

**The Eskimos.\***—For most of Canada's 11,500 Eskimos, each year brings ever-increasing changes in the familiar pattern of the traditional way of life. Scattered throughout the northern mainland and the Arctic Islands, they are facing the impact of southern culture and southern economic activity and have begun to emerge as leaders in totally new fields. Many have joined the ranks of the growing body of skilled Eskimo tradesmen—in the nickel mine at Rankin Inlet, where more than 50 are employed; on the Distant Early Warning Line, where a hundred or so play a part in the defence of North America; and in the service of mining and oil exploration companies probing the exciting possibilities of the North. In 1960, the first Eskimo was ordained a Minister in the Anglican Church; another became a senior officer in a large centre for the rehabilitation of disabled Eskimos; and another became an announcer in the new CBC Northern Service. In dozens of communities, Eskimos are serving as diesel mechanics, interpreters, clerks, hospital aides, electricians, carpenters and power plant operators. At the same time, about three-quarters of the Eskimo population live outside the main centres of economic and government activity and continue to live as their fathers lived—by hunting, trapping and fishing.

Whatever the activities, they are not without problems for the Eskimo people. Those in wage employment face the difficulties of social adjustment in a new and different way of life. Those on the land face the fundamental problems of obtaining adequate food and shelter. The Government of Canada, through the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and other agencies, is endeavouring to ensure that the citizens of the North receive not only the same social benefits as southern Canadians in the form of family allowances, old age assistance, and disabled persons' allowances, but also such additional help as may be required to enable them to maintain a leading role in the years of adjustment. Teachers, northern service officers, social workers, technical officers and a variety of other government agents engaged in the administration of the northland pool their knowledge and their skills to this end. Schools have been established in most Arctic communities and hostels have been built to accommodate children whose parents live away from the communities, so that in 1961 some 1,800 Eskimo children—approximately half the total of school age—were in regular attendance. Vocational training and adult education courses are provided to enable wage-employed Eskimos to learn the skills necessary in their new jobs.

Welfare services include the operation of three centres for the rehabilitation of Eskimos disabled by tuberculosis, by other diseases or by accident, where those unable to return to the old way of life may learn new kinds of work and become self-sufficient. Welfare officers employed throughout the Arctic are few in number but they render a wide variety of case-work services to the Eskimo population.

Permanent housing of a kind within the reach of all to buy and heat is a necessity for both the wage-employed Eskimo and the Eskimo still living on the land. More than 200 units of a small dwelling designed in 1958 have been shipped to a number of Arctic communities. Many of them have been erected by the purchasers themselves. Some of those in wage employment have already completed their payments, while many of the buyers living on the land will take advantage of the full ten-year amortization plan.

For the people living on the land, education for their children offers the brightest hope for the future, but new uses for existing resources are contributing to a more comfortable life today. Co-operative fisheries and handicraft production shops are bringing much-needed cash to the small communities. Carvings and stone-cut prints have reached a high standard of excellence and have brought Canadian Eskimos world-wide acclaim in the artistic field as well as a valuable economic return. Where country food is plentiful, community freezers are now used to store game and fish taken during the summer months for the winters ahead. With the better use of local food and with a higher income for many people, the threats of privation and malnutrition are dwindling.

\* Prepared in the Information Section, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa. A more detailed article appears in the 1960 Year Book, pp. 205-210.