

The Eskimos*

Collectively and as individuals, Canada's 13,600 Eskimos living in the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and Labrador continued to move ahead in their development from a nomadic way of life to one not too unlike the pattern of living in some areas of Southern Canada. Eskimos are becoming settled in established communities where opportunities are greater for education, health services and employment. In addition to those self-employed as members of co-operatives, Eskimos have jobs in a variety of fields. They work as civil servants and as DEW-line employees. Eskimos are clergymen, aircraft pilots, miners, carpenters, mechanics, diesel and tractor operators and oil drillers. An Eskimo is manager of the CBC radio station at Inuvik and an Eskimo girl produces Eskimo-language programs for the CBC Northern Service. Eskimo women work as interpreters, waitresses, nursing assistants, secretaries and clerks—in southern as well as northern communities.

Increased education has tended to give the Eskimo a better chance in competing for employment. The number of schools in the North continues to grow—from 11 in 1952 to 63 at the end of 1964—and almost 2,700 Eskimo youngsters attend these schools which they share with all the other children who live in the North. More than 82 p.c. of the school-age population of the Northwest Territories is now in school. A program of grants and loans to finance university education for Eskimo, Indian and white children, approved by the Northwest Territories Council early in 1963, assures higher education for those who qualify. In addition, vocational training classes are available in such fields as auto mechanics, barbering, carpentry, domestic science and hairdressing. An apprentice training program to provide more skilled workers and raise occupational standards in the North began on Apr. 1, 1964; about 30 occupations are included in the program with more to be added.

Eskimo co-operatives have developed very rapidly. There are now 19 co-operatives engaged in commercial fishing, fine crafts, graphic art and sculpture, the operation of retail stores, logging and boatbuilding, and at Frobisher Bay and Inuvik groups of Eskimo families have formed housing co-operatives. Products from the co-operatives are maintaining the Eskimos' reputation as skilled artists and craftsmen. The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative which produces graphic art has established Cape Dorset as an art centre of distinction, and interesting prints are also produced at Povungnituk. Soapstone sculptures from Povungnituk, Grise Fiord and Igloodik are well known and Eskimo craftsmen living at Baker Lake, Coppermine, Resolute and Great Whale River are producing a wide range of original and attractive articles. The fishery co-operatives at George River in northern Quebec and at Port Burwell and Cambridge Bay in the Northwest Territories have found ready and profitable markets for their catches of Arctic char. In 1963, Ookpik, a shaggy little sealskin owl produced by Mrs. Jeannie Snowball of the Fort Chimo Co-operative, was chosen by the Department of Trade and Commerce as the symbol for Canada Week at the Philadelphia Trade Fair. He was a sensation and received much publicity. He was registered under the trade marks and patent laws to protect Mrs. Snowball and the co-operative, and licensing agreements with manufacturing concerns in Southern Canada have created a major new source of revenue for this co-operative.

A need for more permanent homes has been created by the increasing number of settled wage-earners in northern communities. Through a program of loans and grants initiated by the Northern Affairs Department, an increasing number of Eskimos own their homes. A \$1,000 subsidy covers part of the cost of each home and the owner may borrow

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