed sons. The freemen were engages who had taken their discharge and remained in the northwest, held there by an Indian wife and half-breed children and the wild life they had come to prefer. Their children were called Metis, and sometimes bois-brules from their swarthy complexion. Even in their freedom they retained much of their dependence on the North West Company and remained in many ways its servants and natural allies. Casual workers, trappers and hunters like their Indian kin, the Metis had their sense of identity preserved by the connection with the company. As buffalo hunting became more important, they began to specialize in it and to conduct their expedition out onto the plains in an organized way.

More and more they gave up the stalking of the buffalo by individual hunters and began, like the plains Indians, to "run" the buffalo on horseback, shooting down the great beasts one after the other from the saddle. After a run, their women had days of work before them, cutting and drying the meat, pounding it to flakes, and stirring it with melted fat, tallow, and sometimes berries, in bags of green buffalo hide. ⁴

But the Metis did not give their blind allegiance to the North West Company on the basis of race alone. Indeed, the company, despite the fact that most of the French Metis were tied to it by the economic chains of the fur trade, had to resort to propaganda and chicanery to acquire the Metis' support for its war against the Hudson's Bay Company. For this they used Cuthbert Grant, the bold leader of the Metis hunters:

Even if Grant was only one of four captains of the Metis, however, he was now cast for the role he was to play in the fur-traders' war. A clerk of the company, he had been chosen both because of his standing as a clerk and a gentleman and because of his ties of blood with the Metis to lead them in their alliance with the Nor'Westers in the fur traders' war. He was to help bind the bois-brules to the cause of the company, and with their help to remove from the life-line of Upper Red River the menace of the colony at The Forks. He was to lead the Metis in rejecting the claims of Selkirk to the Red River country by asserting those of the Metis. With the eagerness of youth and the unquestioning loyalty of the clansmen, he made his bourgeois' cause his own and passionately identified himself with the campaign to drive the colonists from Red River. By so doing he was also to identify himself with the new Metis nation, and stands at the beginning of their history as Louis Riel stands at the end,

But at the same time, Grant was to make himself and the bois brules the dupes and tools of the Nor Westers. It was a fact he did not perceive in his youthful enthusiasm, because the North West Company and the brules seemed to have a common interest in resisting the establishment of the colony. So Grant thought, and so he acted. Later, when he found the Nor'Westers disposed to shift the blame for the violence

that arose out of the resistance, his loyalty began to falter, and he was to become in the end the champion of the Metis, and of the Metis alone.⁵

As can be seen the North West Company had, through Cuthbert Grant, instilled the Metis with a sense of nationhood. Tied as they were, as the workforce for the North West Company they had literally no alternative but to struggle for its preservation against settlement, and against the Hudson's Bay Company.

A.S. Morton wrote:

The conception of the Metis as "The New Nation" instilled into them during the struggle with Selkirk's colony never died. Nationalism born of racial feelings and nurtured by a common language and by a community of interests is an undying flame. It may die down in a period of calm, but at the first clash of interest it is fanned up as by a tempest. This belief of the half-breeds that they were a nation, that as the Indian population, depleted by smallpox and drawn off to the more distant posts for their livelihood, left the land vacant, the Metis inherited their vast domain through the mother blood in their veins, held them together as one at every juncture at which they revolted against the domination of the "whites." Instilling such ideas and feelings into the half-breeds during what proved to be a passing phase in the history of the West the Northwesters were playing with fire - a fire which would not be quenched. In five short years they were drawn into the Hudson's Bay Company and they and their partners, and after them the Canadians, found that this national feeling accentuated their difficulties in dealing with their untutored servants and fellow subjects.⁶

*- that Co.
or
that
struggle!
proce*

Despite the nationalism created by the struggle of the Metis hunters against settlement, they were, on the other hand, kept in a state of dependency by the Canadian 'bourgeois' of the North West Company just as surely as the Indians of the North had been by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Both companies required some food production to continue their operations. This was supplied for the North West Company by the Metis buffalo hunters. No agricultural colony was therefore required. Not so with the Hudson's Bay Company. Having won the loyalty of the Metis hunters, the North West Company thereby controlled the only available food supply.

These Metis hunters were used by the North West Company in its war against the Hudson's Bay Company to kill the Red River settlers who had been brought out to establish a Hudson's Bay Company claim to the land in Red River. This massacre also contributed to the idea of Metis nationalism (even though they were fighting for interests other than their own. Of this massacre, Joseph Kinsey Howard wrote about a song that the Metis minstrel Pierre Falcone made up regarding the Seven Oakes massacre:

The song was born on June 19, 1816. On that day, too, the nation was born in the minds of the people, if not yet in political fact.⁷

←? / added language

(from "The Battle of 7 Oakes")

However, the massacre of Seven Oakes brought on the forced merger of the two companies when Britain intervened in the trade war. When the two companies united, the fur trade was made more efficient since duplication of transportation routes ^{was} were no longer necessary. Consequently many Metis were laid off, and since there was no other activity allowed by the new company, they could not turn to farming or any other activity. (work)?

The Hudson's Bay Company, in line with British Colonial policy had, with its apparently absolute victory against local capital in the trade wars, created a perfect monopoly. This made life impossible for large numbers of Indian and Metis people in Rupert's Land. In so doing it had sown the seeds of its own destruction, since it had created a conflict that was to become too expensive for the Imperial Government to contain or control militarily.

The Metis struggle took on a nationalist flavour as it burst the economic chains that had been imposed, through its spontaneous efforts toward free trade. "Law and order", under these conditions, would have required a major military presence, a presence that the British Crown was not able to provide because of more pressing world-wide commitments, and which the Company could not really afford if other measures could be found. But, as time went on, one thing became clear to governor Simpson and the London Directors; the cry for free trade coupled with rising Metis nationalism was fast becoming a force that would eventually threaten the power of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly just as surely as these same historical forces had emerged in the Thirteen Colonies, resulting in the successful middle class revolution of Nationalist American merchants and artisans against the British imperial trade monopoly. The cry, "no taxation without representation" that was heard in that revolution, was to echo across the plains again.

How
(ie)
national
nationalist
?

The company had created its own institutions, and staffed them with its hand-picked friends and allies. So the British jury system was adapted and utilized by the Company. The hand-picked "notables" were non other than Company officials as judicial "bag men", and upper class allies were added to give the jury system the appearance of justice and democracy. Tremaudin continued:

"Year in and year out, the Hudson's Bay Company had promulgated and vigorously enforced strict rules in connection with fur trading. Trappers were forbidden to traffic with outside interests and even with each other. Its decrees were absolute and no one dare violate them. Occasionally, maybe, and alone, Metis were allowed to sell furs in the United States or buy pelts from their cousins, the Indians, in order to get a better return for their trouble.

By degrees, the Natives organized to protest against a monopoly that was becoming insupportable. Consequently, in 1837, a petition bearing 977 names and asking for greater freedom of trade, was addressed to the Queen. Most of the signers were Metis.

At the beginning of Spring, 1849, Company officers arrested a young Metis, Guillaume Sayer, of Saint-Francois Xavier, the son of a retired Company agent. He was accused of having bought Company goods with the intention of exchanging them for furs at Lake Manitoba. As he resisted arrest, the officers maltreated him and tossed him into prison.⁸

Five hundred armed Metis attended the trial of Guillaume Sayer. Since Great Britain could not any longer send armed troops to Red River, the Metis knew as a result of Sayer's court victory, that the Hudson's Bay Company could no longer restrict free trade to the United States. Tremaudin wrote that when Sayer walked out a free man, the Metis, led by Louis Riel senior (father of the famous Metis Leader) - burst out with cheers:

Inside and outside the Courtroom, the Metis chorused: "Long live liberty! Sayer is free!" "That is not all," continued Riel. "We want something more than the acquittal of Sayer and his co-accused. They have already suffered too much - especially Sayer - for having trafficked in a few furs without the Company's permission whatever the lawyers may say. We demand that henceforth trading be free all over the country, that all hunters and merchants have the right to buy, sell, and exchange furs without first obtaining the Company's permission; that, in future, the Company must not, in any way, meddle with our business transactions. We intend to be free. I proclaim here and now that from this time forward trade is free! Long live free trade! - Long live free trade!"

"Trading is free!" chorused the Metis inside and outside the courthouse.⁹

This was a singularly important event for the Metis because it opened up free trade which was to provide the economic basis of Metis nationalism. From this free trade money flowed in, and the Metis class of merchants grew.

(End of Lesson 4)

Louis Riel senior had eloquently and bravely taken his place in history with his defence of the Metis free traders. From that day onward, until all pretence of democracy had been abandoned by the Canadian government in its dealing with the Metis, trade for the Metis people was free despite half-hearted harassment by company officials.

The Metis, through the illicit free trade to the south, and to lesser degree to the west along the Edmonton Trail had produced its own class of merchants, some of whom were wealthy.

From 1840 to 1850 some 4,865,250 buffalo were killed and sold by the Metis hunters.¹⁰ Most of this trade went south to St. Paul, and it made many Metis merchants rich. Joseph Kinsey Howard wrote of this:

The Red River trails had been in use for several years for occasional unscheduled transport before they became a vital link in the new north-south chain of communication. In 1843 the first regular cart service was inaugurated between Pembina and St. Paul by Joseph Roletter, Astor's agent at Pembina. Half a dozen carts then sufficed to take the furs south and bring back trade goods, implements, and whiskey; but by 1851 more than a hundred were making the trip and in 1858 the number had grown to six hundred. This meant that a^q sizeable share of the fur trade had been diverted, illegally, from the Hudson's Bay Company to the aggressive Yankee traders of St. Paul and New York, for there were not enough furs south of the boundary in the region served by the carts to make possible shipments on this scale.

Freight traffic over the prairie route reached its peak in 1869 when twenty-five hundred screeching carts raised a cloud of dust which hung over the trail for three months. The next year political trouble began and trade was interrupted; then, in 1873, the first steamboat came up the Red, and in 1878 the first railroad was completed. The old trails were finished

But they had done their job. Among other things, they contributed more than any other factor to the break-up of the best-entrenched political and industrial combination that ever existed, the Hudson's Bay Company. The Company of Adventurers could absorb and disarm its most enterprising competitors; it could dictate to bishops and shift populations; it could stave off investigations and audits and other governmental interference - but it could not close the Red River trails.

The new nation being born on Red River owned much of its *raison d'être* to smuggling, as had other nations before it. Much of the commerce upon which St. Paul and other cities of the American frontier were build was illegal. But the laws that were broken were mostly Hudson's Bay Company laws, and few persons on either side of the forty-ninth parallel recognized the right of a chartered company to make and enforce legislation."¹¹

The wealth provided by this trade was, in part, used to move the concept of a Metis nation toward the reality of a Metis nation. With this wealth, came the potential for a good education for some of the people. Louis Riel, famous for his struggles on behalf of the Metis Nation, was one of the people who received this education. However, he was not educated in Red River by other Metis; he was educated in Quebec where Quebec values and interests were instilled rather than Metis values and interests. Just as the aristocratic Scottish element had sent their children off to Europe for education (Cuthbert Grant et al) so now the French speaking Metis bourgeois sent their most intelligent progeny off to Quebec to be taught by the Roman Catholic school system. Thus Louis Riel Junior, at a tender age, left his prairie home to be tutored in Quebec, despite the beauty of local culture that was developing in Red River, as Stanley describes it:

"The night-long dances and the political gatherings on the church steps after Mass. Perhaps he asked his father or his cousins about the organization of the buffalo hunters, about his own race, their sensitiveness, their myths, their depressions and their exaltations. Because Louis Riel was always a thoughtful boy, proud, introspective, just a little aloof, these things would have interested him.

In spite of the failure of his father to secure political recognition for himself, as the boy grew older he must have felt a sense of pride in the emergence of the Metis as a strong group in the Red River community, a group which was developing its own bourgeoisie, its own leaders, a group whose voice was being heard and respected in the Settlement. Without a doubt Louis shared in the social life of the Metis, in the family parties, the feasts of galettes, tikameg (whitefish), buffalo steaks and boiled tea, in the annual migration to the nearby lakes to hunt the Canada goose during the autumn." ¹²

These were the things that were important in the lives of the Metis, yet, for the bright children of the Metis entrepreneurs, Montreal was the destination for "higher" education.

Louis Riel had not reached his fourteenth birthday when he set out for Montreal on June 1, 1858. At that age he was able to enjoy to the full the experience of a journey that took him over fifteen hundred miles from the banks of the Seine to those of the great St. Lawrence. This first part of the journey was to be by ox-cart, along with the metis tripmen on their way to St. Paul. There were two people to watch over the boys and assist them on their way, the Reverend Sister Valade, Superior of the Grey Nuns at St. Boniface, who was on her way to Montreal to find new recruits for the western missions, and an old

Canadian, Granger by name, whom Tache had asked to go along with the party.¹³

The course of studies was that of the ordinary French classical college. It occupied eight years, called Latin, Syntax, Method, Versification, Belles-Lettres, Rhetoric and Philosophy. The subjects studied included religious instruction, Latin, Greek, French, English, mathematics, philosophy, and the elements of physics, chemistry, astronomy and botany. The emphasis was thus upon the humanistic studies, with only a cursory nod in the direction of the sciences. Each pupil's day was full. With frequent examinations, both oral and written, there was little time for idle dreaming. It seemed a long struggle for the young boy, but the reward at the end was the classical baccalaureate."¹⁴

The educational institutions of Quebec were teaching the conservative doctrine of the "ultra Montaign" order that still attempted to stifle free thought (and free trade) by acting as the ideological supporters of the old feudal order. Yet, despite these contradictions, the Metis of the plains inevitably saw their intelligentsia siphoned off and inculcated with an ideology that was foreign to the interests of the local people, and which tended to replace the old Indian co-operative systems with European conservatism, of free enterprise individualism. In this struggle, the leaders of the Metis of Red River lined up on one side or the other. The third option, the communal organization of life, and the old tribal co-operation of the Indians went down to defeat by default. This ideology of the conflict was "made in France" or was "made in England".

With the death of the last free bison on the plains, died the dream of Metis nationhood, a dream that was based on the commodity production of this resource. The middle class Metis intellectuals remained. The Metis spirit of nationalism still flourished. Could they not remain as a nation of farmers, tradesmen and merchants in the west?

This would require a new technology and capital, more capital than the Metis middle class had been able to accumulate in its historically brief span. The C.P.R. was on its way. The cart trade was gone. The buffalo were gone, the fur resource depleted. The Indians were being forced onto reserves, their only alternative being starvation. Could the Metis - proud hunters of the plains, intrepid voyageurs of the North West, independent free traders to St. Paul and the south - could they now become sedentary farmers and ranchers? If so, the dream of nationhood might still become a reality. The Hudson's Bay Company's reign was effectively finished. But many new forces emerged to take over. And most of the forces represented empires, either to the rise, or on the wane. The Metis were indeed an insignificant force amid the clash of empires on the vast expanse of the prairie west.

The fur trade was ending as well. The Hudson Bay monopoly had over developed this resource until the fur bearing animals were nearly extinct. Thus, the economic basis of the Metis nation was gone by 1880. The Metis nation had been built upon the money earned from the free trade of furs and buffalo to the United States. When these resources were gone, so was the basis of Metis nationhood.

These

FOOTNOTES

1. Jennifer Brown, Strangers in Blood University of British Columbia Press, 1980, p. 199
2. Ibid, p. 199
3. Margaret McLeod and W. L. Morton, Cuthburt Grant of Grantown, McClelland and Steward, 1974, p. 21
4. Ibid, p 14
5. Ibid, p. 24
6. A.S. Morton; from The Other Metis, The Metis, *ibid*, p.30
7. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Strange Empire, Swan Publishing Toronto, 1952
8. Auguste Tremaudin, The History of The Metis in Western Canada, (Gabriel Dumont Library) p. 58
9. Ibid p. 59
10. These figures were compiled from statistics taken from Mr. Robert Devrome's Thesis, The Metis, Colonization Culture Change and the Saskatchewan Rebellion of 1885 University of Alberta, 1976, p.p. 49,50,51,52.
11. Joseph Kinsey Howard, *Ibid*, p. 55
12. Geroge F. Stanley Louis Riel, McGraw, Hill, Ryerson, 1969. p. 18,19.
13. *Ibid*, p. 21
14. *Ibid*, p. 24

CORE CONCEPTS FOR LESSON 3

1. The Metis population came in to being because of the fur trade.
2. Indian women were vital to the fur trade because of their traditional skills, thus Europeans married them not only on the basis of love but also because the fur trade was literally impossible without their labour skills.
3. This union of peoples resulted in a union of skills that made the Metis invaluable as a work force during the fur trading epoch.
4. The Metis population grew in size as a result of the expansion of the fur trade.
5. The Metis were used as military force by the North West Company in its trade war with the Hudson's Bay Company. They opened up a trade route south through Sioux Country, when they defeated the Sioux at the battle of the Grand Coteau.
6. The Metis became the best buffalo hunters of all time. They provided food to the fur trading companies through the buffalo hunt.

CORE CONCEPTS FOR LESSON 4

1. The Metis were co-opted in to the side of the North West Company in the trade war by Cuthbert Grant, a Scots-Metis who was the leader of the buffalo hunters.
2. This war waged against the Hudson's Bay Company is what initiated the idea of Metis nationalism. This was done purposely by the Canadian merchants of Montreal, in order to get the Metis fighting on their side.
3. This resulted in the massacre of settlers at Seven Oakes.
4. The massacre ended the trade war when it caused the British government to intervene and force a merger of the two companies. The merger took place in 1821.
5. This resulted in the lay-off of thousands of Metis from the new Company because with the end of competition came the end of the duplication of forts and canoe routes.
6. This forced the Metis to free trade against the orders of the Hudson's Bay Company - who was also the government of Rupert's Land after the merger.
7. The Sayer trial freed trade effectively for the Metis.

CORE CONCEPTS FOR LESSON 5

1. Some Metis became rich selling buffalo to the United States traders in St. Paul.
2. This provided the wealth necessary to turn the concept of nationhood in to the reality of nationhood.
3. This new wealth provides the basis for an educated class. Louis Riel was one of this class.
4. This education was not based on Metis interests; rather it fovoured Quebec Catholic interests.
5. The buffalo disappeared as the fur trade came to an end. These commodities had provided the basis of Metis nationalism. When they were gone, the Metis had little hope of creating a nation.

CORE WORDS FOR LESSON THREE

1. Technology
2. Merger
3. Surplus population
4. Monopoly
5. Ideology

CORE WORDS FOR LESSON FOUR

1. Allegiance
2. Propaganda
3. Nation
4. Nationalism
5. Free trade

CORE WORDS FOR LESSON FIVE

1. Intelligentsia
2. Over exploitation

DEFINITIONS

Of the definitions listed, go through the relevant definitions, as described under Teaching Methods.

LESSON 3

1. Technology:

- a) The application of science in industry.
- b) The means by which material things are produced in a particular civilization, example hunting and gathering societies after have a stone age technology, agriculturalists a primitive metal technology and capitalist societies, a technology based on the replacement of much human labour by a complex metal and electronic technology.

2. Merger:

- a) The combining of two or more (previously competitive) commercial interests into one. Usually this is a process leading to a monopoly (where all competition has ended).

3. Surplus population:

This refers, not to "overpopulation", but specifically to that class of people that have been displaced by the dominant economic system as it moves from its labour intensive, to its capital intensive phase. Today this includes the unemployed, people on social welfare, people only working part-time but who would like to work fulltime. It also includes bankrupt "independent" business people who could no longer compete against the big monopolies and chain stores etc. and found themselves on the labour market. This later group would include small farmers, store owners etc. who went broke. Many Native people are in this class. This class of people can no longer be fitted in and exploited by the big corporations and therefore they tend to be oppressed by the state ending up in jail or on welfare. Characteristics of this class are poor education, lack of marketable skills etc. Alcoholism and a "feeling" that life is

without purpose, is another set of characteristics that many people in this class experience.

4. Monopoly:

The exclusive control of a commodity, service, or means of production in a particular market, with the resulting power to fix and control prices.

5. Ideology:

The major belief system of a society, example, hunting and gathering societies usually have an ideology based on co-operation and kinship, with no private ownership primitive agriculturalists have an ideology based on land ownership and capitalist societies an ideology based upon the justification of the private ownership of industry, trade and commerce.

LESSON 4

1. Allegiance:

- a) fidelity, or an obligation of loyalty to a government or sovereign.
- b) fidelity in general, as to a principle.

2. Propaganda:

- a) a systematic effort to persuade a body of people to support a particular course of action.
- b) An institution or scheme for presenting a doctrine or an ideological system.

3. Nation:

a body of people associated with a particular territory, usually organized under a government and possessing distinctive cultural and social way of life. Nations did not always exist; they are associated only with recent history. Nations were preceded by tribal organizations where political power was not separated from the people in the tribe as a whole.

4. Nationalism:

- a) a belief, or feeling of devotion to ones own nation.
- b) the belief that ones own nation is better than all others.
- c) A desire or movement for national independence.

5. Free trade:

This term is associated with the struggle of the new class of merchants against the old aristocratic monopolies sponored usually by European Nation-states for the control of the wealth of colonies.

The United States of America gained its independence from Britain as a result of the revolution for free trade. The Metis free trade struggle was based upon the same historical struggle against an imperial monopoly.

LESSON 5

1. Intelligentsia:

A class of educated people, especially those with a broad and informed point of view. This class usually evolves when a society has created enough wealth that some of its members can spend many years of their lives as scholars and thinkers.

2. Over exploitation:

this refers to the colonial age. It is the systematic exploitation of one country by another. The natural resources are taken from the colony until there is very little left for the people of the colony, leaving it in a state of economic destitution.

Student handout for Lesson 3

LESSON 3

METIS TECHNOLOGY

Before the Europeans came to North America the Native tribes had lived in a society that demanded hard work and co-operation by all the member of their tribes. This was because their technology was labour intensive. Everyone had to work, either at hunting, or at making clothing, shelter, and doing the thousands of daily tasks that were required in a land with a harsh climate. Lacking a metal technology, people had to use stone tools. This demanded much skill and many hours of hard work. Indian women, over many hundreds of years, had developed skills such as the making of snow shoes, and clothing. As well, they preserved meat by making pemmican, so that it would last for many months.

When the European work force for the fur trading companies arrived in North America, they quickly recognized that they could not survive in this land without the special skills of the Indian women. Thus many marriages between European fur traders and Indian women were based not only on love, but necessity as well.

The Metis came in to being as a people because of the fur trade. Thus, the new race combined both Indian traditional skills and European knowledge of a metal technology, so that they became an exceptionally good work force for the fur trading companies. Consequently, the Metis population grew in direct proportion to the extention of the fur trade accross North America.

However, competition between the Canadian owned North West Company and the British owned Hudson's Bay Company resulted in a trade war. The Metis were caught up in this war, with the french-speaking Metis mainly on the side of the North West Company, and the English-speaking Metis on the side of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The Hudson's Bay Company had used the poor people of Scotland as their first workers, while the North West Company used mainly men from Quebec. The North West Company had used a famous Metis hunter, Cuthbert Grant, to organize the buffalo hunters in to an army. These Metis warriors became the best in North America. They even defeated the mighty Sioux Nation to the south, thus opening up a new trade route through the south to St. Paul Minnesota.

The Metis became such expert buffalo hunters because they combined Indian know-how with European technology and organization. They killed millions of buffalo and they supplied the only reliable land source in the west. The fur trading companies ~~feed~~ depended on the Metis for all their food.

The North West Company agitated among the Metis, telling them that if they wanted to preserve their freedom they would have to kill the Hudson's Bay Company settlers who were arriving at Red River.

ECONOMIC MERGER AND FREE TRADE

The Metis did not want war with the white settlers in Red River. However, the owners of the North West Company systematically spread propoganda among them, and began the notion of a Metis nation. (←!)

The Hudson's Bay governor passed an ordinance forbidding the Metis to hunt buffalo in their own highly organized way. Cuthburt Grant, under the direction of the company owners began to harass the Hudson's Bay Company settlers. This resulted in the massacre of Seven Oakes, where twenty-one settlers were ambushed and killed. This was in the year 1816.) (language 11)

This did not have the desired effect for either the North West Company or the Metis. The settlers were scared away for a short time, but the massacre brought on intervention by the government of Great Britain. The government forced the merger of the two companies. They merged in 1821 and this had a big effect on the Metis people. Before the merger, each company had its own work force of voyageurs and its own string of trading posts spread across the land. They needed this because they were competing with each other for the best fur trading regions. After the companies united, they only needed one route and one string of trading posts. As a result the new united company laid off about half of its workforce.

Now, the Hudson's Bay Company was engaged in only one industry. It made its money from furs. So it prevented the people from going in to farming, or doing anything that would come in to conflict with the fur trade. Therefore when the Metis people were laid off, they had no way of making a living. The Hudson's Bay Charter gave the company complete control of Rupert's Land. The Company was the government as well. They made laws to ensure that the fur trade would pay off for the Company. One of these laws forbade free trade by anyone. In effect the Metis (mainly the French-speaking Metis from the old North West Company) became surplus population in terms of the Hudson's Bay Companies laws, and the only way they could continue to survive was by breaking the "laws" of the mercantile company whose monopoly over Rupert's Land was literally making life impossible for them.

From this struggle came the ideology of the Metis as a distinct nation. The struggle for free trade with the United States, "against the law" of the Hudson's Bay Company, came to a head when the Company tried to prosecute a Metis, named Guillaume Sayer, in the year 1849. Five hundred armed Metis attended the trial. Judge Thom found him guilty of trafficking in furs but let him go free because he knew that if he did not do so the Metis would start a revolution. After the famous Sayer trial it became obvious to all that the Company could no longer depend on Great Britain to send enough troops to Red River to control Metis free trade. After the trial, Louis Riel senior proclaimed to the assembled Metis, "here and now, from this time foreward trade is free! Longlive free trade! From this "illicit" free trade trade through the United States, a wealthy class of Metis merchants was born. From 1840 to 1850 some 4,865,250 buffalo were taken by the Metis. Most of the trade went to St. Paul but the Metis continued to supply the food staple for the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly.

how?

Student handout for Lesson 5

THE GOOD YEARS FOR THE METIS NATION

In 1843 the first cart train (red River Carts adapted for use by the Metis) made its way from Pembina at Red River, to St. Paul. By 1851 over a hundred carts were required because of increased trade. By 1858 six hundred carts were regularly making the journey, laden with furs and robes. By 1869, at the height of Metis power in Red River twenty five hundred screeching carts plied their noisy, dusty way to St. Paul.

The wealth obtained from this trade went to local merchants, many of whom were Metis. Thus the concept of a nation, born of the battles in the trade war was moved toward the reality of nationhood by the creation of a new class of Metis merchants.

From this wealth, obtained by a few Metis merchants, an educated class of Metis emerged. Louis Riel, the famous patriot was one of the ^(first?) ~~just~~ Metis youths to be sent east to Quebec for higher education. However, in Quebec, the Metis were schooled in the conservative doctrines of the Quebec catholic clergy. In many ways the things they learned there did not fit the needs of the Metis of Red River. Nevertheless, at this stage of the history of the Metis, it is they who were frequently better educated and wealthier than the European peasants and workers who were brought to the prairies.

But the new wealth was not to last long. The fur bearing animals were being tapped to extinction. The buffalo were being systematically destroyed by the American government (to take away the independence of the Plains Indians so they would settle on reserves). By 1870 the buffalo were becoming very scarce. Thus, the very resources that had provided the money for a Metis class of wealthy merchants were rapidly disappearing. With the disappearance

of the animals, went the basis of the Metis nation as it was being formed. The rail lines were coming in. Steamboats sailed the Red River. Settlers were pouring in. It seemed that the golden age of the Metis must end.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Lesson 4

THE FUR TRADE AND METIS NATIONALISM

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Lesson 6

THE METIS MIDDLECLASS

Historical Overview

Lesson six: THE METIS MIDDLE CLASS

I AIM

1. Students will understand the historical significance of a Metis middle class.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. explain how the Metis middle class came in to being,
2. describe the historical significance of the Metis middle class and its relationship to the destiny of the Metis people as a whole,
3. describe the economic and historical basis for the Metis political movements leading to the Manitoba act of 1870.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Read the TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL, p 11 v 1 3
2. Use the core concepts outlined in this material.
Page II - IV - Discuss the meanings of the core words in class. For this discussion, use the tactic of first determining what the students presently understand about the core words. Then, with continued discussion, prompting when necessary, ensure that the students acquire an understanding of the core words that is in accord with the definitions provided.
Page II - VI -

3. Use the handouts (or lecture) provided, page II - IV -
Then have a class discussion, ensuring that core words
and core concepts are understood.
4. Go through the text book, A Pictorial History of the Metis
and Non-Status Indians in Saskatchewan, with the
students.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Use this class discussion (3 above)
ensuring that the core words, concepts and themes
have been grasped by the class. List them on a flip
chart or blackboard.

V MATERIALS

1. TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIALS containing an
essay and bibliography, a list of core concepts and
core words.
2. Textbook, A Pictorial History of the Metis and Non-
Status Indians in Saskatchewan, published by the
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in Co-operation
with the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians
of Saskatchewan.

TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIALRESULTS OF THE AMALGAMATION OF 1821
THE METIS MIDDLE CLASS

Following the amalgamation of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, the newly structured company began a program to increase profits. As will be shown, the program involved two essential components: (1) the creation of a Metis Middle class as a friendly comprador class that could be used by the Company to co-opt the Metis population, and (2) the movement of surplus population from abandoned posts to a central location (in Red River) where these unemployed people would form a pool of floating surplus population, who could, at the same time, be placed under the control of the Company's fledgling state apparatus.

To accomplish the first task--the creation of a Metis Middle class--Cuthburt Grant would be used because of his position of prominence with the Metis, a position he had earned as the leader of the para-military buffalo hunters and warriors of the old North West Company in its battles against the Hudson's Bay Company prior to amalgamation. If the new Governor, George Simpson, could win the allegiance of Cuthburt Grant, his prestige and position of power with the "Bois Brule" would bring them in under the control of the monopoly. Grant's allegiance was quickly made a "fait accompli."

McLeod and Morton wrote:

Who could so well establish them [the Metis] as their former leader, Cuthburt Grant, now so loyal to the new Company? These displaced people must be settled

and the idea of a new nation which they still held must if possible be quenched.¹

So that animosities that still existed over the recent trade-war could be "cooled down," Grant was swiftly exonerated by the court for his leading role in the murder of the Selkirk settlers at Seven Oakes.² This was necessary for the newly formed Company for two reasons; first, Grant and his "Bois Brule" followers were needed by the new Company as suppliers of buffalo meat and pemmican that still made up the staple food supply of the new Company, just as it had for the old feuding companies. Secondly, Grant was to be used by Governor Simpson to entice the Metis to settle down as subsistence farmers that might some day be used to supply the Company with agricultural produce when the buffalo became scarce.

Many of the Metis, particularly the French Metis, had been employed by the North West Company. After amalgamation, the duplication of forts and transportation routes was no longer necessary since competition had ceased. Consequently, it was the French-speaking Metis, formerly of the North West Company, who had to bear the brunt of the unemployment caused by the amalgamation.³

Red River and Pembina became the "dumping ground" for these unemployed people. As the Company moved away from the use of indentured labour to free labour, Red River became a location for this reserve army of workers that could be hired during the busy season and laid off during quiet periods. The unemployed were also used as a para-military organization to placate the "savage" Sioux to the south of the Colony. McLeod and Morton wrote:

After the amalgamation of the companies in 1821, the Métis at Pembina were considerably increased in number by people from discontinued posts. Mr. Halkett considered settlement there undesirable. Its situation on the border increased the danger of a Métis alliance with the American traders. There was also danger from the Sioux. Governor Simpson admitted that Pembina was "much exposed to the hostile views of the neighboring Indians (the Sioux)." It had been attacked that season several times, and fourteen people had been either killed or wounded. The Company had withdrawn the post in an endeavour to concentrate settlement at The Forks. They relied on Bishop Provencher's influence with the Métis to effect their removal.⁴

There can be little doubt that Governor Simpson recognized the need for a surplus population in Red River to be used by the Company as a free labour force to be used during peak periods and laid off during quiet times. Harold Innis recorded a Company spokesman who explained:

The number of servants employed by the contending companies was triple the number required in quiet times, and, more especially, when the business came to be managed by one firm . . . The influx of families [to Red River] from the fur trade, in 1822, and the following summer, exceeded in number those who represented the original colonists brought in from all quarters by his Lordship [Lord Selkirk] . . . (The large personnel of both Companies incidental to competitive conditions was reduced and arrangements made for settling those who had been discharged, at Red River.)⁵

The Company's plan for relocation of the unemployed took form, then, in the settlement of surplus population at Red River, and in the creation of a settlement at White Horse Plains under the direction of Cuthbert Grant.

Governor Simpson had settled Grant and his Metis at White Horse Plains, south of Red River, giving each family a twenty-five acre plot of land. But settlement was only part of the plan. The

creation of a Metis middle class in the service of the monopoly, was the second part of the plan. Simpson wrote, on January 4, 1824:

Mr. Cuthbert Grant I consider to be a fit person to conduct this transport business between Norway House and Red River and for that purpose he will be dispatched with the craft from hence at the opening of navigation.⁶

Grant now became a private freighter, transporting goods in 1824 and 1825 from York to Red River both for the company and on his own account. For the role Simpson had planned for Grant was not merely that of settler, but also of a free, or private trader who would purchase the furs the Métis might otherwise take over the border to sell to the American traders from St. Peter's or from the Missouri. Grant was to be his agent in solving the whole problem of the place of the Métis in the new order. If they were not to be a menace, they must be brought to settle in the colony and they must be induced not to sell furs to the Americans. They must also be restrained from provoking the Sioux Indians to attack the colony. Grant, with his unequalled influence over the Métis and his deep concern for them, could more than anyone else bring them to settle and accept the Company's rule and monopoly. Of this undertaking, Grant's projected settlement would be the centre-piece.⁷

In order to provide the structure to control the Metis within the bounds of the Company's monopoly, the Hudson's Bay Company set up a small local state apparatus, and planned to settle the Metis down as subsistence farmers, so that a sedentary life-style would lend itself more readily to social control, as well as providing a reserve for the extraction of labour during the busy season.

In June, 1825, Governor Simpson wrote (selected excerpts from his letter):

Small allotments of 20 or 25 acres of land will be made for the men with families, and a general establishment under the Plan of a School of Industry will have to be formed for the orphan children.⁸

To ensure the initial success of these small, subsistence farms, the Company supplied tools, seed, and ammunition to maintain the Metis settlers until the first crop could be harvested.⁹

Simpson continued:

We understand that there are an immense number of women and children supported at the different trading posts, some belonging to the men still in the service and others who have been left by the fathers unprotected and a burden on the trade. It comes to be a serious consideration how these people are to be disposed of. It is both dangerous and expensive to support a numerous population of this description in an uneducated and savage condition, and it would be impolitic and inexpedient to encourage and allow them to collect together in different parts of the Country, where they would not be under any proper superintendence. The establishment of clergymen and schools at the Red River Settlement, where means of religious instruction and education will be afforded them and there they will be under a regular police and Government, by the Establishment of Magistrates under the act passed last session of Parliament points out the proper mode of disposing of this numerous class of persons. All old servants, with numerous families, ought to be discharged and transported at the expense of the Trade to Red River; the Canadians who are Roman Catholics, their children will naturally fall under the care of the Catholic Mission, and the Protestants and their families, and all the orphan children who will (fail?) to be supported by the Company will of course be under the care of the Reverent Wm. West.¹⁰

The writer of this thesis apologizes for the length of the above quotation. However, it is difficult to imagine a more concise statement of the role of the state as an instrument of social control for the H.B.C.'s. Clearly, Governor Simpson was discussing just that role and purpose. Most of the suggestions, plans, etc. were taken word-for-word from the recommendations of the London Committee to the Council of Assiniboia (the local government was set up and controlled by the Company). Members were appointed by the Governor of the Company; they were not elected, and they inevitably consisted

of Company "hacks."¹¹

It was just after the amalgamation of the two companies in 1821, followed by the lay-off of nearly half the employees who were no longer required as a vital labour force, that the Hudson's Bay Company's ideology regarding natives did an abrupt "about-face." For over a century the Metis had been tolerated as vital workers for the Company. Now, however, they were suddenly seen as "indolent," "merely fit for voyaging."

The Half-breed population is by far the most extended about the Settlement and appear to require great good management otherwise they will become in my opinion dangerous to its peace; hitherto they have lived almost entirely by the chase, and in consequence of the great demand for provisions have been enabled to indulge in their rage for Dress, extravagance, and dissipation; but domestic Cattle are now getting so numerous that in the course of two years hence there will be no market for the produce of their hunts, and those people if not brought gradually from their present vagrant mode of life will then become worse and more destitute than Indians being unaccustomed to the privations & hardships to which the latter are frequently exposed, & ignorant of the mode of hunting fur-bearing Animals;-- their notions of pride and independence are such that they will not enter the service moreover they are not the Class of people that would be desirable on any terms as they are indolent and unsteady merely fit for voyaging.--Under those circumstances it is necessary to watch and manage them with great care, otherways they may become the most formidable enemy to which the Settlement is exposed.--Cuthbert Grant, whom your Honors were last years [sic] pleased to admit as a Clerk in the service, is warmly attached to this race of people & has much influence over them which he seems desirous to use in furtherance of your views.¹²

The merger of 1821, over the length and breadth of Ruperts-land had displaced a significant number of people who were now being used as a "reserve army" of labour, but they were to be used again, in the transportation routes, as voyageurs, Cart men and labourers, though in greatly reduced numbers.

Grant's loyalty to the new order was an item of top priority for Governor Simpson. As a final bonus, the Metis if not actually having conquered the Sioux, at least had sufficiently subdued them so that the Metis were strong enough to be able to travel through Sioux territory to St. Paul. Thus, they were capable of opening up a much cheaper trade route for the Hudson's Bay Company than the expensive northern water routes had been.¹⁴

Since Cuthbert Grant, as the leader of the Metis, was invaluable to the Company in accomplishing these tasks, his new position as a middle classowner in the new order seemed little enough recompense. He was appointed as a Council member on the Council of Assiniboia.¹⁵

Through the co-option of the Metis leader by means of making

him the "Seigneur of Grantown," and by setting him up as an owner of a transportation company, as well as giving him a token position on the Council of Assiniboia,¹⁶ the Metis surplus population remained passive for a few years. However, this peaceful situation was not to last for long.

From the Company's needs for a cheaper trade route than the difficult and dangerous northern route through to Hudson's Bay, the Cart trade to St. Paul, Minnesota, developed. In the beginning the Metis initiated and dominated this trade route to St. Paul as a workforce for the company:

The trade between St. Paul and the Red River settlements began in 1844 with 6 carts and increased to 102 in 1851, 600 in 1858, and 2500 in 1869.¹⁷

Initially, in 1844, the Carts, pulled by oxen, manned by the Metis, were owned by the Company. However, of the 2500 carts involved in the trade in 1869, virtually all were owned by Metis entrepreneurs.¹⁸

The St. Paul trade route, initiated by the Company, quickly was taken over by the Metis hunters who had been pushed out of the old fur trading economy bounded by the rules of the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly. Indeed, a Metis middle class did develop from this illicit trade, and with it, the concept of a Metis nation grew and flourished.

The "Sayer trial" of 1849, is recognized as the turning-point for the Company's effective monopoly control of Rupertsland.

Despite repeated requests from Governor Simpson for more troops from England to control striking workers and to smash the free fur trade movement, fewer and fewer troops were being dispatched to Red River.¹⁹ The Imperial government of Great Britain was not able, or willing, to send troops to Red River. During this highly expansive era of British imperialism, troops might have been more profitably deployed elsewhere. During this period British troops were engaged in the following conflicts: 1837, suppressing a rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada; 1839 to 1860, the England-China war; 1854, suppressing the great strike in England. In 1867, a series of attacks on Canada was initiated by the Fenians from inside the United States of America. As well, in 1867 Canada was in a state of economic depression, with much labour unrest.²⁰

Consequent to these events, the Imperial Government's only response to these "urgent requests" for troops, in 1848, was a contingent of military troops ready for retirement. Charles Bell described the military inadequacies as follows:

On several occasions detachments of Imperial troops were sent to the Red River Settlement by the British Government in response to urgent requests of the Hudson's Bay Company, and these were all in turn, during their stay, quartered within the stone walls of Fort Garry. In 1846, eighteen officers and three hundred and twenty-nine men, being a wing of the 6th Royal Regiment of Foot, with artillery and engineers, under the command of Colonel John F. Crofton, arrived, having made the long journey from England via Hudson Bay, Lake Winnipeg and the Red River. They remained quartered in the fort for two years and then returned to Great Britain by the same route.

In the autumn of 1848, seventy pensioners arrived under the command of Major Caldwell, the object of this corps being that they should form the nucleus of a local force

to be recruited in the Red River Settlement, to support the enforcement of the laws of the Hudson's Bay Company. Major Caldwell remained in the Settlement until 1855, but most of the men settled down in the country.²¹

The cost of maintaining a large garrison at Fort Garry had been onerous for the company and, in any event, other world events were putting pressure on the British empire for the use of its troops. By 1848, it was becoming obvious to the Metis that the Company could no longer enforce its monopoly.

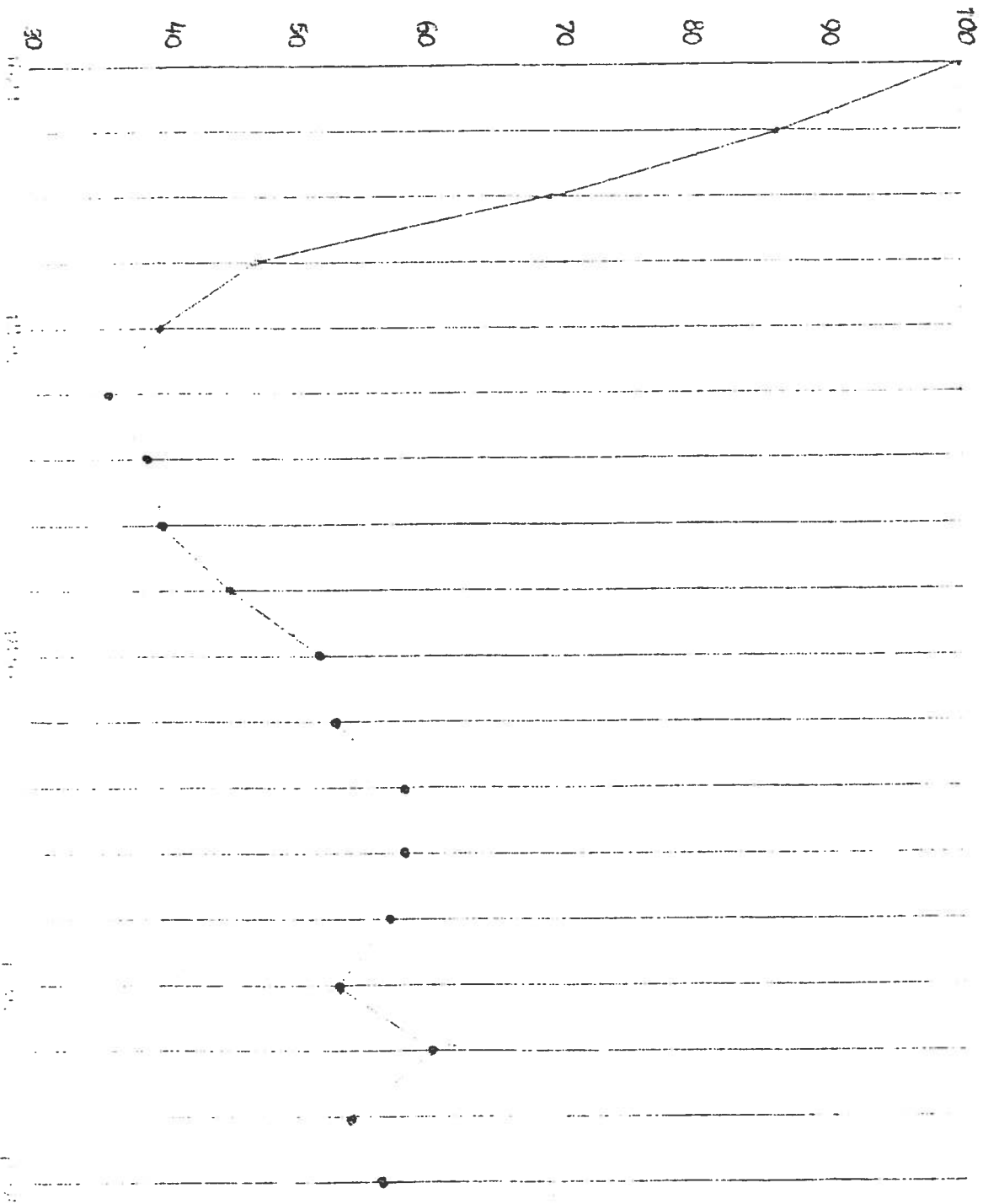
These free trading Metis were the french-speaking people who, in the main, had been employees of the old North West Company. They had been laid off during, or very shortly after, the amalgamation of 1821, because of the abandonment of nearly half the trading posts and half of the transportation facilities which had been in place because of the necessity to compete in the various trading regions. Thus, the Metis buffalo hunters, mainly of French, Catholic extraction, were the ones who had initially been displaced as a proletariat immediately after the merger because of the internal structural changes made possible through the merger when the two companies became one. The Metis middle class thus developed from the free trade movement, led by Louis Riel senior, as a direct consequence of the structural changes created by the merger. But the remaining employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, mainly English speaking and Protestant, were not to enjoy "job security" for long.

In order to understand just how the Metis "middle class" of merchants and property owners came in to being we must briefly review the results of the amalgamation of the two fur trading companies in Rupert's Land.

As the following graph indicates, the workforce dropped to about 35% of its preamalgamation level, hitting its lowest point in 1837, it then growing again to about 57% of its former requirements. Clearly, the concentration of capital on the one hand, was creating massive unemployment on the other. As profits increased for the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly, life became more tenuous for the Red River Metis who, it will be recalled, were prevented from free trading, commercial farming or any other form of economic diversification by the Company government. (The Hudson's Bay Company also had full power of the government, judiciary, police etc. in Rupert's Land.) Study the following graph. This graph was compiled, based on Hudson's Bay Company archival data, for Parks Canada.

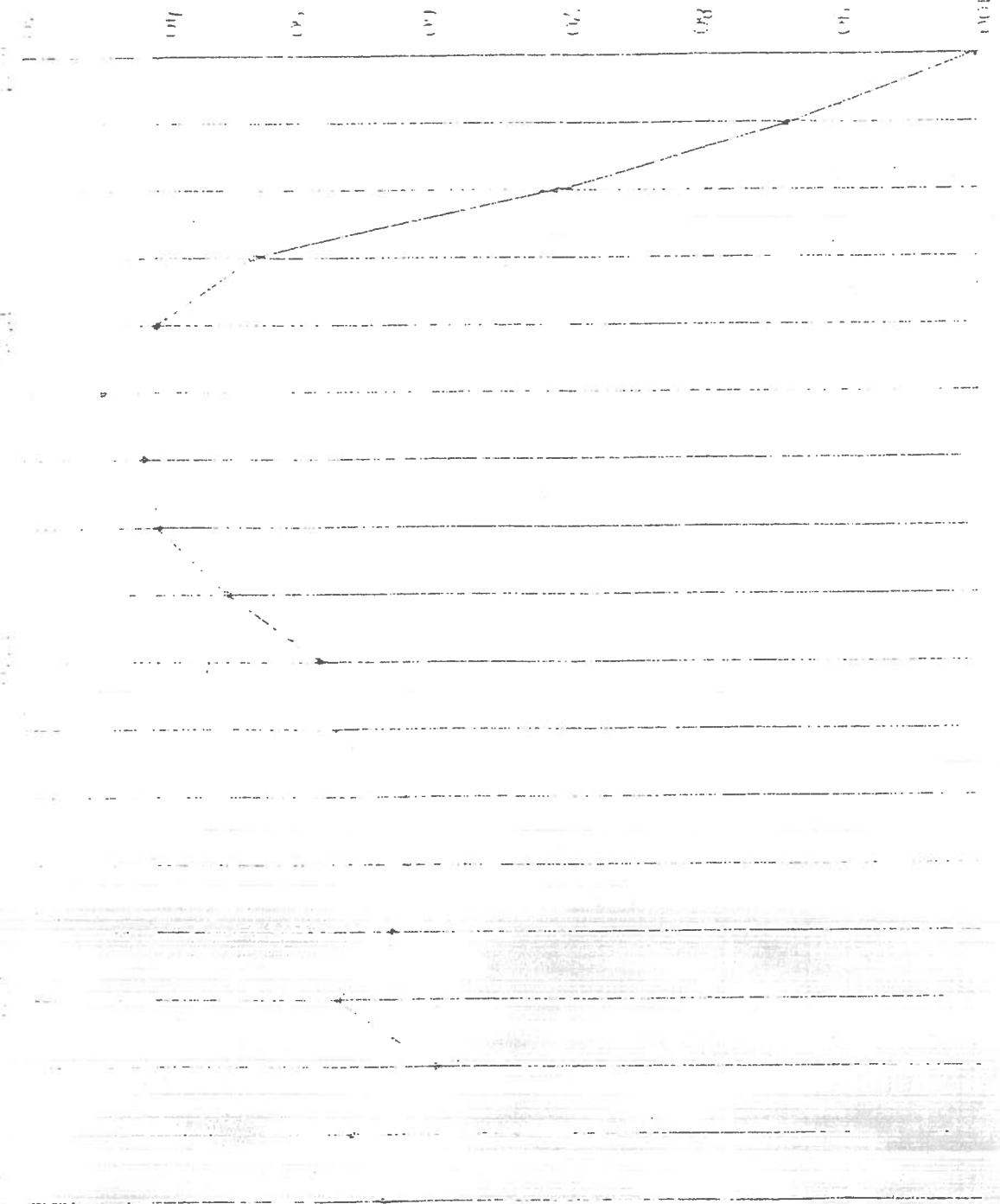
Graph depicting % decrease in total labour force in British North America

Note - the amalgamation of the two fur trading Companies occurred in 1821.



Graph depicting % decrease in total labour force in British North America

Note - the amalgamation of the two fur trading Companies occurred in 1821.



Papers on the Labour System of the Hudson's Bay Company 1821 - 1900, Parks Canada

The Hudson's Bay Company had, by 1870, depleted most of the furs in Rupert's Land. It could no longer prevent settlement of its lands. The Company considered selling the land to Canada. However, the state apparatus that the Company had set up in Red River - the Council of Assiniboia, the fort, the jail and the police force, put there for the social control of the Metis after 1821 - this whole state apparatus was now needed by the Metis, who, relatively powerful both in terms of economics, and political organization, were now preparing to set up their own nation within the Canadian confederation. Thus the Metis middle class had laid the foundations of the Metis Nation, and the Manitoba Act of 1870. However, this was only to come about after much conflict with the federal government, and only in an unacceptable form for the Metis Nation.

Student handout:

RESULTS OF THE AMALGAMATION OF 1821: THE METIS MIDDLE CLASS

The last lesson told of the way the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company resulted in unemployment for many Metis, particularly those french-speaking employees who had worked for the North West Company. Look at the graph, page II - VI - 14. It shows that the work force dropped to about 36% of it of its preamalgamation total in 1821. It reached this low point in 1826 then climbed back up to about 57% of the old total. Overall, then, about 43% of the total work force prior to amalgamation was permanently laid off.

The Hudson's Bay Company monopoly would not let these employed people farm commercially, or go in to business for themselves, or trade in furs on their own. Consequently they had to rebel against the Company's government in order to stay alive. (There was no social welfare or anything of that nature).

The Company's governor, George Simpson, knew that these newly unemployed people would attempt to trade in furs themselves, so he hired their old leader, Cuthbert Grant to work as a small businessman for the Company monopoly. As well, they made him a council man on their local government, the Council of Assiniboia. In reality, this whole government was made up of Hudson's Bay managers and their allies. Governor Simpson knew that if he could win over his late enemy, Cuthbert Grant, he would be able to use his prestige to be able to control the Metis people under his command. Cuthbert Grant became a leader of the new Metis middle class because the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly wanted to co-opt the loyalty of the Metis in this way. Thus, Cuthbert Grant represented an example of a particular type of national middle class, a comprador class. This class is created by colonizing countries so that it can suck in the people through their own nationalist sentiments, and use them for the Company's own purposes.

To ensure social control of the Metis people, the Company Monopoly, under governor Simpson built up its own parliament (the Council of Assinaboia) and built its jails in Fort Garry. As well it attempted to maintain an army from Great Britain. However, Great Britain did not supply a large enough army. Together, the Company's control of the government, the judiciary and the police and military that were available represented in miniature a complete state apparatus.

The Company monopoly settled some Metis down as subsistence farmers, but most of these people went out on to the plains and made a good living trading in furs and buffalo. They are the ones who formed the core of the Metis nation.

The Company spokesmen who had employed the Metis before the merger maintained an ideology that saw the Metis as good, strong, loyal workers. After the merger, the Company spokesmen began to create an ideology that saw the Metis as lazy, indolent and unfaithful. (This was because the Metis were no longer earning the Company any profits; in fact they were competing against it.

These french-speaking Metis had many families who became rich and well educated. These well educated people taught the Metis people that they were a distinct nation and led them in to a confrontation with the Canadian government as it attempted to take over Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1870.

For an introduction to some of the Metis middle class people, read the textbook, a pictorial history of the Metis and Non-Status Indians in Saskatchewan. Pay particular attention to: Cuthbert Grant, Louis Riel Sr., Captain Kennedy, Alexander Isbister, Louis David Riel, Xavier Letendre dit Batoche, and Joseph Nolin.

These people were among the notable Metis who came from the new middle class and did so much to move the history of the Metis.

CORE CONCEPTS

The Metis middle class was made up of two opposing elements, the compador class, under Grant was used to co-opt the Metis by turning their nationalist sentiments in to a movement that would work for the monopoly.

Many of the french speaking Metis, through their battle against the monopoly, became a successful middle class movement of traders and merchants. They provided the revolutionary basis of Metis nationalism. They led the people through the future confrontations with Ottawa. The new revolutionary Metis middle class took over the existing state apparatus in Red River. This led to the first rebellion and the Manitoba Act of 1870.

The Company created a state (jails, army, parliament etc.) for the social control of the unemployed Metis. The Company tried to place the unemployed on small farms, where they could subsist without threatening the monopoly.

CORE WORDS
defintitions

1. Middle class: a class of people that owns or manages a society's major means of production and distribution.
2. Comprador class: A name given to that class of people (usually in colonies) that is granted power by the imperial country, so that it will function in the interests of the imperial power, not in the interests of the local people.
3. Co-opt: to turn an opposing force in to a direction that works for ones own benefits.
4. The State: A historically specific institution that came into being when classes developed in human society. The State is the organized authority, domination, and power of the possessing classes over the rest of the people. It includes the royal families, kings, bishops, popes, parliaments, dictators, armies and police forces as well as the judiciary, the court system, the educational institutions and the bureaucracy of civil servants.
5. Subsistence farming: farming on a small scale. It provides only enough for basic survival, if that. There is nothing for sale or profit

FOOTNOTES

¹Margaret McLeod and W.L. Morton, Cuthbert Grant of Grantown, McClelland and Stewart, 1974, p. 86.

²Ibid., p. 69.

³Henri Letourneau, Curator, St. Boniface Museum, Interview, March 1981.

⁴Margaret McLeod and W.L. Morton, Ibid., p. 86.

⁵Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1970, p. 288.

⁶Ibid., p. 87.

⁷Ibid., p. 87.

⁸Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Ottawa, A/620 Fo., pp. 36-43.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., A6/20 Fo. Note--the word "fail" was not clearly written in the original document; consequently, it may have been misinterpreted here.

¹¹See appendix a, A Publication of the Hudson's Bay Record Society, Published in a limited edition by The Champlain Society, 1940. A copy of this can be found at the Gabriel Dumont Institute in Regina.

¹²Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Ottawa, D14/8, Section, pp. 14-16. (Letter--Simpson to McTavish, January 4, 1824.)

¹³Harold Innis from Robert J. Devrome, Ibid., pp. 43-44.

¹⁴See appendix a. Also, Margaret McLeod and W.L. Morton, Ibid., Chapter 4.

¹⁵Ibid. Also see Auguste Tremaudin, Ibid., pp. 90-91.

¹⁶W.A. Mackintosh, Prairie Settlement--The Geographical Setting, Vol. 1, Macmillan Company, Toronto, 1934, p. 27.

17 Following a breakthrough in tanning technology, American markets for buffalo hides created an immense demand, since they were being used in belting for industrial purposes. As well, buffalo tongues were sold as delicacies. Consequently, the Metis buffalo hunters of Red River developed a new and effective method of hunting buffalo to be sold as a commodity to traders in St. Paul. A hunt in 1840 comprised 4,000 people and 1,200 carts. In 1872 the Santa Fe railway shipped 10,793,350 pounds east. This equalled about 564,300 buffalo, according to a tabloid from the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources Publication, Museum of Natural History, Bison and Man, undated, pp. 21-22. The Metis hunters killed 11,549,621 buffalo between 1855 and 1870, W.L. Morton, *Ibid.*, p. 52. Many of these buffalo were killed and sold to the Hudson's Bay Company but it is probable that most went through the illicit trade via St. Paul, to the American market. The millions of dollars earned from this trade provided the economic basis for the rise of a Metis petite bourgeoisie.

18 Charles Napier Bell, The Old Forts of Winnipeg, 1738-1927, Sponsor, The Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Publisher, Davidson, Richardson Ltd., 1927, pp. 32-33.

19 Benjamin Vincent, Haydn's Dictionary of Dates, Ward, Lock & Co., Warwick, England, 1903.

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

lesson 8

EVENTS PRECEDING THE 1870 RESISTANCE

Cultural and Historical Overview

Lesson 8: EVENTS PRECEDING THE 1870 RESISTANCE

I AIM

1. The students will understand the underlying conflicts that come to the surface during the 1870 Metis resistance.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. describe the end of mercantilism and analyze the new policies that were put in motion by the Canadian and British governments,
2. describe the way that the local resistance to these policies developed,
3. discuss the meaning of the Manitoba Act, and analyze the Metis role in the creation of this legislation.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Read the TEACHERS FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL.
From this material prepare either a lecture or a handout for the students.
2. Hold a class discussion. Ensure that the following questions are dealt with:
 - a) Why did the federal government need Metis and Indian lands?
 - b) How important was the Canadian Pacific Railway to the fulfillment of the Canadian Policy?

- c) Why (and how) did Louis Riel choose to resist through parliamentary procedures instead of revolutionary action?
- d) What were the short-term and long-term results of the Manitoba Act?
- e) Who were the people that were really responsible for the passing of the Manitoba Act.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. From the class discussion, write the salient features on the blackboard or flip chart. Ensure that students participate in the discussion, and understand the items highlighted on the blackboard or flip chart, as outlined in the section "CORE CONCEPTS, p II - VII - 16

V MATERIALS

1. TEACHERS FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL
Prepared by Gabriel Dumont Staff.

TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL

To understand why the Metis put up such a stout resistance to the changes initiated by the Canadian government, we must begin by recognizing that 1870 represented the end of an historical epoch and the beginning of the modern history of the west, based on settlement, agricultural and industrial development.

1870 represented the end of mercantilism in Canada. The fur trade had been profitable. But the money that could be earned in trading furs was "peanuts" compared to the profits that were to be obtained from exploiting the settlers and Indians and Metis, through the land development policies of the Montreal merchants.

The Montreal merchants who had made so much money from the fur trade now wanted some place to invest that money. We shall see how they had failed to get in to the market created by the United States settlement of the west. So what they did was, (1) create a Canadian State in Ottawa to carry out their desires, (2) help finance the C.P.R. to bring in settlers, (3) in one way or the other, "legal" or illegal, acquire Metis and Indian land through speculation, (4) settle the west in such a way as to create profits for themselves through manufacturing that was protected by tarrifs, by exploiting farmers in the marketplace, and by obtaining huge land and money grants from their Canadian government in Ottawa. However, before there windfall profits could be made from land settlement, the Indian and Metis had to be disposed of in some suitable way.

Let us now trace out this pattern of events, as it has been recorded by various historians and authors.

The events of 1870 in Red River moved with a rapidity that, even now, has left historians with a hundred years of "hindsight" wondering, at times, what happened? In the heart of this western "wilderness" a drama of empires was being played out. The United States of America was carrying out its "mopping-up operations" against the plains Indians. Westward settlement was proceeding by leaps and bounds. Industry was following, and America was seeking markets westward across the pacific, in fierce competition with Imperial Great Britain.

Vernon Fowke wrote:

"The American Revolution introduced nationalism to North America. Originally it was merely defensive nationalism".¹

By 1850 the early defensive nationalism of the United States had given way to aggressive economic and political philosophy which fully sanctioned territorial aggrandizement within continental limits.² This "philosophy" was named "Manifest Destiny". It provided the rationalization for the American take-over of the continent, in the name of "liberty".

But the American capitalist class, now in control of their national State apparatus, was not the only group that was becoming dangerously aggressive: "Continental ambitions were not, however, exclusively American ... Aggressiveness had by no means been lacking in the conduct of the commercial pursuits of the St. Lawrence merchants. (Canada's class of National capitalists). The construction of the Grand Trunk Railway in the 1850's may nevertheless be regarded as the last attempt at economic aggression on the part of the St. Lawrence commercial interests. It became increasingly clear that the American commercial system, and the American manufacturing system as well, was more than a match for any rivals.

By 1860 it was apparent that the St. Lawrence commercial system had no chance of sharing in the Agricultural trades of the American frontier."³

And what of trade with Great Britain? During the epoch of the fur trade, Britain had been virtually the only "trading partner" of the Canadian North West. The previous "imperial trade preferences" with Canada were removed by Britain in the mid-nineteenth century. After the depletion of the fur staple, Britain it seems, had lost interest in the colony.

The economic forces which contributed to Confederation and the establishment of the Dominion government were, like the political forces, both internal and external. (The decision to create and develop an integrated economy on a national basis was adopted because of the disappearance of not one but two more highly regarded alternative possibilities -- those of imperial and of continental economic integration.). The alteration of British trade and fiscal policy at mid-century as represented by the removal of imperial preferences not only ended any hope of the immediate extension of imperial integration but also seriously reduced that which had previously existed. The Reciprocity Treaty, put into effect in the 1850's with the United States, restored temporarily to full vigour the persistent belief among British North American economic groups that continental integration offered a practicable and preferable alternative to close imperial economic relationships. This belief, however, waned in proportion as the conviction grew that the Americans were unlikely to renew the treaty upon the expiration of its first term.⁴

As profits from the fur trade fell, the ruling class of British merchants lost their interest in supplying troops to the colony as well.

Political alterations which pointed urgently to the necessity for change in the relationships among British North American territories appeared both internally and externally after 1850. Internally there was the political impasse in the United Province of Canada arising out of rigidities created by the Act of Union. These rigidities, originally immaterial became evident when unexpected shifts occurred in

delet

*

the regional and racial distribution of population within the united area. Externally, there were new and disturbing developments in the matter of defence which applied alike to the St. Lawrence and to the maritime provinces. After 1850 the Imperial government displayed an increasing reluctance to maintain the burden of defence of British North American territories. This development coincided with a period of increasing friction between Britain and the British North American provinces on the one hand and the United States on the other. The central government, to be created by the act of Confederation would, so it was reasoned, assume responsibility for defence on a national basis, otherwise the defence requirement would either impose an intolerable burden on the individual provinces or else would have to be left in default. ⁵

** During this period British troops were engaged in the following conflicts:
 1837, suppressing a rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada;
 England, 1839 to 1860, the suppression of the great strikes in England.
 In 1867, a series of attacks on Canada was initiated by the Fenians from inside the U.S. of A.
 In 1867 Canada was in a state of economic depression, with much labour unrest.*

Now, with the market reduced in Great Britain, and with the long hoped-for dream of an American frontier agricultural market smashed by overwhelming American competition, the rising class of Canadian (Montreal-based) merchants had only one choice left, the creation of a Canadian agricultural frontier. And there was no question as to the profits that could be obtained in such a venture. The American experience had shown that with massive immigration came a business boom.

"When Canadian leaders in the 1850's and 1860's looked back, they saw clearly that earlier periods of expansive prosperity had been characterized most prominently by an abundant immigration and agricultural settlement. This was true whether the area examined was on the Canadian or the American side of the St. Lawrence. The lesson was particularly pointed up by an examination of the American economy, since prosperity and immigration persisted simultaneously there in a manner not to be mistaken for coincidence, while by 1855 prosperity and immigration had together deserted the Canadian economy. For the entire century following the Revolutionary War the most important feature of North American economic life, and indeed of the conomic life of the entire Atlantic region, was the westward movement of the agricultural frontier. The British colonies on the St. Lawrence shared generously in this movement until the middle 1850's and particularly throughout the generation from 1825 to 1855. The rate of economic growth in Canada thereafter was relatively low in contrast to what it had been in the earlier period. The simultaneous decline of agricultural immigration and settlement could not escape attention." 6

Clearly, then, western settlement would benefit one group more than any other. It would provide the basis for industry and for those with sufficient money to invest, high profits, through trade and transportation could be expected.

"Attempts to expand the Canadian agricultural frontier in the 1850's failed as completely as did the efforts to establish commercial contact with the American agricultural frontier. Immigrants entering at Quebec averaged 10,000 a year from 1858 to 1860 and 20,000 a year from 1861 to 1865. These figures were barely comparable with the yearly totals of a generation before when no assistance had been extended to immigrants. The most discouraging contrast, however, was with the persistent buoyancy of American immigration and settlement. By 1860 New York was receiving seven immigrants to every one arriving in Quebec. Free grants and colonization roads on the Canadian frontier were inadequate to divert the European immigrants from settling in the American Middle West where land was obtainable only at a price. Instead of proving a land of opportunity for scores of thousands of new settlers each year, Canada was, in fact, unable to retain her native sons.

It was in this context of economic frustration that the national policy was gradually evolved."

7

The economic requirements of the Montreal merchants became the major determining factor of Canadian economic development policy long before Canadian nationhood in 1867. In effect, the formation of a national parliament simply acted as the formal institutionalization of the merchant class's power. Prior to the creation of a national state, the interests of the Canadian merchant class were disorganized, while the system primarily served British imperial interests. However, with the creation of Canada as a nation-state, imperial capital and Canadian capital blended into a mutually beneficial symbiosis. Fowke wrote:

The National policy took shape over the decades before and after confederation.⁸ (emphasis mine)

Fowke, below, indicates quite clearly what class of people controlled National Policy.

The emergence of the national policy represented a major change in the views of St. Lawrence commercial interests concerning the location of the Canadian frontier. Successive generations of resident and non-resident merchants, from the earliest establishment of European trading-posts on the St. Lawrence River, had refused to recognize any limit to their commercial domain within the confines of the continent. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century the commerce had been in furs and the investment frontier had been a fur trader's frontier but after the Revolutionary

War, and particularly after the beginning of the nineteenth century, the westward expansion of agricultural settlement on a continental basis completely overshadowed the fur trade as a source of investment opportunities for labour and capital. St. Lawrence merchants abandoned the fur trade and directed their efforts toward the servicing of a new frontier.

9

Now that the rapacious overdevelopment had depleted the fur resource and impoverished the Indian tribes that had become dependent on the fur trade, the Montreal merchants, abandoned by Britain, were to create a new staple economy in the west, based upon settlement and wheat production. With the establishment of the Canadian national state they now had a vehicle that could be used as a multipurpose servant to create laws favorable to themselves, to assist in providing capital for the required transcontinental railway (the C.P.R.) and finally, to provide a military force that could overcome Indian and Metis resistance, or for that matter, organized resistance from the settlers and labourers, should it arise.

"The British North America Act of 1867 established the political constitution, the first step needed for the elaboration and implementation of the national policy, and created the federal government, the major instrument by means of which the plan was to be carried out. It is necessary at this point to indicate the nature of the constitutional provisions made in the British North America Act for the furtherance of the national project and to examine the development and integration of the main non-constitutional elements of the national policy, that is, those relating to railways, immigration, settlement and land policy, and protective tariffs."

10

Prior to 1867 the merchant class of Montreal had set the process in motion: Britain was finished with its colonial conquest of Rupert's Land. The fur trade with its stifling of agricultural and industrial growth was all but finished.

The Canadian Policy opened the floodgates for immigration and settlement. And it was controlled and arranged in such a way that the benefits of the new economy were to accrue, not to the pioneers of settlers, but to the Montreal merchants. They were to amass fortunes taken from the Indians and Metis

through scrip, and from the settlers who paid inflated prices for their industrial supplies and lost again to these same merchants, when they sold their grain through them, frequently at less than the cost of production.¹¹

The treachery exhibited by the Federal Government in its dealings with the Metis of Red River must be seen in light of all this. Historians have tended to infer that the Canadian governments, under Macdonald and MacKenzie, were simply ignorant of the local problems or did not understand the Metis people. Nothing could be further from the truth. The following events in Red River were necessary components of the implementation of the national policy of the ruling class of merchants, through its new institution, the Canadian Federal Government. And if the American experience was any indication of what might happen to Native people who "stood in the way of progress", things looked bad for the Metis of Rupert's Land.

The Company, having wrung from the territory all that it could, and having reduced the native population to a state of dependency, poverty, and in many cases to outright starvation, departed from Rupert's Land ignominiously, without warning the inhabitants of the impending storm that would replace its old mercantile dictatorship. The vast territory was transferred to the Montreal merchant class, through its new medium, the federal government for:

"£300,000 and a grant of some thousands of acres of land around the Company's posts, together with one twentieth of the 'fertile belt' in order to extinguish the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company in Rupert's Land." 12

George F. Stanley recorded this event:

"The terms agreed upon at London were ratified by the Canadian Parliament and the date of the transfer was fixed for October 1st, 1869. This date was, however, altered to December 1st, owing to a delay in making the necessary financial arrangements. In the meantime the Canadian Government, in anticipation of the transfer, passed "An Act for the Temporary Government of Ruperts Land.", which provided for the administration by a Lieutenant-Governor and Council not exceeding fifteen and not less than seven persons, and the retention of all the laws then in force in the territory not inconsistent with the British North America Act or the terms of the transfer. The choice for the position of Lieutenant-Governor fell upon the Honourable William McDougall. It was regarded by many as a fitting reward for his public services in bringing about the acquisition of the North-West - although his enemies suggested that the Government were anxious to disembarass themselves of an unpopular colleague.

In order to be present at Red River when the long-negotiated transfer should finally take place, the Governor-designate, accompanied by his prospective Provincial Secretary, his Attorney General, his Collector of Customs and his Chief of Police, set out, by way of the United States, for the seat of his prairie government. Towards the end of October he arrived at the frontier village of Pembina where he was greeted, not by the expected address of welcome, but by

"A Monsieur McDougall.

"Monsieur - Le Comite National des Metis de la Riviere Rouge intime a Monsieur McDougall l'ordre de ne pas entrer sur le Territoire du Nord-Ouest sans une permission speciale de ce Comite.

Par ordre du president

John Bruce
Louis Riel, Secretaire

Date a St. Norbert, Riviere Rouge
ce le jour d'octobre, 1969"

13

As Stanley indicated earlier in The Birth of Western Canada, McDougall was one of the main "advocates" of the acquisition of Ruperts Land for land settlement. The Pay-off for services rendered by McDougall to the Montreal merchants was to be the governorship of the new territory. However, his first meeting with the Metis of Red River should have convinced him that they were not to be "bought and sold" or "transferred" from one dictator to the next, like property, or sheep and cattle. When McDougall tried to enter the territory, he was given a rough ride back across the border by the Metis, who had formed a provisional government.

The stage had been set by the Montreal merchants through the newly created state machinery in Ottawa. The plans for the expropriation of the west and its future development as an agricultural colony of the east had been hammered out by the merchants and the politicians.

The following is, then, simply the story of the chain of events thus set in motion by both P.M. MacDonald and his competitors and successors. The action thus created is what historians have tended to pass off as "history", something arbitrary, unplanned, controlled by this, or that, strong personality.

Indeed, strong personalities were involved on both sides but they were not the determining factors in settling the fate of the Metis and the settlers of the west. Canadian government policy was the determining factor. All resistance was to be crushed. No matter who was hurt by the people on the government side.

On one side was a new historical class of people on the ascension, on the other was a way of life that British imperialism had depleted and impoverished until it could no longer function or survive on its own. The buffalo were gone. Furs were scarce and the market for them had dried up. The new Canadian merchant class had seized control of the fledgling state apparatus and was ready and willing to use its military power to further its own interests, which included the seizure of western land from the Natives, the sale of this land, with immense profits, to the settlers, many of whom were to be indebted to the land development companies and the C.P.R. for the rest of their lives.

Immigration meant profit. The profit was to be used to industrialize the east, and the wheat economy was to be exploited through the private marketing network. This was the National policy. The following then, is the story of the characters who played their parts in the drama, whose stage had been set in Ottawa and London, and in Washington.

The Montreal merchant class was also embroiled in such "harmless ideological debates". However, they were on the march; a national class of ruthless entrepreneurs on the ascendancy. They did not rely on "debate" to establish a new investment frontier; they sent out spies, agents provocateurs, and finally used military force to deceive and conquer the Metis. And the American State was in a stage of revolutionary capitalist expansion as well. Stanley wrote:

"It was the north-westerly movement of the American frontier of settlement that brought home to Canadians the urgency of securing the north-western territories for British rule. In 1849 there had been fewer than 5,000 people in the territory of Minnesota, south of Assiniboia, but by 1860 there were more than 172,000. St. Paul had become the distributing centre for the Red River Settlement and the overland route via the United States had displaced Hudson Bay as the principal trade route to the interior of the British North-West. The natural direction in which further expansion would take place appeared to be the Red River valley, and it was evident that, unless Ruperts Land was in the hands of a power stronger than a trading monopoly, American frontiersmen would pay little heed to the existence of an imaginary boundary line. It was not difficult to foresee the serious international

complications which might arise from a sudden and unauthorized influx of immigrants from the United States. The Americans were, as a rule, anti-British and strongly biased in favour of republican institutions, and the doctrine of "manifest destiny" was a powerful force in American politics. Peaceable American penetration had been the preliminary step to the annexation of Oregon and Texas, and it was not beyond the bounds of possibility that Ruperts Land and the North West might go the same way." 14

Even the ponderous bureaucracy, the Hudson Bay Company had considered raising capital for the exploitation of mines, timber etc., when the fur resource was depleted, "and A.K. Isbister (The same Isbister who handled the 'memorials petitions', who was a Metis lawyer in Britain) urged before the Select Committee that Great Britain should take over the North West because the United States are fast peopling the territory along the frontier, and they will have the territory from us unless

Footnotes

1. Vernon C. Fowke, The National Policy And The Wheat Economy University of Toronto Press, 1975, p. 25
2. Ibid, p. 26
3. Ibid, p. 26
4. Ibid, p. 5
5. Ibid, p. 5
6. Ibid, p. 24
7. Ibid, p. 24
8. Ibid, p. 25
9. Ibid p. 25
10. Ibid, p. 40
11. Ibid, read Chapters 2 and 3
12. W.L. Morton, The Kingdom of Canada, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1969, p. 334
13. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1963, p. 63

See The Birth of Western Canada, for details of this. Stanley pointed out that McDougall had worked long and hard to bring about the transfer - He also was responsible for imposing the unpopular american system of survey on to the local people of Red River. This was of course, basic to the requirements of the National Policy, as spelled out by Vernon Fowke in The National Policy and the Wheat Economy, and was being implemented into the planning for the take over of Rupert's Land before Canadian Nationhood in 1866.

14. Ibid, p. 24
15. Ibid, p. 25

Lesson 8

CORE CONCEPTS

1. By 1870 mercantilism had given way to other, more profitable forms of economic exploitation. Mercantilism, as an historical epoch, was finished. It had provided the necessary capital for industrialization for the advanced countries.
2. The Canadian class of merchants, with headquarters in Montreal, now wished to join forces with British and American capital to use the west as an investment potential.
3. The Canadian merchants had been unable to get in to the lucrative American frontier market, but they learned from the Americans that millions of dollars could be made by settling the prairies with peasants from Europe.
4. The Canadian government was set up and became the instrument by which the Montreal merchant class developed the west for its own purposes of profit and industrial growth in the east, (Ontario and Quebec.)
5. High tariffs would see to it that profit from settlement of the west would flow to the eastern merchants, not the United States.
6. The Hudson's Bay Company was to be "purchased", but the Indians and Metis had to be disposed of, so that their lands could be taken by speculators for next-to-nothing. They could then sell this land at a high profit to the peasants being brought in from Europe.
7. The Canadian Pacific railway was built (using massive amounts of tax money). This railway was financed in large measure by the public but was owned privately by such men as Donald Smith, a man who had made a fortune through the fur trade. The C.P.R. was also given millions worth of land by the government.
8. Governor McDougall had been sent out by the Ottawa government to survey the land and get it ready for settlement **EVEN THOUGH THE LAND WAS ALREADY OCCUPIED BY INDIAN, METIS AND**

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

LESSON 9

RED RIVER RESISTANCE

Cultural and Historical Overview

Lesson 9: RED RIVER RESISTANCE

I AIM

1. Students will understand who the important historical characters were, and how the events unfolded, in the Red River rebellion and the founding of the province of Manitoba.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. discipline themselves to read, and take notes on, a brief historical account of the Red River rebellion,
2. relate the role of Louis Riel as leader of the Metis to the struggle of the Metis people against the federal government's imposition of a new social system,
3. take note of the main characters in the account and describe their roles. As representatives of classes and interest groups.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Ensure that each student has a copy of, RIEL'S MANITOBA UPRISING, by Frank W. Anderson, Frontier publishing Ltd., 1977.
2. Design homework if necessary, but have the students read this short booklet. Some class-time may be assigned to ensure that it is read.

3. In a class discussion, identify the following characters and connect them to the larger constituency that they represented in this struggle, example, Louis Riel, represented the Metis people. Do this for the following:
- a) Dr. John Christian Schultz
 - b) Archbishop Tache
 - c) Colonel John Stoughton Dennis
 - d) Major Charles Boulton
 - e) Governor William McTavish
 - f) Sir John A. Macdonald
 - g) William McDougall
 - h) Louis Riel
 - i) Gabriel Dumont
 - j) John Bruce
 - k) Judge Black
 - l) William O'Donoghue
 - m) Donald A. Smith
 - n) Ambrose Lepine
 - o) Mrs. Sutherland
 - p) Thomas Scott
 - q) Alex Scott
 - r) Father Richot
 - s) Colonel Garnet Joseph Wolsely

VI PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

List on a blackboard, or flip chart, the points brought out in the group discussion.

Ensure that the students understand the cause of the rebellion, the conflicts of the various classes and groups involved in the rebellion, and the relationship between these groups and the people who represented their interests through this struggle. (as per the people named on the previous page).

V MATERIALS

The only material recommended is the text, RIEL'S MANITOBA UPRISING, by Frank Anderson, Frontier publishing Ltd., 1977. These texts can be obtained at the Gabriel Dumont Institute library, Dumont Institute, 2505 11th Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan. Phone 522-5691.

This text is not a particularly good one. However, it is not as biased as most, and is simply written. As well it is brief, so that it can be handled in one lesson.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL OVERVIEW

Lesson 10

Events leading to the resistance of 1885

Historical and Cultural Overview

Lesson 10: EVENTS LEADING TO THE RESISTANCE OF 1885

I AIM

1. Students will understand the forces that were put in motion that eventually left the Metis with no alternative other than armed conflict against the government of Canada.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. describe the Manitoba Act, and relate it to the Metis struggles in Saskatchewan,
2. recount the ways that the Metis sought peaceful solutions to their grievances with the federal government,
3. describe the emerging forces that were displacing the old Metis way of life.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. The instructor will read the TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL, P. II - X - 3 - 15.
2. Use the students' handout, THE END OF A DREAM, Page II - X - 17
3. After the handout has been read, hold a class discussion listing the salient features of the discussion on a flip chart or blackboard.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Use the discussion as a means of ensuring that the important concepts contained in the lesson have been mastered by the students.

V MATERIALS

1. TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL
2. Student's handout, THE END OF A DREAM

THE END OF A DREAM

Following the brief success of Riel's provisional government and the resulting creation of Manitoba through the Manitoba Act, the Metis were defeated by military invasion, under colonel Wolsely.

Thus, Louis Riel, founder of Manitoba, the man who dreamed of creating a Catholic sanctuary on the plains for the dispossessed people of the world, people left over from the dissolution of the feudal order, and unacceptable as members of the new capitalist order, was forced to flee for his life, while Donald Smith, former functionary of the Hudson's Bay Company in an era known for the Company's cruelty to the Indian people, moved in and seized direct political power to enhance his economic interests involving future C.P.R. ownership, land speculation and the acquisition of a vast fortune built upon the misery of the Native people.

There was talk of "amnesty" for Riel, amnesty for the "murder" of Scott. No one was ever tried for the murder of the two youths through the actions of the "portage party" under Dr. Schultz. No one was charged when the drunken militiamen under Colonel Wolsely terrorized the town and beat and killed Metis civilians.

Sir John A. Macdonald, in order to appease the Quebec Catholic voters, manipulated a double-deal that even for politicians of his ilk (circus actors for the super-rich) must stand out in history as a remarkable feat.

"Sir John forwarded \$1,000 to Bishop Tache to induce Riel and Lepine (also charged with murder) to remain outside Canadian jurisdiction until the political storm had blown over. To appease the wrathful feelings of Ontario he publicly declared; "where is Riel? God knows; I wish I could lay my hands on him".¹

In the midst of the doubledealing, and the government and orangemen of Ontario's plot to take Riel's life, Riel constantly shifted back and forth between the American West and Quebec. Riel returned to Quebec after he was again elected as the federal representative of Assiniboia. However, he could not take his seat because he knew that he would be immediately siezed and charged with murder - or worse. Treason carried the death penalty as well. Nevertheless, in a daringepisode, Riel entered the legislature in Ottawa and signed the register, thereby making his election a significant reality, one that must be dealt with openly, through the political process. Despite Quebec opposition, Riel lost his seat in the House. However, the open political debate resulted in his being given official "amnesty". He was banished from the Country for five years. Riel had been incarcerated in a mental institute and had been charged with "insanity."

Riel, like O'Donoghue, lived in Montana where, like O'Donoghue, he became a teacher. Riel married during this, the most peaceful years of his life. So did O'Donoghue, but the slim, handsome O'Donoghue did not have long to enjoy it. He died at age 36 of tuberculosis, a disease that had ravished his people in Ireland, and was brought on by conditions of extreme poverty and starvation. A few years before he died:

It was disclosed that the new Canadian Pacific Railway Company, to which the Government had given the charter in 1873 to build the transcontinental railroad, had contributed large sums to the Macdonald party's campaign the previous year. The Premier and his ministers (especially the indiscreet Cartier) had repeatedly asked and received large sums, totalling about \$350,000. Though Sir John tried to defend the contributions on the ground that he had given no promises to get them (as he had not promised amnesty to win the submission of Riel!), the expose drove him from office in November 1873 and Alexander Mackenzie, Liberal, formed a government. Mackenzie appealed to the people in a general election about two months later and was triumphantly returned. 2

The C.P.R. "scandal" was not really a scandal at all. Right from the beginning the Federal Government worked in the political interests of the emerging Canadian capitalist class, and this class returned the "best" of these people to parliament by providing them with funds and support. This time, however, they were "caught in the act", and public support was temporarily lost. The Metis fared no better under Mackenzie and the Liberals than they had under Macdonald's Conservative Government. Sir John's defeat was temporary. He was returned again in the next election and began in earnest his political exploitation of the west.

O'Donoghue was dead. Riel was banished. The Metis cause was lost despite the democratic popularity of Riel, despite the fact that he was widely accepted by Metis, Half-breed and white people alike in the west. Wolsely's expedition was, as Tremaudin indicated, a "real invasion. It conquered, and reason and democracy went down to defeat. The warrior was victorious, the poet had been silenced, and the parasites were going to get fat on Metis and Indian lands." Some of these parasites had come in as soldiers under Colonel Garnet Wolsely. As the following account indicates, they stayed on as speculators, made a fortune from Indian and Metis scrip, converted it to capital, and became famous bankers. The Alloway and Champion bank later merged with what is now the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.³ Below, this process is described:

My narrative must necessarily start with personalities for the reason that the private banking firm of Alloway and Champion was made up of individuals, who, each in his own way, contributed something to the building, and commercial life, of the City of Winnipeg and Western Canada.

It would appear that the young men of the period about 1870 were not much different from those of today. Whether it is a trait of Canadians or not, it has always seemed to me that "we want to go places, learn what is to be learned and see what is to be seen." This spirit must have formed part of the life of the young men resident in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec in the days of 1870, when, at the request of the Imperial Government,

there was organized a Red River Expedition under Colonel Garnet Wolseley, consisting, we are told, of some 400 Regulars and 800 Canadian militiamen, most of whom came from Ontario...

William Forbes Alloway, familiarly known as "Bill" was a private in the Quebec contingent, while Henry Thompson Champion, later known as "Champ", was a sergeant with the Ontario militiamen. These two men, together with Charles Valentine Alloway, the younger brother of Private Alloway, who came west with the second Wolseley expedition in 1871, were later to become partners in the private banking firm of Alloway & Champion. But before we reach the stage, let me give you some of the highlights of the lives of these young men during the years 1870 to 1879, or the period prior to their launching into the banking business.

W.P. Alloway was born in Ireland on August 20, 1852, the son of Captain Arthur William and Mary Alloway. His mother and father were first cousins and were descendants of very old-time families who originated in Lincolnshire, some of whom went to Ireland in the year 1690 as part of King William's army and fought at his side in the Battle of the Boyne. Mr. Alloway was named after an uncle, William Forbes Johnson, a brother of his mother, who in turn had been named after Sir. William Forbes who became the founder of the Union. ⁴

"Alloway and Champion" became a financial firm that made a vast fortune from the acquisition of Metis and Indian lands.

The "legal" and illegal acquisition of Native lands was built into the Canadian Policy. It was the prerequisite for successful settlement, (successful as defined by the profits of the speculators - not the success of the individual settler; that was a matter of little consequence to these new Canadian capitalists and their parliamentarians.)

Following is a letter written by Sir John A. MacDonald to Sir John Rose: (selected excerpts)

February 23/1870 Everything looks ? for a delegation coming to Ottawa including the redoubtable Riel. If we once get him here, as you must know pretty well by this time, he is a gone goon. There is no place in the Ministry for him to sit next to Howe but perhaps we may make him a senator for the territory. I received your cable to the effect that Her Majesty's government will co-operate in the (Wolsely) expeditions... These impulsive Half-breeds have got spoilt by the emeute (popular uprising) and must be kept down by a strong hand until they are swamped by the influx of settlers. 5

These excerpts from Macdonald to Rose are clear statements of the National Policy. It was no "accident" that Wolsely's troops pillaged and murdered in Red River. Members of the provisional government were brutalized and H.F. O'Lone, a fenian, was killed in his saloon, while Francis Ouilette, Elzear, and Roger Goulet and James Tanner were also killed by the drunken soldier-mob. Riel's family was terrorized and people were beaten up in the streets. This was the "heavy hand" that Macdonald spoke of. Gradually the Metis let their property go to the speculators, loaded their belongings, and left Red River forever. They were moving to Saskatchewan to escape the oppression of this government. Below, Tremaudin lists the "practical results" of the Metis struggle in Red River. The Manitoba Act is of course, the most lasting one.

1. Instead of being annexed to Canada as a colony of a British colony, the Red River settlement had become a Province of Confederation. This one point alone would be sufficient to justify a rebellion.
2. The public educational system was settled to everyone's satisfaction.
3. The question of the two official languages, English and French was settled.
4. Section 22 of the Manitoba Act assured generous subsidies and an equitable taxation policy.

5. The laws regarding customs duties and internal revenue already existent in the colony and satisfactory to the inhabitants, were retained.
6. Children of Metis and Half-breeds, who resided in the country at the time of the transfer had right to a grant of 1,400,000 acres of arable land.
7. A generous homestead law was adopted.
8. It was stipulated that the remainder of the North-West Territories be admitted into Confederation at a future date, and that, in the interim, laws at present in force should continue.
9. To assure to the inhabitants of the new Province the peaceful possession of the lands they were occupying at the time of union, it was understood that:
 - a) All absolute titles turned over by the Hudsons Bay Company until March 8, 1869, would be, at the owner's request, confirmed by Crown titles.
 - b) All titles other than the preceding, agreed to by the said Company until the above date, would be, at the owner's request, converted to Crown titles.
 - c) All titles of occupation, sanctioned by the said Company, until the above date - relating to land situated in that part of the Province, where Indian tribes had not yet been settled, would be, at the owner's request, converted into absolute Crown titles.
 - d) All people in peaceful possession of certain areas at the time of the transfer to Canada, in these parts of the Province where Indian titles had not been settled, would have the right to preemptions on this land, on such terms and conditions as the Governor-General in Council decided.
 - e) The Lieutenant-Government was authorized, by regulations that would be formulated from time to time by the Governor-General in Council, to do what was necessary to define and to fix, according to just and equitable conditions, common rights, such as the rights to hayland (that the settlers enjoyed), and to transform them into Crown lands.

Briefly, except for the many-times-made but never-granted-until-ready promise, and except for a few details of secondary importance, in its Manitoba Act of 1870, the Canadian Government had acquiesced to all the demands presented in the List of Rights of the Red River and North-West Metis. Three Provisional Government delegates had presented this famous List and had been received and recognized in their official capacity by Ministers of the Federal Government in Ottawa. ⁶

Manitoba was born of this struggle. The 1,400,000 acres of scrip granted the Metis in Manitoba was soon re-taken. What good was farm land without farm implements? The Metis had no access to capital for these implements so they let land go for what they could get, and in the forlorn hope that the old free ways could still be found further West, they migrated:

Many migrated to old settlements...but others formed new communities--St. Laurent, St. Louis, and Batoche on the South Saskatchewan and Duck Lake nearby. Less permanent groups were at Cypress Hills, at the Qu'Appelle Lakes and at Fort Pelly. All of these were French half-breeds. English half-breeds went to Fort Carlton...and to the present site of Prince Albert. ⁷

Fifteen years more is all they had left as a free nomadic people. In Red River, now that the fur trade was finished and the Buffalo were gone, how could the Metis earn profit for anyone? The more aggressive of the immigrants expressed the opinion that "the Metis should be wiped off the face of the globe".

Let us now see why it was that the Metis were so brutally disposed of by the federal government. To see why they needed this land so badly, we turn to an analysis of the importance of the C.P.R. to Great Britain.

The land masses of the Western Hemisphere had first appeared to European discoverers as a tremendous barrier lying athwart a possible water route to the Indies. Throughout the centuries which followed the voyages of Columbus, Europeans never abandoned the search for the Northwest Passage. By the end of the eighteenth century it had become apparent that such a passage, entirely by open water, did not exist. The western continents would have to be circumvented, as they could be by way of hazardous Cape Horn, or portaged, as they might be at the isthmus of Panama or even at other places where the extent of land was immensely greater. Not till railway technology was well advanced, however, as it was by the middle of the nineteenth century, was there a serious possibility of a trade route from Europe to the Orient across rather than around the Americas. By the same date, Britain had established new commercial contacts with far-eastern countries, notably China. Neither the Suez nor the Panama canal had yet been constructed.

Under these circumstances it became apparent that transcontinental North American railways were potential and essential allies of any group or region desirous of competing effectively in the renewed world rivalry for the far-eastern trade. In the letter written in 1860 and cited above, E.W. Watkin advocated the extension of the Grand Trunk Railway to the Pacific, and commented in partial justification: "Try for one moment to realize China opened to British commerce; Japan also opened; the new gold fields in our own territory on the extreme west, and California, also within reach of India, our Australian Colonies - all our Eastern Empire, in fact, material and moral, and dependent (as at present it too much is) upon an overland communication through a foreign state." 8

For both groups then, the British Imperial power, and the rising class of Canadian merchants, the trans-Canada rail line had become the absolutely essential first step in the trade route to China, and in the creation of a vast new market potential through western land settlement.

The commitment to build the Pacific railway within ten years alarmed many of the supporters, as well as the political opponents of the government. To allay their fears a resolution was introduced in the House and after considerable debate and modification, was accepted in the following form: "That the railway should be constructed and worked as a private enterprise, and not by the Government, and that the public aid to be given to the enterprise should consist of such liberal grants of land, and such subsidy in money or other aid not increasing the present rate of taxation."⁹

The Canadian Government had given to the amalgamation of British and Canadian capitalist interests the following:

The extensive assistance given to the Company by the government included \$25 million and 25 million acres of agricultural land "fairly fit for settlement"; land for right of way, sidings, and structures; substantial exemptions from taxes and duties; and a twenty-year guarantee against certain competitive construction in the West. In addition the government agreed to complete those sections of the railway which it had already under construction in 1881, and to transfer them to the Company on completion, without equipment, but without cost to the Company. These were the Lake Superior section from Fort William to Winnipeg, and the western section from Kamloops to Port Moody. The Pembina branch was also to be conveyed to the Company. The portions of the railway thus constructed by the government and transferred to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company totalled 713 miles and cost the government \$37,785,320.¹⁰

The Canadian Government had to in some way justify the "gift" of public monies.

Among the recipients of this Government money was to be found the ubiquitous Donald Smith, the same man that MacDonal sent out as a government spy and agitator to Red River in 1870. American capitalists were involved in a big way in this Canadian railroad,

just as Smith had been involved in American railroads. Again, we see international capital on a friendly basis, even while they promoted the struggle between Canadian "nationalism" and Metis "nationalism".

Among the central figures in the Canadian Pacific Railway syndicate were Geroge Stephen, president of the Bank of Montreal, Donald Smith of the Hudson's Bay Company, interested anonymously, and J.J. Hill; these three had also been the central figures in the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway which was linked with the Pembina branch railway in 1879. The profits which the promoters of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway secured on the American frontier were adequate to ensure their interest in further expansion of their holdings. 11

As well, the government agents and politicians had directly involved themselves with land expropriation. They had directly benefited as businessmen from their actions as government functionaries. Just as bankers came in dressed as soldiers in the Wolsely expedition, so land speculators dressed as politicians and governors benefited from the expropriation of Metis lands. In fact, a new historical class of national capitalists was being created through the theft and "purchase" of native lands. Stanley wrote:

The Canadians not only had their eyes on the political jobs, they had their eyes on the vacant lands too. There was good land in the Settlement - Mair had written frequently on this subject - and it was to be had for the taking. Certainly men like Schultz and Mair were not likely to lose any opportunity to turn an honest or dishonest dollar when the Canadian immigrants would come pouring into the country. Good land close to the river and the centres of population would demand good prices. There is evidence that not only did Schultz and Mair speculate in lands, but that Snow and other government employees did likewise. 12

To these spys and insurgents went the spoils of profit from the very land that they, as government employees, elected representatives, etc. expropriated from the Natives. The C.P.R. received its "public money" in a more subtle manner. Instead of displacing Canadians by military conquest, they simply had the conservative government of the day give them the money and the land, and the taxpayers were left with the bill.

Although Riel had been "banished" for five years by the Conservative government, under Sir John A. Macdonald, he was nevertheless elected by the people of Assinaboia as their Ottawa representative. If Louis Riel attempted to take his seat in parliament however, it was anticipated that he would be assassinated or, at best, seized and charged with treason. The radical Orangemen of Ontario had a reward out for his capture.

Most of the land granted to the Metis through scrip was quickly taken back by such speculators and bankers as Alloway and Champion. Nevertheless, the Metis who had migrated to Saskatchewan were not given title to the land they had settled on. For years, hundreds of petitions were written by the Metis leaders and sent to Ottawa. Such petitions implored the government to grant them title to their lands. Following is a copy of one such typical petition.

Lake Qu'Appelle, September 11th, 1874.

To His Excellency Governor Alexander Morris,
Your Excellency:

The Half-breeds of the Lakes Qu'Appelle and environs, offer you to-day their homage, and submit to you the following petitions, which they present in their name and in the name of all their brethren scattered over the prairies. And beseech you to give them a favorable hearing, and to remember them in the various arrangements that the Government may make with the Indians.

They ask you, 1st, That the Government allow to the Half-breeds the right of keeping the lands which they have taken or which they may take along the River Qu'Appelle.

The right of fishing in all the lakes of the above mentioned river. The right of hunting freely in the prairies west and south-west of the lakes Qu'Appelle without being arbitrarily hindered by the Indians but only in virtue of the regulations that the Indians, in concert with the Half-breeds and the Government, shall establish hereafter for the good of all. The right of trading at the Lakes and environs of the Lakes Qu'Appelle.

They ask, 2nd, That the Roman Catholic Mission may have the free and tranquil enjoyment of its possessions, and participate in all the privileges and rights of the Half-breeds.

They ask, 3rd, That the Government, in concert with the Indians and the Half-breeds, do make with regard to winter quarters and Buffalo hunting laws which will be of great use to all, such as to prevent wintering too far out in the prairies and to compel every one to start together for the

who have the confidence of the people of the place, and charged to manage the affairs of the country, make its alws, see that they are put in force, and judge differences.

In all these demands the half-breeds have no intention of depriving the Indians of their rights, but merely claim the recognition and respect of their own, and are disposed to live with the Indians, as with brothers and with friends.

Hoping that these demands will be favourably received, they beg Your Excellency to accept the assurance of their profound respect for you, and of their perfect submission to your Government.

The Half-breeds of Lake Qu'Appelle.

(Signed,)	Augustin Brabant,
Baptiste Davis,	John Fisher,
Michel Dejarlais,	Alexander Fisher,
Michael Klyne	Francois Seignier,
Peter Lapierre,	Alex. Swain,
Antoine Larocque,	Pierre Flammand,
Francois ST. Denis,	Patrin Monet,
Norbert Delorme,	Moise Ouellette,
Thomas Kavanagh,	Joseph McKay,
Pierre Peltier,	Joseph Poitras,
Michel Dunarais,	Antoine Ouellette,
Simon Blondean,	Antoine Glarne,
Pierre Poitras,	Antoine Hamllin,
Jean Monet,	Louison Flammond,
Joseph Petier,	Pierre Denomme,
Corbert Seignier,	Andre Flammond.

For fifteen years, 1870 - 1885 the government in Ottawa refused to acknowledge these petitions, let alone act on them.

Despite the amount given the C.P.R. by the government, it was still short of funds in 1881, and it began to look like the project would not be successfully completed without further government funding. It was becoming difficult to continue giving away these vast sums of money to the super-rich. In turn, the super-rich were kicking back generous amounts to the political funds of MacDonald and Cartier. The "C.P.R." scandal brought down the MacDonald government once, when they were caught by opposition members taking "bribes" from the C.P.R. financiers. Given the "grass roots" resistance to this overwhelming tax burden, taken from the workers and farmers and given to the rich, it was becoming an unpopular project. What the Canadian government needed was a rebellion in the West.

If a rebellion occurred, the people of Canada would once again "rise to the occasion", and make the financial sacrifices necessary to "keep the old flag flying". They had insufficient fire-power to put down a general Indian uprising in the west. A rebellion of about two or three hundred "half-breeds" would be just right. Just as the slaughter of the Highlanders brought on the amalgamation of the fur trading corporations, and just as Scott's death had brought the province of Manitoba into being, would not another Metis uprising in Saskatchewan ensure the completion of the C.P.R., by uniting Ontario labour with Ontario capital in a holy war generated on the basis of nationalist sentiments and anti-French, anti-Catholic hysteria?

Footnotes

1. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, p. 211 University of Toronto press, 1963.
2. Joseph K. Howard, Strange Empire, Swan Publishing, Toronto, 1952, p. 210
3. Peter Low, All Western Dollars, published by The Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 1946. This document is located in the AMNSIS library, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Regina.
4. Ibid,
5. Letter, Sir John A. Macdonald to Sir John Rose, dated February 23, 1870. This letter was copied from the original at the Saskatchewan Archives Board.
6. Auguste Tremaudin, The History of the Metis in Western Canada, (unauthorized translation) p.p. 237 - 239.
7. A.S. Morton, The History of Prairie Settlement, Macmillan Co., Toronto, 1964, p. 64
8. Vernon C. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy, University of Toronto Press, 1957 p. 32
9. Ibid, p. 46
10. Ibid, p.p. 48 - 49
11. Ibid, p. 50
12. George F. Stanley, Louis Riel, McGraw, Hill, Ryerson, 1969, p.55
13. Copy of a letter from the Metis petitioners of Lake Qu'Appelle to governor Alexander Morris, September 9, 1874. (document in the A.M.N.S.I.S. library, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Student's handout

THE END OF A DREAM

Despite Louis Riel's popularity among both the Metis and the white settlers of Red River, he was driven out of the country by an armed invasion launched from Ottawa. Louis Riel was, however, the true founder of the Province of Manitoba.

Riel was "banished" from the country but the local people still voted him in as the provincial representative of Assinaboia in the national legislature in Ottawa. Of course, he could not take his seat in the Ottawa parliament because Sir John A. Macdonald and his Conservative government associates would have had him arrested and charged with treason. The radical Orangemen sect of Ontario also had illegally placed a "price on his head".

Sir John A. Macdonald sent a thousand dollars to Louis Riel to get him out of the country. At the same time he declared in parliament, "where is Riel, I wish I could lay my hands on him" In this way, Macdonald hoped to prevent trouble between the French-Catholic people of Quebec, and the English protestant Orangemen of Ontario.

But, while Louis Riel, the idealist who had hoped to build a nation that would become a sanctuary for the poor people of the world, was banished and disgraced, Donald Smith, the man with so much money invested in the Canadian Pacific Railroad, was given charge of governing Manitoba, until governor Archibald arrived to take over. Smith was the man that was in the act of making a fortune from the very lands that were being taken from the Metis.

During his banishment, Riel and his right-hand-man Bill O'Donoghue both lived and taught school in Montana. However Louis Riel made many trips back in to Canada. Once, he even slipped in to the Ottawa parliament buildings and signed his name on the register.

Meanwhile Macdonald's conservatives got ~~got~~ caught taking bribes from the C.P.R. financiers. These two events caused an uproar across Canada.

Things were going badly for the Metis however. The buffalo were fast disappearing. The Metis were attempting to settle on land in Saskatchewan, but the federal government refused to give them title to the lands they settled on.

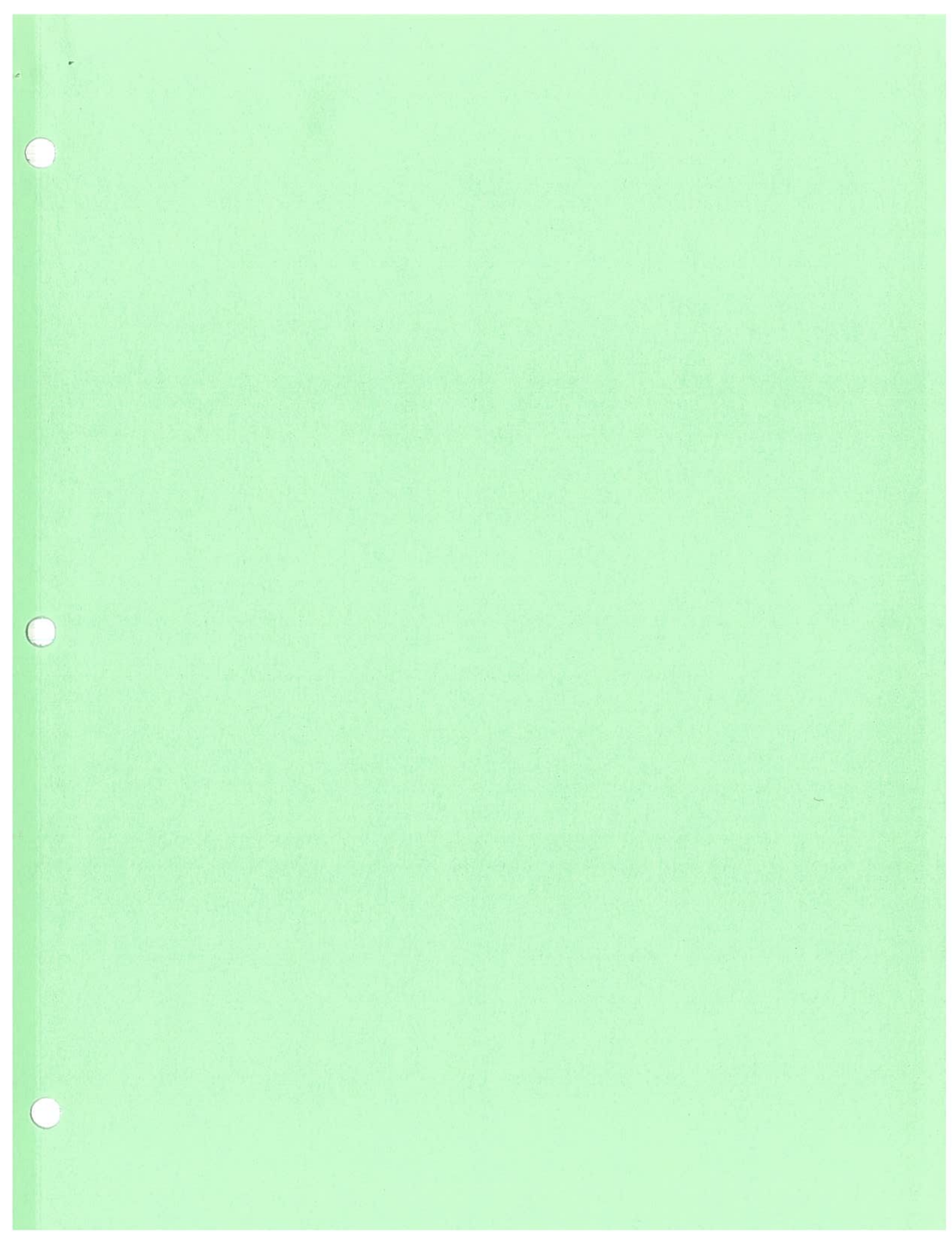
Some of the people that had come in with Colonel Garnet Wolseley's military expedition remained and became so rich from speculation in Indian and Metis scrip that they were able to start their own bank.

Sir John A. Macdonald was implementing a plan to settle the west in such a way that the eastern merchants would get rich from the settlements. Consequently the demands made by the Metis, and even the legislation passed for their protection through the Manitoba Act, never really did any lasting good for their cause. 1,400,000 acres were given to the Metis in Manitoba, but most of it was purchased from the Metis very cheaply by the banks.

The Metis who settled in what is now Saskatchewan never did receive title to their land until the actual battles commenced in 1885.

The federal government wanted the lands to use as a rail-route to the riches of the orient. This would serve the interests of the British investors. The Canadian investors were to get rich from speculation in Indian and Metis scrip. From their point of view there was no place in the new scheme of things for either the Indians or the Metis. The new settlers coming in were to be used for the production of new wealth in agriculture. But the lands that were to be sold to the settlers had first to be taken from the Indians and Metis who now inhabited them.

The Canadian government gave to the rich investors over 37 million dollars and thousands of miles of land.



By 1885 hundreds of Metis families had settled in Northern Saskatchewan. They had been hopeful that eventually the Conservative government in Ottawa would hear their pleas and give them title to their tiny plots of land. But it was becoming clear that this would not happen. Instead some white settlers were getting title to lands occupied by the Metis. Finally, the Metis of Batoche sent a delegation, led by Gabriel Dumont, to Montana to ask Louis Riel to return to once again take up the parliamentary struggle with the Conservative government in Ottawa.

In refusing to answer the petitions of the Metis, the federal government, either intentionally or not, had forced a rebellion on the people of the west. This rebellion was to spell disaster for the Metis people and it was to be the end of the dream - the dream that saw people of all races united under a catholic republic in the west and living in peace with one another. Perhaps the Cabinet ministers of Macdonald's government knew that a rebellion would entice the Ontario tax payers to part with the money needed by the private investors to finish the C.P.R. to the Pacific Coast.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL OVERVIEW

Lesson 11

THE RESISTANCE OF 1885

Historical and Cultural Overview

Lesson 11: THE RESISTANCE OF 1885

I AIM

1. Students will be familiarized with the people and events of the 1885 resistance.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. describe the people and events of the rebellion,
2. relate the rebellion to the historical situations of the past and present as regards the Metis people.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Read the TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL.
2. Use the student's handout.
3. View the presentation, METIS AND NATIVE UPRISINGS AND THE LAND QUESTIONS, (audio and visual, No. 50 - 2 - 4 only), titled THE SECOND METIS UPRISING, 1885.
4. Ensure the concepts have been properly exposed through a class discussion.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. On the basis of the class discussion list the important facts on a flip chart or blackboard ensuring that the students have an understanding of the historical events that occurred during the 1885 resistance.

V MATERIALS

1. Teacher's Familiarization Material
2. Students' handout.
3. Multi-media kit, METIS AND NATIVE UPRISING AND THE LAND QUESTION (audio-visual) film and tape number 50 - 2 - 4 only. This section is titled "THE SECOND METIS UPRISING, 1885. A slide-projector and a tape recorder is required for this presentation. (the above tape and film is available from the Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2505 - 11th Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan. Phone 522-5691.

If this film is not available, obtain either, NORTHWEST REBELLION: 1885 (20 min. N.F.B. #106C 177 332) or THIS RIEL BUSINESS (28 min. N.F.B. # 106C 0174 055).

TEACHER'S FAMILIARIZATION MATERIAL

The Resistance of 1885

A delegation led by Gabriel Dumont was sent to Montana to beg Louis Riel to come to the North Saskatchewan to represent the Metis people in their demands for land title. This delegation had been appointed at a mass meeting in the Lindsey district school house (near Prince Albert) on May 6, 1884. The message to Riel said, in part:

It is late, but it is the time now more than ever, for we have right and justice on our side. Do not imagine that you will begin the work when you get here; I tell you it is all done, the thing is decided; it is your presence that is needed. It will, in truth, be a great event in the North-West; you have no idea how great your influence is, even amongst the Indians. I know that you do not like the men much, but

I am certain that it will be the grandest demonstration that has ever taken place, and the English are speaking about it already. Now, my dear cousin, the closest union exists between the French and English and the Indians, and we have good generals to foster it...The whole race is calling for you!

On June 4th the delegation, which had been appointed by the meeting in the Lindsay School House on May 6th, arrived at St. Peter's Mission in Montana, and consulted Riel. They informed him of the state of the country and invited him to return to the North-West.¹

When Louis Riel returned from exile to take up the struggle of his people, once again, he was well received not only by the Metis but by the Indians and the white settlers as well.

Riel was invited by the settlers to address a large meeting in Prince Albert. At first he refused, but eventually accepted. Following his speech with its moderate tone, asking only for unity in demands on Ottawa, he was widely accepted as the West's leader by all races. Stanley wrote:

During the spring of 1884 the agitation was in full flame throughout the District of Lorne, the bellows being assiduously applied from Prince Albert. Meetings were held and grievances discussed, the principal agitators

being whites. Early in May a large meeting was held at the Pocha School House. A working committee was formed and a list of complaints - non-representation, non-recognition of the half-breed claims, and alleged discrimination against residents of the North-West Territories in the filling of public offices - was drawn up. They seem, wrote the Times, to be fully alive to the fact that the farmers' interests are all alike and that in union is strength. ²

From this union of races and classes, a Bill of Rights was drawn up.

The platform of the new movement was formally adopted at a meeting at the Colleston School House on February 25th. The resolutions adopted at this meeting subsequently formed the basis of the "Bill of Rights" which was forwarded to Ottawa in December by Louis Riel and the Settlers' Union. Tariff reduction, representation of the Territories in the Federal Government, and a Hudson Bay Railway were the white demands. To these were added protests against the land regulations, the obnoxious timber dues, and the non-issue of scrip, grievances largely half-breed in character. ³

W.H. Jackson, a white farmer and chief organizer of the settlers Union that supported the Metis cause, signed the petition and sent it to the secretary of State. Certainly, at this point, it was not too late for the Federal Government to redress the grievances of both the settlers and the Metis. Their demands, in terms of money required, were insignificant. The land was there; all the Federal Government had to do was grant title for it, and make some money available for farm equipment. The real problem, however, would not allow for such an easy solution. The National Policy was designed to enrich the eastern merchants at the expense of the Metis and the western settlers. Consequently, Sir John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister of Canada, denied receiving the "Bill of Rights".

The petition embodied the grievances of all parties in the North-West Territories. It demanded more liberal treatment for the Indians: scrip and patents for the half-breeds:

The situation being such that I requested Capt. Macdowall to communicate with you, by wire, at once. I do not apprehend any immediate danger, but this continued state of excitement is dangerous. The Government is, I believe, quite wrong in not leading itself to some arrangement which would prove satisfactory to all parties concerned. A rebellion I know could soon be squelched, but what trouble would it not cause in the country! Although I do not see actual danger, you may be certain that if the halfbreeds make any more, a large number of Indians would join them and make a common cause with them; and the troops, at present, in the country will not be able to prevent such a movement.

The Government, certainly, takes upon itself great responsibility in thus delaying so long to redress the grievances of the halfbreeds and rendering them the justice to which they are entitled.⁵

The government authorities both locally, and in Ottawa, obviously knew what was going on. The local authorities repeatedly expressed concern, and requested that the demands be met immediately. They all feared an Indian uprising. Jackson was aware that the Federal Government was goading the Metis into taking military action by refusing to answer the petitions. The Prince Albert paper, originally on the side of the Metis and settlers, now did a political turnaround, and had become the organ of the Federal Government. In the last paragraph of his manifesto, "Jackson referred: briefly to the Indian problem, declaring that false rumours were being deliberately circulated by the press of the Territories, seeking a pretext for placing the country under martial law and so goad the people into a false step. Louis Riel, he maintained, will do more toward pacifying Big Bear than could be accomplished by twenty agents in a month of Sundays. 6

Indeed, Riel, more than anyone else had the Indians' respect. The Federal Government had broken its word to them so many times that they were desperate, being short of food, and having no viable alternative to the old way of life, penned up as they were on the new reserves.

In August, Big Bear met Riel at Jackson's house in Prince Albert. Jackson's brother, describing the latter interview, said Big Bear complained that the Canadian Government had broken the terms of the treaties and asked Riel and his friends if, when they had secured their rights, they would help the Indians obtain theirs. It was with Riel's assurances of help from the North-West movement (which, incidentally, adopted more liberal treatment for the Indians as one of its objectives) that Big Bear and other Indians met in council at Carlton in August. The Lieutenant-Governor was frightened at what the Council might bring forth. ⁷

Stanley summed up the tactics of Riel's people and the settlers. Their combined agitation was directed at creating another province and obtaining sufficient human rights simply to exist as independent self-sufficient farmers and workers:

Riel had no intention of fighting the Dominion with arms; it had not been necessary in 1869; it would not be necessary in 1885. Philip Garnot, the Secretary of the Provisional Government of 1885, stated in his evidence that the half-breeds had only risen to force the attention of the Government to their needs, that every day they expected that the Dominion of Canada would send commissioners to negotiate with them. But instead of commissioners came troops. Riel, in his weakness, made one great mistake; the situation in 1885 was vastly different from that of 1869. In 1869 the North-West had not belonged to Canada, there were no military forces in the country, and Red River was effectively isolated from Canada by the formidable barrier of geography. In 1885 everything had changed. The North-West had been transferred to Canada and was now Canadian territory, there was a strong force of Mounted Police in the country, and the barrier of geography, which had made the North-West the Great Lone Land, had been penetrated by the Canadian Pacific Railway. ⁸

When the peaceful petitions failed to get a response from the Federal Government, most of the white settlers dropped out of the movement, fearful that war was imminent. The police had been busy, travelling from farm to farm warning them against continued support.

The clergy had been successful at breaking Native unity as well. A provisional government had been proclaimed consisting of:

Pierre Parenteau was elected President; Charles Nolin, Commissaire; Gabriel Dumont, Adjutant-General; and Bapt. Boyer, Donald Ross, Damase Carriere, Amb. Jobin, Norbert Delorme, Moise Ouellette, Bte. Parenteau, David Tourond, Pierre Gariepy, Maxime Lepine, Albert Monkman, Bte. Boucher, members of the Council; and Philip Garnot, secretary. The Council chosen, one of the first acts of the newly-formed "Provisional Government of the Saskatchewan" was to place Gabriel Dumont a la tete de l'armee with Joseph Delorme and Patrice Tourond as his assistants.⁹

As the direction of the movement was forced away from any possibility of peaceful settlement by the actions of the Federal Government, the Metis internal organization changed form and Louis Riel, brilliant orator, religious mystic, charismatic political intellectual became a less important figure while Gabriel Dumont, seasoned Indian fighter, leader of the old buffalo hunt, expert marksman and brilliant guerilla warrior began his rise to power. This was simply a spontaneous reaction to the threat of invasion from Canada. So too did the direction change as regards the control of the church over the Metis people.

By this time Riel had definitely broken with the Roman Catholic clergy. His religious unorthodoxy had long been suspect. Even prior to his return to Canada, he had given evidence of religious peculiarities. In the Saskatchewan his proposals to change the Mass and the liturgy and to establish Archbishop Bourget as the Pope of the New World, added to the growing violence of his agitation, gained him the complete disapproval of the clergy. Finally the priests met together and decided that Riel was non Compos mentis and therefore should not be admitted to the sacraments. On March 1st, Father Fourmond

preached against Riel, who replied with the accusation that the priests are spies of the Police. During the Novena Father Fourmond declared that the sacraments would be withheld from any who took up arms, a proposition which led to another dispute between Riel and the clergy. Notwithstanding the efforts of the clergy to win over the Metis they continued to remain loyal to Riel.

On March 15th the clergy made a determined effort to bring about a division in the Metis ranks. Charles Nolin, who had fostered the agitation in the beginning but who was not in favour of a recourse to arms, was selected to counter Riel's inflammatory agitation. Nolin met with no success. On the 19th, when the Provisional Government was formed, Riel felt strong enough to demonstrate his authority. He seized the Catholic Church as his headquarters and ordered the arrest of Nolin. Towards midnight Nolin was brought before the Council and charged with discouraging the movement to take up arms. He defended himself with vigour and accused Riel of working more for his own ends than for those of the Metis. In the end he was acquitted but the counter movement had been broken, and Nolin, to save himself, promised to throw in his lot with the Provisional Government.

More significant to Riel than the alienation of the clergy was the attitude of neutrality now assumed by the English half-breeds and white settlers.¹⁰

The Protestant clergy and the police had dissuaded the white settlers from further action, but it was the Catholic Church that smashed Native solidarity. Stanley wrote:

If Riel had not achieved the solidarity in Saskatchewan that he had achieved in Manitoba, it was largely because of his rupture with the Catholic Church. Despite the enthusiasms of Fourmond, Riel had never convinced the stronger-minded and more influential members of the clergy that they should give him their unqualified support.¹¹

Thus the settlers had been separated from the struggle, and the Natives were again divided along "ethnic" and "linguistic" lines. It only remained to neutralize the Indians, and Ottawa could cry "rebellion" and thus bring the C.P.R. into being with public funds and public sympathy.

At Duck Lake the Metis, under orders of the provisional government, seized some supplies and placed Canadian Government officials under arrest. Arrested were Hilyard Mitchell, John Ashley and Hugh Ross. The last two were police scouts while Mitchell, a store owner, was believed by Gabriel Dumont to be a police spy.

At Fort Carleton, Major L.N.F. Crozier received the news and assembled a task force. At Duck Lake the two parties met on the road. Assiyiwin, an Indian, leaped upon Joe McKay, a Metis, in the service of the police. "Gentleman Joe drew his revolver and shot Assiyiwan, while the police opened fire, killing Isadore Dumont in the saddle." 12

The battle of Duck Lake was a resounding victory for the Metis, although the recklessly courageous Gabriel Dumont had been wounded in the head. But Ottawa's plan was put into motion. Before proceeding with the military destruction of the Metis, Ottawa had one more task of subversion to complete:

When the news of the rebellion reached Ottawa The Canadian Government, realizing the absolute necessity of placating the southern Alberta Indians, acted promptly. On March 24th, two days before Duck Lake, Macdonald telegraphed to Father Lacombe, a missionary greatly beloved by the Indians, asking him to see Crowfoot and endeavour to ensure the loyalty of the Blackfeet. Lacombe went to the reserve, and on the 31st, replied to the Prime Minister that Crowfoot promised me to be loyal no matter how things may turn elsewhere. To assist Father Lacombe in his efforts, and to remove any possible cause for complaint among the Indians, Macdonald advised Dewdney that extra rations should be issued to the Indians. In addition to complying with this request, Dewdney also recalled Agent Denny, who had resigned as a result of the

economy cuts, and himself visited Blackfoot Crossing for assurance as to the sincerity of Crowfoot's professions. On April 12th he forwarded the following message from the Blackfoot chief:

On behalf of myself and people I wish to send through you to the Great Mother the words I have given to the Governor at a Council held, at which my minor chiefs and your men were present. We are agreed and determined to remain loyal to the Queen. Our young men will go to work on their reserve, and will raise all the crops we can, and we hope the Government will help us sell what we cannot use.

Continued reports are brought to us, and we do not know what to believe, but now that we have seen the Governor and heard him speak, we will shut our ears and only listen to and believe what is told us through the Governor.

Should any Indians come to our reserves and ask us to join them in war we will sent them away. I have sent messengers to the Bloods and Piegans who belong to our treaty

treaty to tell them what we are doing, and what we intend to do about the trouble. I want Mr. Dewdney to be with us and all my men are of the same mind. The words I sent by Father Lacombe I again send. We will be loyal to the Queeb whatever happens. I have a copy of this, and when the trouble is over will have it with pride to show the Queen's officers, and we leave our future in your hands.

We have asked for nothing, but the Governor has given us a little present of tea and tobacco. He will tell you what other talk we had at our Council; it was all good, not one bad word.

It was not however, a deep sense of loyalty which inspired these words, but rather the fact that the Indians, realizing their powerful position, were determined to use it to extort concessions from the Government. Father Lacombe, who had lived for many years among them, and who fully understood Indian character, wrote confidentially after the rebellion was over:

For my own part what I have seen of the Blackfeet and their kindred since last spring makes me believe, that, if they have been quiet and have made loyal promises during the Cree rebellion, it was purely out of self-interest in order to get more and more out of the Department. From the beginning of the war any one who knows the Indian character could very early perceive that they were not pleased when told of the victories of the whites; on the contrary they were sorry and disappointed. Crowfoot received into his camp and fed for months many Cree families, and was very much displeased when we tried to send away these Crees, and it was very generally believed that a great many of our soldiers were killed by their Cree friends.

To discourage any inclination upon the part of the Blackfeet to go back on their word and to reassure the panic-stricken settlers, troops were quickly despatched to southern Alberta. 13

Father Lacombe had, through his knowledge of the Blackfeet, been used to placate them with fake promises. He initially prevented them from joining the rebellion, and troops were quickly moved in. The Metis had been set up, isolated, and forced to fire back after they had been shot at. This "rebellion" had been cynically and ruthlessly brought on by the Conservative Government of the day, knowing it would obtain support and money for westward expansion.

The C.P.R., in desperate financial straits, "came to the rescue", although, as can be seen, the "rebellion" in reality rescued the C.P.R.:

In Ottawa, Van Horne of the Canadian Pacific told the Government that he would get the troops over the gaps in his unfinished railroad in eleven days if he could have two days' notice and a free hand. He got them. Van Horne had moved troops on the Chicago & Alton during the Civil War and he knew what was required; but that had been a railroad, and the C.P.R., the potential corridor of empire, was hardly a railroad yet. Technically it now reached to the foot of the Rockies, but 250 miles along the north shore of Lake Superior were under construction, with temporary track or no track at all.

In British Columbia three hundred armed strikers were being held at bay in a C.P.R. camp by eight Mounties, and there was trouble elsewhere because the company was broke and the men were unpaid. Stephen and Smith had sold or pledged everything they owned. "Donald", Stephen said, "when they come they must not find us with a dollar." They were ruined and the railroad was doomed unless a Dominion loan could be obtained. There had been bickering over this for four months; Sir John was holding out, as usual, for a political deal. But if Van Horne could get the troops west in time to save the Territories, the Cabinet would have to come around.

So Van Horne moved about five thousand men, most of them eighteen hundred miles and some twenty-five hundred, into the land of the Metis. It took nine days to get one bunch over that unfinished section but others made it in four, and none needed the eleven he had given himself as a sale limit. He put rails down on ice and snow, ran trains over frozen rivers, used construction trains and work engines, imported Chinese coolies from the United States to lay track. Sometimes his locomotives could move only six miles an hour; for ninety miles there were no locomotives because there was no track; the men rode in sleighs if they were available and if not they walked. But they moved, and by April 10 most of the expeditionary force was in the Northwest, marching on the Metis. And on April 30 the C.P.R. got its loan. 14

Macdonald's dream was assured. The Metis' dream was dying. The only questions left were, how long would it take? How many people would have to die with it?

"A total of 7,982 men were mobilized, along with the Mounted Police with about 500 men in addition to the troops. The artillery consisted of nine guns and two machine guns." 15 This force would have been insufficient had the Indians joined the rebels. The number of Indians in Treaties 4, 6, and 7 totalled about 20,000.

The senseless little fight (at Duck Lake) had lasted only half an hour. Nine Prince Albert volunteers died at that time,

while three police were killed. The force could have been wiped out, but Riel's humanitarianism intervened and he forbade the Metis to pursue the routed Canadians. This battle had cost the Metis five dead. "They were buried at St. Laurent by Father Fourmand. Even as the bodies of the five Metis were being laid to rest at St. Laurent, even as funeral orations were being said over the fallen loyalists at Prince Albert, the Canadian Government announced that Messrs. Forget, Roger Goulet and W.P. Street had been appointed as a commission to inquire into grievances." 16

Thus, after the rebellion was engineered, and the government forces placed into motion to establish the C.P.R. and the National Policy, the Metis were further divided by granting a Royal Commission that immediately gave some land title out to encourage people to stay neutral. This, despite the fact that the government had silently ignored the Thousands of petitions that had been sent during the preceeding fifteen years. Divided as they were, the Metis went to war.

Dumont's force of about 450 Metis and Indians dealt another blow to the enemy when they defeated the overweight and somewhat stupid General Middleton's force at Fish Creek. Middleton had divided his force, but the side that made contact still vastly outnumbered the Metis force. Nevertheless, thanks to Gabriel Dumont's tactics of picking the battle scene, and firing from ambush, Canadian casualties were high, while Metis casualties were relatively light. Here Dumont had lost four dead and eleven wounded.

The dead were later brought to the village and buried by Father Moulin in the little cemetery between the church and the river Francois Boyer and Michael Desjardain, who had been critically wounded, died three days later, bringing the total dead to six. It was later learned that Middleton had lost 10 killed and 44 mounded - nearly one tenth of his effective force!

Had the Metis been in greater strength, or even armed with weapons comparable to the Sniders and Winchesters of the army, the halt given to Middleton would undoubtedly have been a defeat of heroic proportions, for it is a military maxim that one guerilla fighter can defeat three regular militiamen with ease - and the Metis were guerilla fighters par-excellence. Many of the troops later testified that they never clearly saw the targets at which they fired so industriously all day. Even during Dumont's charge through the smoke, the Metis and Indians had kept under cover with remarkable skill. Whether misguided or not, the Metis had put up a magnificent battle and Fish Creek deserves to be enshrined as a monument to their incredible courage and bravery. Frontier history was enriched that memorable day.

Two days after the battle, Middleton sent a dispatch to Colonel Irvine at Prince Albert, the opening sentence of which was: "Attacked here on 24th, and after a smart fight drove the enemy back, but lost too many men to repeat...." The General later deemed it wiser to modify this statement and claimed that he had not followed up his "victory" because of other strategic reasons.

The plain fact of the matter is that the battle was a draw, if anything, and when one considers the numerical superiority of the troops and their overwhelming superiority in firepower, one is tempted to call it a Metis victory - with no quibbling or reservations. Certainly the Metis proved their right to take a place among the best fighting men Canada has ever produced!

Nonetheless, having won the skirmish at Duck Lake and having given a definite check to Middleton at Fish Creek, Louis Riel and his followers were farther than ever from achieving their ends. The Commissioners had not yet arrived from Ottawa to treat with them; the troops had kept together so that it was impossible to capture a small segment to hold as hostages, and the army was camped but thirteen short miles from Batoche.

John Astley, one of the prisoners confined in the home of Joseph Boyer, temporary jailor, pointed out to Riel on April 26th, that this would seem an opportune time to sue for terms, but Riel, refusing to correctly translate the writing on the sky, retorted, "No, we must have another battle. If we gain another battle, the terms will be better." 17

The Canadian volunteers fighting these guerilla warriors were green troops, unlike the professional killers involved in genocide south of the border. The Canadian soldiers were saddened by the sights of the abandoned Metis farms:

Some of the livestock had been taken along, but much of it had been left in pastures or on the prairie. Stored crops, farm equipment, furniture and prized personal possessions - holy pictures or musical instruments of the children's homemade dolls and toys - remained untouched; sometimes unfinished meals still rested on the tables. Bewildered, the Canadians helped themselves to souvenirs. But didn't these strange people know what war was, and that they were engaged in it?

Riel and Dumont knew what they were about, no question of that. But as for the rest, the Canadians wondered. They fought off their sense of guilt and relieved their inner tensions by impatient outbursts. Let's get on with it! Let's hang Riel and Dumont and go home!

Despite the looting, which every invader (sometimes including commanding generals) has justified to himself, this was the most righteous army to take the field in modern times, and the most ingenuous. Its young volunteers had responded to the summons out of sincere patriotism, and most of them, only two months ago, had stepped out of the doors of good middle-class homes where they had been reared in the strictest nineteenth-century Protestant tradition. Without some drive as strong as patriotism, which was now being weakened by inaction, few of them would willingly have hurt even a stray dog.

They were race-conscious, but unrealistic about it; they had none of the cold cynical resolution of the American regulars just to the south of them. The Yankees, to start with, were a wholly different type of men; moreover they had learned

from horrible experience how well savages could defend themselves. There were some vindictive Orangemen in the Northwest Field Force, preachers of religious hatred, and as usual they made themselves heard; but they were few and ineffective in comparison to the number which accompanied Wolseley west fifteen years before. These well-meaning young militiamen for the most part had to grudge. And they would have been utterly astonished, then outraged, had they heard Riel's tirade accusing them of plotting to rape, disembowel and finally annihilate the Metis.

They were punctilious about church attendance, even while on the march on the prairie. They had virtually no liquor and no women; of five thousand men only one required hospital treatment for alcoholism and there were no recorded

hospital cases of venereal disease.

That further set them apart from the hard-bitten United States cavalry, whose camp followers, Indian and white, were quickly ensconced in "whiskey gulch" slums on the outskirts of whatever military reservations the tough American regulars chanced to occupy. True, liquor and women were hard to get on the Canadian frontier, and what is significant is that it rarely occurred to the conscientious young men who made up this army to complain about it. They complained about the waiting. There was nothing for them to do but fight, and General Middleton wouldn't let them do that.

If the morale of the men was bad, that of the officers was worse. The commanding general, many of them felt, was a pompous ass, a chucklehead, and a coward. There had been no excuse for the setback at Fish Creek; there was no excuse that they could see, despite the difficulties with the wounded, for the long delay before the advance on Batoche. 18

But this amateur army with its "comic opera" general had one professional killer in its midst. He was a lieutenant of the United States military who was here to experiment with a new weapon of war. (The United States Government was very co-operative, this time, and no doubt would have intervened had the Indians joined the uprising). 19

The venturesome Howard was farther from home than any other member of the expedition. He had left a wife and four children in New Haven to involve himself in a quarrel which certainly did not concern him in the least - because he loved a gun. Dr. R.J. Gatling, who had invented in 1862 the first successful machine gun ever devised, made it clear that Howard was not an employee of his firm; he had gone to Canada, Gatling said, merely as "a friend of the gun".

There was no question about that. Howard had chivied and coaxed and cursed until the Connecticut National Guard had authorized the organization of machine gun platoons; then, in thirty days, he had the first one ready, fully equipped and splendidly trained.

He was no dewy socialite Guardsman, addicted to crisp uniform and show-off drill and soirees. He had had five years of Indian fighting with the United States cavalry as a private and noncom before he went back to Connecticut to settle down. There, because he was an expert machinist, within a few years he built a carriage manufacturing business which was netting him fifteen thousand dollars a year. He sold it and devoted his full time to inventions, most of them connected with firearms and munitions. He had used the Gatling in his American service and he knew as much about it as any man alive; when he learned that Canada was going to try it out against the rebellious Metis he hastened to offer his services.

He had a comfortable, happy home in sedate New Haven and he loved his family, but he also loved that gun. He thus joined the company of implausible characters who strode across the stage during the climatic scenes of the Northwestern historical drama. He had travelled more than twenty-five hundred miles into a foreign country to kill men against whom he had no feeling whatever; yet he was not a grubby soldier of fortune and he was not a killer - he was a maniac. His interest in the mass murder of Metis was wholly scientific, cold as mercury in a tube. Batoche was to be his laboratory. 20

In contrast to this professional, and the buffoon general, were the Canadian troops, many of whom sympathized with the Metis whose small, neat farms they were burning. They had heard that the Metis were savages, but the small homes, and religious pictures, the comely people were not at all what they expected. So they "did their duty" half-heartedly, and as they marched, they sang:

The volunteers are all fine boys and full of lots of fun
 But it's mighty little pay they get for carrying a gun.
 The Government have grown so lean and the C.P.R. so fat
 Our extra pay we did not get -
 You can bet your boots on that!

They will not even give a shed that's fitting for our drill
 For Ridgeway now forgotten is, and also Pigeon Hill;
 But now they've wanted us again, they've called us out -
 that's flat -
 And the boys have got to board themselves;
 You can bet your boots on that!

To annexate us some folks would, or independent be,
 And our Sir John would federate the colonies, I see,
 But let them blow till they are blue and I'll throw up my hat
 And give my life for England's flag -
 You can bet your boots on that!
 The flag that's waved a thousand years,
 You can bet your boots on that!

The last battle of the Metis against the overwhelming forces set against them occurred at Batoche. Here, despite Middleton's use of artillery and the deadly gattling gun, the Metis, low on ammunition, held out for three incredible days. Dumont's brilliant tactics and his courage in battle resulted in heavy Canadian casualties for the first two days, while on the Metis side, only one casualty, a child, was lost.

Every night the Metis harrying tactics drove the green Canadian troops back from the territory taken during the day. So well were the Metis hidden in their trenches that most often the Canadians could not see their enemy, even while their own numbers were being reduced by accurate rifle fire. General Middleton played in to their hands by refusing to allow an all-out charge on the Metis position.

On the morning of May 12, 1885, Middleton who now had in his command upwards of 1200 troops, still had not dislodged the 150 or so Metis warriors. In the afternoon the Canadian troops, going against the orders of General Middleton, suddenly charged the Metis defences. The Metis, now nearly out of ammunition, were finally driven out.

During this attack the first Metis casualties fell. Jose Ouellette, age 93; Jose Vandal, age 75; Mr. Ouimet, age 75; Donald Ross, over 80; died in this charge. Also killed were some younger fighters, Michel Trottier, Andre Batoche, Calixte Tourand, Elzear Tourand, John Bunn, and two Sioux warriors, JA - PA - To - Wa, and one other whose name is not known.

The remainder of the Metis finally surrendered; it was now Wednesday May 13, 1885.

Of This war, Auguste Tremaudin wrote:

To speak reasonably - if it took no fewer than 5,000 well-disciplined, well-equipped troops over three months, and an expenditure of \$20,000,000, to overcome 1,000 badly armed rebels who lacked ammunition and provisions, would it not have been more sensible to have expended all this energy, all this time, and all this money, before

March 19, 1885, for the purpose of ameliorating the existing conditions of the North-West Metis and Indians!²²

Gabriel Dumont escaped to the United States. Louis Riel decided to stay and face his enemies in their courts so that something might be salvaged by the Metis from their struggles.

The irony of it all is that the Canadian Government could have settled all the Metis land claims in Saskatchewan at less than the cost of the war against the Metis. Again, the inference is clear--Ottawa wanted a small uprising that would "legitimize" and popularize the subsidy paid capitalists to push through the railway, thereby securing Britain's trade route to the Pacific, and thereby ensuring initial success of the Canadian Policy and the new Western economy based on wheat production.

Although the cost was small in terms of those killed in battle, the resulting oppression of the Metis people from 1885 onward took a terrible toll. With their old way of life gone, with the racism engendered by the war, and in the absence of sufficient assistance to enable them to enter into the new wheat economy, the Metis' social fabric came apart. Their culture could no longer exist in a vacuum, removed from the economic system that created it in the first place. The Metis people died of poverty, disease, mental breakdown and alcoholism. Many simply packed their few belongings up and began a trek northward to the woodlands and the fringe of the Arctic. Many of these people moved out beyond the control of the bureaucrats and government officials so that they disappeared from the population statistics of Canada. Many others died of poverty-related diseases such as tuberculosis, venereal disease and just plain hunger. From 1885 to 1900, the Metis population dropped by approximately 50%. The following is a description of the aftermath of the war:

The sequel was a bitter one. The Metis were not only defeated, as a politically cohesive group they were practically destroyed. Their homes were burned and their property looted or destroyed. Those who had taken part in the Provisional Government were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. A number of Metis were compelled to seek entrance to the Indian treaties by virtue of their Indian blood: others moved westward, towards Northern Alberta, to escape the merciless pressure of civilization. Those who did not join the rebellion received the scrip and patents which Louis Riel had demanded -- tacit admission of the justice of the Metis grievances. But just as the Manitoba half-breeds had done so too the Saskatchewan Metis disposed of their scrip to eager and unscrupulous buyers. They lived only for the present and forgot the future. What did it hold for them? Destitute and disillusioned, unable to compete with the white men either as traders or farmers, they gradually sank further and further in the social scale, their life, society and spirit crushed and destroyed.²³

Gabriel Dumont, the brilliant guerilla leader had led the overwhelming Canadian forces a "merry chase". Absolutely fearless, he had delivered lightning-swift blows to the superior forces, picking the location for the battles, using ambush tactics, hit-and-run tactics, camouflage, the setting of prairie fires, he consistently took the initiative and, were it not for Louis Riel's basic humanitarianism that, time-and-again stopped the Dumont force from following up on their advantage, the casualties of the Canadian forces would have been much higher. As well, Riel refused to let Dumont move out and "blow up the railway". Riel recognized, however, that a military solution was not possible from the very beginning. And to the very end, he only let his forces be used as a reaction to Canadian military aggression.

The Canadian government had answered petitions with bullets. Its agents fired the first shots against the Metis, and killed the first men.

FOOTNOTES

1. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1963, p. 297
2. Ibid, p. 267
3. Ibid, p. 265
4. Ibid, p.p. 306-307
5. Letter, Father Andre to governor Dewdney, Feb. 6, 1885 (from the Macdonald Papers, AMNSIS library)
6. George F. Stanley, Louis Riel, McGraw, Hill, Ryerson, 1969, p. 281.
7. Ibid, p. 282
8. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, Ibid., p. 314
9. George F. Stanley, Louis Riel Ibid, p. 282
10. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, ibid, p.p. 316, 317.
11. George F. Stanley, Louis Riel, Ibid, p. 307
12. Frank Anderson The Riel Rebellion 1885, Frontier series, 1965, p. 20
13. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, Ibid, p.p. 361, 362.
14. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Strange Empire, Swan Publishing, Toronto, 1952, p.p. 336,337
15. George F. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada, Ibid, p. 353
16. Frank Anderson Ibid, p. 22
17. Ibid, p.p. 36,37
18. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Ibid, p.p. 326,327.
19. George F. Stanley The Birth of Western Canada, Ibid.
20. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Ibid., p. 380
21. Ibid, p. 340
22. August Tremaudin from The History of the Metis in Western Canada (unauthorized translation).
23. George F. Stanley, in The Other Natives: Volume 1, edited by A.S. Lussier, and D.B. Sealey, Manitoba Metis Press, Winnipeg, 1978, p. 200.

Students' handout

THE RESISTANCE OF 1885

The snow had melted, even in the heart of the woods, and the small fields lay bare when the Metis of the North Saskatchewan sent a delegation south to Montana to plead with Louis Riel to return and once again be the spokesman in the struggle against the federal government.

This little delegation, led by Gabriel Dumont, arrived at its destination on June 4, 1885. Two days later they set out on the return journey to Batoche, this time with Louis and his wife and family riding in the wagon.

When this troop arrived back in Batoche they were greeted with enthusiasm, not only by the Metis, but by the Indians and many white settlers as well. Louis was invited to speak at a settler's political rally in Prince Albert. At first he refused, but then accepted. He was cheered on at the meeting where he talked in a moderate tone about unity and justice.

W.H. Jackson, a young white farmer, joined forces with Riel, and together they drew up a Bill of Rights demanding better treatment of the Indians, responsible government, amnesty for Riel, and title to Metis lands. Prime Minister Macdonald received this document, sent it on to Great Britain, then denied that he ever received it. Macdonald did not want justice for the people of the west, he wanted their lands so that the Canadian businessmen could get rich selling it to new settlers.

Father Andre, although in sympathy with the federal government, nevertheless supported the Metis in their demands to Ottawa. Later, however, after Ottawa refused to acknowledge the Metis through its own parliamentary processes, Andre turned against the Metis and began to intimidate them and divide them.

The people of the north, Metis, Indian and white, had been in a state of severe poverty. The farmers had no market for their grain and the Metis had insufficient money to buy farm implements. The Indians, since the buffalo had been all

killed off, were living on reserves and surviving on government handouts. If they decided to fight the government they would starve.

Louis Riel was not able to persuade the Conservative government to deal justly with the people of the North West. Macdonald recruited soldiers and began to send them west. Riel and Dumont set up a provisional government, just as they had done at Red River.

Now, however, it became clear that the police and the military would be sent, instead of parliamentary debate. As a state of war threatened, Gabriel Dumont, seasoned hunter and warrior began to share the power that Riel, as an intellectual, had previously held on his own.

As the Metis geared up for war, the church abandoned the movement. In fact people were told that if they died fighting against the government, they would be refused the last rites of the church and would, therefore, be consigned to hell. Despite all this the three hundred Metis patriots prepared to defend their lands and lives with arms.

At Duck Lake the Metis, under the orders of their Provisional government, seized supplies from Mitchell's store and imprisoned several people suspected of spying for the federal government.

Upon hearing news of this, major L.N.F. Crozier sent a mounted force out from Fort Carlton. This force met Dumont at Duck Lake. A Metis in the service of the federal government fired the first shot of the war, instantly killing a Sioux warrior, Assiyiwan. Isadore Dumont was killed next by the Crozier force. Before this skirmish was over, however, Gabriel Dumont's force had proven its effectiveness, and the two slain comrades were avenged. The battle was a resounding victory for the Metis. Gabriel Dumont, leading the patriots through the thick of the battle was wounded in the head. His comrades, fearing he was dead began to lose their confidence. Dumont regained consciousness and seeing their fear cried out "don't

be afraid, when the head is not lost, you do not die".

The Indian tribes, on hearing of the Metis victory began to consider joining the insurrection. However, the great priest, Father Lacombe convinced the Blackfeet chief that they should not rise in the rebellion. Consequently they did not join it. As a result the rebellion was eventually lost. Their ancient enemies the Cree did participate on the limited scale but they too refrained from all-out war so that in the end the battle had to be fought by about two hundred and fifty metis.

Meanwhile the Canadian Pacific Railway had ceased construction because no more money was available for Donald Smith and his fellow investors. They needed government money to finish their railway. When the rebellion began at Duck Lake, Prime Minister Macdonald called for money for the tax payers to complete the railway so that thousands of soldiers could be sent out to fight for "King and Country". This is the way the C.P.R. was saved from bankruptcy.

The federal government recruited 7,982 men along with 500 mounted police. They had nine pieces of artillery and two machine guns. This is the army that eventually face 250 Metis patriots equipped mainly with old breech-loading guns.

Nevertheless, under the brilliant direction of Gabriel Dumont with about 450 warriors the enemy received another stunning defeat at Fish Creek. Gabriel again picked the battle scene, and sucked the rather dull General Middleton in to a situation where his troops were ambushed. At Fish Creek Canadian casualties were again high. Dumont's force lost four dead and eleven wounded. The guerilla tactics employed by Dumont, coupled with the courage of desperate men defending their homes and families was turning this one-sided war in to a heroic epic that would forever stand as a blight on the Canadian conscience.

The Canadian troops that were brought out had heard that the Metis were savages. Yet, when they saw their small, neat homes, the comely Metis people, and the courage with which they

fought, they lost their heart for fighting them. Still, they moved ahead "doing their duty" as the government had taught them to do.

The Americans involved in this battle was not a "green" farm boy in uniform like the Canadians; he was a cold professional killer. He had come all this way to try out his new rapid firing gattling gun against real people. This gun, more than once, prevented a temporary Metis victory at Batoche.

The end had to come, given the inequality of the forces in the war. Hot courage alone could not withstand mountains of cold steel. For three days and three nights the Metis, hidden in their camouflaged trenches, picked off the "green" Canadian troops. The befuddled General Middleton (who had his cap shot off his head by Gabriel Dumont) seemed not to know how to handle such an elusive and courageous enemy as Dumont's small force.

On the morning of the fourth day of the battle the Canadians, going against the orders of their own general, suddenly charged the Metis trenches. The Metis by now were very low on ammunition. Incredibly, no Metis had been killed up to this time at the battle of Batoche. This charge ended the battle. Jose Ouelette, age 93, Jose Vandal age 75, Donald Ross, over 80, and Mr. Ouimet, age 75 died in action as a result of this charge.

Before the "rebellion" had been smashed by the federal government forces \$20,000,000 was spent. It would have taken only a fraction of this money to meet the demands that Louis Riel, the settlers and the Indians had sent to Ottawa before it all began.

Gabriel Dumont escaped to the United States. Louis Riel decided to stay and plead the Metis case in court. Following the war many Metis became demoralized and broken. Disease and hunger reduced their population. Their peaceful petitions had been answered with bullets instead of justice. Their loss became the Canadian Pacific Railway's gain.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL OVERVIEW

Lesson 12

1885 to the present

Historical and Cultural Overivew

Lesson 12: 1885 TO THE PRESENT

I AIM

1. Students will be familiarized with the successful and unsuccessful attempes of the Metis to organize themselves politically and economically, following the "rebellion" of 1885.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. discuss the lives of Malcolm Norris and Jim Brady, in terms of their significance to the Metis people,
2. discuss the "third migration" of Metis people - from the countryside to the cities of Saskatchewan.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Use the handout, METIS STRUGGLES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. This entire series of articles (19 pages) must be read by the students. It should be handed out, and taken home to be read if necessary prior to the day of the lesson.
2. Discuss the handout in class.
3. Write up the salient points of the discussion using a flip chart or blackboard.

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Use the class discussion to ensure that the class has acquired an understanding of the history of Metis movements from 1885 to the present.

V MATERIALS

1. handout, METIS STRUGGLES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, a series of articles in New Breed magazine, selected from the August, and October issues, 1978. These articles were written by researcher and author, Murray Dobbin, 1978. Suggest additional reading material, for any student wishing to pursue the issue further; THE LIFE OF JIM BRADY, an article from NEW BREED magazine, May/June, 1979. (Handouts enclosed with this lesson.)

Historical and Cultural Overview

Lesson 13

Review of Topic II

Historical and Cultural Overview

Lesson 13: REVIEW

I AIM

Students will reinforce their understanding of Topic II by reviewing what has been covered.

II OBJECTIVES

Students will reiterate the important features covered in topic II.

III TEACHING METHODS

1. Students will view the slide-tape presentation
A PICTORAL HISTORY OF THE METIS.
2. A class discussion will be held, and students will relate the most important features of topic II, as it pertains to their lives.
3. Students will write an essay on the topic; HOW WILL AN UNDERSTANDING OF MY HISTORY AND CULTURE AFFECT MY LIFE?

IV PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Determine, through a class discussion, whether or not the students have acquired an understanding of the subject-matter contained in topic II.

V MATERIALS

The 12 lesson plans used in topic II suggested further reading: a novel about the history of the Metis, THE ONE-AND-A-HALF MEN by Murry Dobbin, New Starr Books, Vancouver, 1981. Available from the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Regina, and Northland News, LaRonge, Saskatchewan.

Slide tape presentation A PICTORAL HISTORY OF THE METIS researched and produced by Gabriel Dumont Institute staff. Available from the Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2505 11th Avenue Regina, Saskatchewan. Phone 522-5691