

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
6TH COUNCIL, 40TH SESSION**

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 10-40

TABLED ON OCTOBER 9, 1969

T. D. # 10-40

Dated on Oct 9, 1969

factish session

ern apartment and shopping complex, incongruous against the barren background, is rising rapidly and it may light the fire of a smouldering Eskimo revolt here in the far north.

"I am sure that when the lid comes off, the Eskimo problem is going to be just as bad as what you see in the universities and in the streets south in the big cities," said one white resident here.

and several other persons, familiar with the north and its peoples were unanimous in their concern that what the whitemen have done — albeit with good intentions, is to provide the fuel for an explosive racial situation which could "go up" anytime.

Frobisher Bay, exactly 1,301 miles north of Montreal, has been described "as one great welfare project" where the Eskimos are turning into alcoholics, where the venereal disease rate is shockingly high and mothers and daughters have turned to prostitution to finance their liquor purchases.

To cap it, a federally sponsored apartment building, now going up on high ground overlooking Frobisher Bay will provide apartment space for Eskimos and their families and for local white residents.

This forced integration, although apparently well-intentioned, will place some Eskimos in a superior position to those living in small houses at nearby Apex. It will cause considerable friction in the community, which is already unstable, according to long-time residents of Frobisher Bay.

"Smiling, little man"

"The Eskimo," said an administrator, "has just started to learn enough about the white man's ways to begin to suspect something.

"Most Canadians have the impression that the Eskimo is a nice, smiling, happy little fellow with a spear, always away out on the ice packs hunting and fishing.

"Here in Frobisher you will see them hang around, wearing their hair long, with tight blue jeans and black boots. A lot of them drink far too much and of course, like the Indian, they have no tolerance for alcohol."

He and two other residents said that last year two Eskimo youths, wearing only light jackets, hopped on their snowmobiles and, half intoxicated, roared off into the distance. It was bitterly cold and their bodies were found the next day.

A generation or two

"All the old traditions, plus the Eskimo's natural ability to adapt — something learned and developed over the centuries — are disappearing now. It will only take another generation or two before the Eskimo as we know him, will be so badly integrated with the

Skeletons of a modern building complex begin to take form against the barren background of Frobisher Bay

'Smiling, little man with spear' drinks much, forgets history

white man, he will lose his identity and his particular culture.

"He is losing more than that now when you take into consideration what we have given him — tuberculosis and venereal disease," said the administrator.

Today it is almost impossible to find an Eskimo who can hand-build a kayak, the one-man hunting boat which, along with the harpoon and the igloo, were the Eskimo trademarks.

Eskimos at Frobisher Bay, when they are in good health, are quick to learn trades and skills and they are anxious to develop them.

"But what good does the training do when there are no jobs for them? This is why so many people call this area and others in the high Arctic where Eskimos have been brought into the white man's area, nothing but a welfare project."

At Frobisher in particular, it has become routine not to

expect too much work to be done on weekends, although maintaining the air base, the roads and the services are a year-round job.

"Too many Eskimos only work now to get their pay on Fridays and they blow the whole thing on liquor," said another 11-year resident of this community.

The small RCMP detachment here does its best in trying to restrict social activities between whites and Eskimos, but "love" always finds a way. In recent years, there has been an iron regulation that military personnel are strictly forbidden to fraternize with indigenous personnel.

However, for civilian personnel in these remote areas, earning up to \$2,000 a month, there is very little to spend one's money on except gambling, drinking and prostitution.

The growing concern and tension shown by the white administrators here has been communicated to the pert-

inent government authorities in Ottawa and Quebec, but according to those involved in Frobisher Bay, "the response has been negative."

"This is why," said one spokesman here, "when the Eskimo problem is going to go, it will really go and everyone back down south will wonder how it all came to happen."

Headline

RACIAL STRIFE COULD HIT NORTH