



SOME INDICATORS OF CHANGE

Westbank Indian Band



1971-72 ~ 1980-81

Canada

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Vancouver, B.C.
V7Y 1C1
November 9, 1982

Mr. F. J. Walchli
Regional Director General
British Columbia Region

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

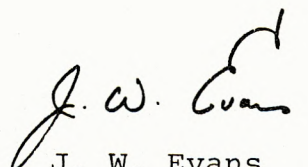
SOME INDICATORS OF CHANGE - WESTBANK INDIAN BAND

You asked me to prepare a short report documenting the impact of the principal social and economic changes which have taken place on the Westbank reserves over the past decade. The purpose of this exercise was twofold:

- To provide a factual information base to highlight the changes that have taken place in the community.
- To provide an objective balanced context in which incorrect or misleading information now appearing in the public domain may be judged.

I hope the report which follows meets these basic criteria. As you can image it was not possible to obtain exact comparative data spanning the 1971-72 to 1980-81 decade. In a number of cases longer or shorter time frames have been substituted. In spite of these shortcomings, however, I feel the data presented does fairly and honestly represent some of the more important changes and trends which have occurred on the reserves of the Westbank Band.

In closing I should add that I received the utmost in cooperation from the Westbank Band in the preparation of this report. Their files, reports, as well as the time of the executive and senior staff were made available without hesitation.


J. W. Evans
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INTRODUCTION

The Westbank Indian Band has undergone a rapid process of social and economic change over the past decade. The change has come about in part as a result of the general growth and development of the Okanagan Valley but to a much larger degree is the result of a conscious and aggressive development strategy which has been established and applied by the Band leadership over the past ten years. The output from these initiatives can be charted with reasonable accuracy in terms of some basic socio-economic indicators. Overall the change has been quite dramatic - from a basically agrarian-maintenance-oriented community, dependent primarily on part time employment, social assistance and Departmental contributions as a basis for individual and Band maintenance to the present which is characterized by a marked increase in employment, a dramatic rise in cash flow from development and a significant improvement in a number of basic social indicators. From a position of almost total dependency on the Department for the funding of local government services, the Band has moved to a point where in the current year, less than 30% of the Band budget is contributed by the Department.

As well the focus of the Band has changed, from that of a dependent, inward looking community to one that is aggressively seeking investment from the "outside", that is consciously seeking close working relationships with neighbouring communities and businesses and one that is calling on government at all levels for improved and integrated levels of support for its membership.

BACKGROUND

Westbank is a relatively "new" Band having been established in October 1963 when it officially separated from the Okanagan Band. The rationale for the break are manifold, but the primary reasons appear to have been a feeling that the small block of Westbank voters had limited impact and influence on the decisions of the Okanagan Band Council, a number of social and economic issues and opportunities existed at Westbank which did not receive priority attention in the overall affairs of the Okanagan Band and there was a general feeling among the Westbank electors that the interests of their membership could be best served by separating, establishing their own land base and electing their own Chief and Council.¹ The division itself appears to have been achieved without acrimony.²

At the time of the establishment of Westbank as an independent Band, development at the reserve level had a distinct agricultural orientation. Much of the better land was on lease to non-Indian interests and a large proportion of the Band's land holdings were undeveloped. In the Region as a whole the population of the Okanagan Valley was growing rapidly as the area developed as a commercial, industrial and service center. The area also was becoming an important center for retirement. Kelowna was emerging as a city in need of access to a larger land base - for satellite communities, as sites for business and recreation development and for basic

1 Summary of Westbank Indian Band History - October 18, 1963 to Present. (A publication of the Westbank Indian Band) and personal discussions with Chief Ron Derrickson and Councillors Brian Eli and Harold Derickson.

2 Ibid.

communication infrastructure. The Westbank reserves abutting this growing center became a prime target for development.

The Band's development initiatives which followed were keyed to and effected by a number of important factors.

- Band Development Strategy

Since the Band's emergence as a separate entity, a succession of Councils have shown a deep interest in establishing a comprehensive policy framework in which the Band's government and the developmental processes could operate. A number of fundamental principles emerged from the process:

- Band lands should be used as the base to establish a viable economic and social environment for the community.
- Land development by both Band and locatee interests would be encouraged.¹
- Employment opportunities for Band members was a key objective.

1 It is interesting to note that early in the 1970's the Department encouraged the Band to adopt a policy of having a proportion of locatee revenues from land leases shared with the Band. The resultant public discussion caused considerable controversy at the Band level, and dissension among the membership over the whole question of locatee land interest. At the request of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Jean Bergevin, the question was finally put to the membership in the form of a referendum and by a decisive vote of 44 to 2 decided that locatees should have the right to retain all revenue from land leases. (Referendum held October 27, 1971.)

- Development would be encouraged by the Band, individual Band members and "outside" commercial interests.
- Cash flow generated by the Band would be used to finance improved social programming for the membership.
- Close liaison would be developed with the surrounding non-Indian communities.
- Band affairs (business and government) would be operated on a sound businesslike basis.
- Some key business undertakings would be developed, owned and controlled by the Band.
- Emphasis would be given to the involvement of the membership in the affairs of their Band Government.

The above noted list is by no means exhaustive and it is undergoing continuous change as new factors enter into the development equation.

- Community Planning

As an integral part of the Band's developmental strategy a decision was made to establish a comprehensive community plan. In 1973 consultants¹ were engaged and a basic land use plan was developed. The study also included a detailed urban design plan for I.R. #10.

1 Interform Planning and Design Limited

Further to this work the Band engaged a second firm¹ of community planners in 1978 to update their plan. These two studies were an outgrowth of the Band's strategy to aggressively develop its reserves for the collective benefit of the Band as a whole and to establish a land use policy framework within which individual locatee interests could be exercised.

A number of basic objectives were identified in the plans. These included the conservation of the existing natural features of the reserve, the exploitation of the Band's land base in the context of its juxtaposition to the City of Kelowna, the development of a functional community which met the needs of its residents and to provide a directional blueprint which would serve as a guide to the Band Council and locatee interests in terms of development.

In summary, the objectives envisioned a controlled, directed development process which would increase individual and collective cash flow from leases, the creation of employment opportunities, the improvement of Band housing, the creation of community facilities and a close interface with the adjacent non-Indian community.

The Esnouf Neilson community plan was approved by the Westbank Council on November 26, 1979, and now serves as the basic control document for development on Westbank reserves.

1 Esnouf Neilson

In commenting on the Band's efforts to utilize comprehensive community planning principles as a basis for reserve development the Departmental Regional Planner¹ has noted with some enthusiasm, that the Westbank plan compares most favourably with that of any other community in British Columbia. The approaches employed by Westbank could be used as a model for other communities in the province.

Particular strengths of the Westbank approach included:

- A sound balance of commercial and people development.²
- A twenty-year phased approach to development.
- The incorporation of the community plan into the Band by-law structure.

A spin off benefit that has been noted is that since the plan has been adopted and implemented by the Band there has been an easing of concern among the Band membership over the significant change that is taking place on their reserves.³ A plan exists, it is followed and the membership can measure change against that base.

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- 1 Personal discussion - Alain Cunningham, Regional Planner
 - 2 Cunningham notes that the Band consciously established a lower population density than was possible. They also set aside over 40% of the land base for recreation and community facilities.
 - 3 Ibid - Cunningham

- Departmental Leasing Policy

Some of the earlier initiatives taken by the Westbank Band to develop a commercial base for the community came into conflict with Departmental policy on the leasing of Band land to non-Indian interests. Major proposals¹ which would have resulted in the alienation of large tracts of Band land for substantial periods of time were developed by Band members and outside interests. These proposals were turned down at the Ministerial level because the Department felt that they would provide limited benefit to the Band as a whole and they would in effect take a significant segment of the Band's land base out of use for many generations. Two successive Assistant Deputy Ministers² both of whom had strong backgrounds in real estate and land development, recognized the obvious potential of the area and the Band's strong desire to use their land as an economic base for development. Encouragement was given to the Band to undertake some of the major developments on its own. This advice was accepted and a real estate development company was incorporated.

- Band Government

At an early stage the Band decided that the developmental initiatives planned for the reserve would require close supervision. Two important decisions

1 Proposals developed by Grosvenor-Laing and Arnold Seed were two of the larger projects developed at this time and rejected by the Department.

2 Jean B. Bergevin and John Ciaccia

followed: Overall control of the development process would be managed by the Band executive;¹ and the Chief and the two Councillors would become full time paid executives with responsibility for the management of specific portfolios.²

As noted earlier the Council placed high priority on the development of a land use plan. Once it was adopted it served not only as a blueprint for development, but also as a policy framework within which the legitimacy of Band Council decision making could be made without question. As a further base the Council developed a series of by-laws which effectively set standards of individual and corporate conduct for all residents on the Band reserves.

A succession of Councils has made a conscious effort to involve the membership in the affairs of the Band. Weekly Band Council meetings are held which are open to all Band members. In addition general Band meetings are held three or four times a year. At these meetings policy issues are discussed, reports are provided by the Chief and Councillors on their areas of program responsibility and the membership is encouraged to question, to voice opinions and to make suggestions.³ During the past two years the Band has made two cash allotments to its membership. A criteria for eligibility of electors for these allotments is their participation in the affairs of the Band.⁴

1 Successive Band Councils have recognized the importance of having access to competent professional advice - The management process however has been controlled by elected executive.

2 This policy came into full effect in 1972.

3 Personal conversation - Chief Ron Derrickson, Councillors Brian Eli and Harold Derickson.

4 Personal conversation - Norman Swartz, Band Administrator

The Band has adopted a firm policy of business discipline. Books of financial account are kept current and the Band auditors provide monthly statements for the Council. Indian-owned businesses (both Band and individually-owned) on the reserve are monitored closely. Where difficulties arise every effort is made to find a solution. The management resources of Band development companies are sometimes applied to meet problem areas.

In 1976/77 there was a general downturn in the local economy and a number of reserve-based businesses tottered on the verge of bankruptcy. This included the Band-owned development company. In the latter case major management changes were made, new financing was arranged and the company's operations were put onto a profit generating basis. The company continues to make a significant contribution to Band income. In other instances privately-owned Indian companies that have experienced difficulty have been taken over by the Band, their operating difficulties corrected and then returned to their original owners. In short the Band attaches great importance to its image and reputation as a sound and reliable business entity.

SOME INDICATORS OF CHANGE

In the course of this review it became evident that in a number of important areas it was possible to chart some key indicators of the change that has occurred at Westbank. Under the subject headings which follow an attempt is made to document this shift in an objective and factual form.¹

1 In general, statistics for the decade 1972/73-1981/82 have been used. In some cases, however, reliable data for that exact timeframe was not available. Where that was the case slightly different time spans have been used.

- Population

There are a number of factors which stand out in regard to the population dynamics of the Westbank Band over the past decade. The following table illustrates some of these changes:

	<u>Population of Westbank Indian Band</u>		
	<u>1971</u> ¹	<u>1980</u> ²	<u>1982</u> ³
On Reserve	118	146	196
Off Reserve	<u>51</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	169	198	216

- The population increase was 17% over the decade.
- Almost the entire increase accrued "on reserve" where the increase was 60%.
- The unofficial 1982 population total indicates an ongoing and accelerating rate of increase in the "on reserve" population. This statistic also demonstrates a sharp decline in the "off reserve" population.

The increase in the "on reserve" population would appear to result from natural increase and the flow of "off reserve" population back onto the reserve. The Band has actively pursued a policy of strengthening its on-reserve population base through a policy of improved housing, better social conditions and an

1 Clark, Frank W., PhD - Human Resource Characteristics of the Westbank Indians

2 1980 Official Membership Listing - Indian population for Bands/Districts/Canada

3 Band Membership Report - April 1982

improved quality of life. Band members living "off reserve" have been encouraged to return and to contribute to community life. The result has been that the off-reserve population has remained static over the decade while the "on reserve population" has increased quite dramatically.

The move back onto the reserves would appear to reverse a trend identified by Clark¹ in 1971, who noted that six persons had left the reserve in that year. He further observed, "In general one could logically expect the outmigration rate of young people to be a continuing trend, unless checked by incentives internal to reserve life."²

While comparable data does not exist for 1970/71 on the total number of people resident on the reserve, Band officials³ estimate that over 4,000 non-Band members now reside permanently on the reserve. In addition to this total 72 status Indian people from toer reserves in Canada and 50 non-status Indians are resident on the reserves.

- Housing

In 1976 the Band began a major thrust to improve the housing of its "on reserve" membership. The initial priority was directed toward repairing, insulating and installing sanitary facilities in existing homes. Once this work was completed emphasis shifted toward

1 Clark - Human Resource Characteristics of the Westbank Indians.

2 Ibid.

3 Personal conversation - Ron Derrickson, Band Chief
- Norman Swartz, Band Administrator

the creation of a new Band subdivision which has seen the construction of thirty new units over the past four years.¹ It is interesting to note that each of the new housing units has been placed on 2 - 2½ acre sites.² This policy ensured that all members of the Westbank Band could become landowners and participate in the housing program.

The following table illustrates the magnitude of the change that has taken place:

	<u>On Reserve Housing - Westbank Band</u>	
	<u>1972</u> ³	<u>1981</u> ⁴
Number of On Reserve Housing Units	26	69
Average Home Age	11.7 yrs.	4 yrs.
Average Home Size	799 sq.ft.	1100 sq.ft.
Electric Services	20	69
Sewer/Septic	7	68
Running Water	8	68
Telephone Hook-up	5	69
Natural Gas Heating	0	55
Cablevision		55
Fire Protection (hydrant)	0	48

- Education

Education data illustrate an ongoing emphasis by the Band on the education of their young. This is illustrated in the following table:

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- 1 Personal conversation - Chief Ron Derrickson and Councillor Brian Eli
 - 2 Personal conversation - Chief Ron Derrickson and Councillor Brian Eli
 - 3 Clark, Human Resource Characteristics of the Westbank Indians.
 - 4 Brian Eli - Band Councillor and official responsible for Band Housing

Westbank Band Students Receiving Education

	<u>1971/72</u> ¹	<u>1980/81</u> ³
Kindergarten	2	7
Elementary (1 - 7)	19	21 ⁴
Secondary (8 - 12)	6	9
Post Secondary	<u>5</u> ²	<u>8</u>
Total	32	45

- A marked increase in the number of students in secondary and post secondary training.
- A second "baby boom" may now be appearing at the kindergarten level.
- Health

This review was unable to develop meaningful statistical comparisons for health programs for the decade. There are, however, a number of important points concerning health programming at Westbank which are worthy of note.

The Health Program was a priority service identified by the Band early in the decade. In 1973 the Band employed a Community Health Representative. The work continues and is considered an important component of Band service.

1 Nominal Role - School District #23
- 1971/1972 School Year

2 Clark - Human Resource Characteristics of the
Westbank Indians

3 Nominal Role - School District #23
- 1980/1981 School Year

4 This figure has been adjusted upward from 11 identified from the nominal role to 22 the number of Band elementary school students identified from Band records.

Some of the basic services made available to Band members include:¹

- Liaison with doctors and dentists re patient care.
- Water sampling on monthly basis.
- Establishment of immunization programs for children.
- Emergency medical assistance.
- Promulgation of health information.
- Follow up re patient needs.
- Workshops re Indian rights and responsibilities for medical service.
- Special programs for the aged.
- Basic health advisory service.
- Interpreter service - patient - professional.
- Social Assistance

There has been a sharp rise in the social assistance costs incurred by the Westbank Band. The following table illustrates this point.

1 "Community Health Representative - Westbank Indian Reserves #9 and #10" - (A publication of the Westbank Indian Council).

Social Assistance Expenditures - Westbank¹

	<u>1971/73</u> ²	<u>1981/82</u> ⁴
Total Expenditure	\$29,608.64 ³	\$243,383.00

There were a number of factors which contributed to this increase:

- In 1972/73 no Social Assistance expenditures were made on behalf of non-Band members and charged to Westbank.
- In 1981/82, 53% of the Social Assistance disbursement, \$128,452.65 was made on behalf of Band members. The remainder, \$114,930.35, was disbursed on behalf of non-Band members resident on the reserve.
- During the decade the Band on-reserve population increased by 60%.
- Children in Care

An important indicator of social health is the number of children placed in the care of the province under the authority of the Family and Child Services Act. It is significant to note that there has been a decrease in the number of Westbank children in care of the

1 The 1972/73 fiscal year was the first year reliable data was available from Departmental records.

2 All disbursements were made by the District Office.

3 Source, D.S.S. statement 1972/73 - 904 P 1464.

4 Departmental Summary - Social Assistance disbursement reports 1981/82.

Province from 12 in 1970¹ to 7 in 1981.² Current Band records indicate that this figure has undergone a further reduction to 3.³ The importance of this change is heightened when examined in light of the fact that there was a 17% overall increase in the Band population over the time in question. The change also represents a marked saving in public expense.⁴

- Band Budget

The decade has seen a dramatic increase in the amount of funding budgeted and managed by the Band. Even more significant has been the magnitude of the increase in the proportion of funding raised by the Band itself. This is illustrated in the following table:

	<u>Westbank Band Budget</u>		
	<u>1971/72</u>	<u>1980/81</u> ⁸	<u>1982/83</u> ⁹
Band	5,160 ⁵	1,999,815	3,788,517
Departmental Contribution	<u>13,850</u> ⁶	<u>900,763</u>	<u>990,586</u>
Total	19,010 ⁷	1,900,578	4,779,102 ¹⁰

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- 1 Clark - Human Resource Characteristics of the Westbank Indians.
 - 2 Billing - Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Human Resources 1981.
 - 3 Personal discussion - Norman Swartz, Band Administrator, - from Band Records.
 - 4 Calculated at the rate of \$21.60 per day, this represents a saving of over \$70,000 per annum.
 - 5 Band B.C.R. #25 - 16/12/70.
 - 6 Departmental Contribution - Departmental Financial Records.
 - 7 It should be noted that this amount does not include services which were provided direct by the Vernon District Office on behalf of the Westbank population.
 - 8 Westbank Band Budget - 1980/1981.
 - 9 Westbank Band Budget - 1982/1983.
 - 10 Totals for 1980/1981 and 1982/1983 including Capital Works.

- Band By-laws

In order to create a framework of law in which the Band Council could direct and control development and, at the same time ensure a consistency in their own approach, the Council enacted a series of by-laws beginning in 1968. At present the Band has 20 such by-laws in effect which regulate such widely diverse matters as the disposal of garbage and waste - the subdivision of land - the discharge of firearms. It is one of the most comprehensive sets of Band by-laws in effect in the Province and indeed in Canada.

- Lease Revenues

One of the principal objectives established by the Band was to institute a policy of development of their lands which would induce quality investment and result in financial returns equivalent to similar investment in the adjacent non-Indian community.

The results of this policy can be noted in the following table:

	<u>Westbank Lease Revenues</u> ¹	
	<u>1971</u>	<u>1980</u>
Locatee Revenue	15,000	466,000
Band Revenue	<u>22,000</u>	<u>830,000</u>
Total	37,000	1,296,000

¹ Reserves and Trusts - From documents registered in the Indian Land Registry - re Section 22 - 53, Indian Act.

- Business Development

The decade has seen a rapid growth in the number of business enterprises established on the Westbank reserves. The following table is illustrative of this change:

Businesses Operating on Westbank Reserves¹

	<u>1971</u>	<u>1982</u>
Individual Indian owned	4	9
Band owned	1	9
Non-Indian	<u>4</u>	<u>22</u>
Total	9	40

Band owned companies play an important role in generating cash flow and in creating employment for the membership. The scope of their business operations are outlined below.

Lakeridge Realty	- Real Estate development
Lakeridge Management	- Real Estate management
WIBCO Construction Ltd.	- Construction
Westbank Indian Band Vineyard	- Grape production
Westbank Indian Band Cement Plant	- Cement products
Sookinshute Utility Co.	- Utility management
Westbank Indian Band Development Co.	- General business development
McDougal Creek Estates	- Mobile home park

1 Personal conversation - Norman Swartz,
Band Administrator.

EMPLOYMENT

Comparable data concerning employment - labour force dynamics for the Band are not available. There are, however, some data which indicate the sort of change which has taken place on the reserve. In his 1971 report Clark noted that during the year 16 people worked for an average of 7.5 months, creating 10 person-years of employment.¹

Current information indicates a marked increase in employment as illustrated in the following table:

Employment - Westbank Band Members - 1971/1982

	<u>1971</u>	<u>1982</u>
Band Administration	-	7
Indian-Controlled Companies	-	17
Non-Indian Companies (On Reserve)	-	7
Off Reserve Employment	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>10</u> ²	<u>46</u> ³

An interesting footnote to the increase in the employment of Band members is stressed by the Band Chief who notes that during the past six months approximately 200 non-Indian people have been employed on the reserves in various capacities, primarily in the construction and service industries.⁴

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- 1 Clark - Human Resource Characteristics of the Westbank Indians.
 - 2 Ibid.
 - 3 Personal discussion - Chief Ron Derrickson, Councillors Brian Eli and Harold Derickson, Band Administrator Norman Swartz.
 - 4 Personal conversation - Ron Derrickson, Band Chief.

SOME SPINOFF BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The developmental thrust generated on the Westbank reserves has had a considerable impact on the surrounding Regional district. The decision by the Band to open their lands to development has in effect provided a strategic supportive base for development and growth in Kelowna. The creation of an executive level residential development, extensive mobile home development and commercial leases for business development have all helped the adjacent communities continue to expand and grow despite a restricted land base. As noted in a preceding section the non-Indian work force employed on reserve lands during the current construction season has numbered approximately 200. Wages, income taxes and associated cash flow have contributed significantly to the Regional economy. As well, the non-Indian interest on reserve lands is subject to provincial property tax and these funds currently accrue to the benefit of the larger, non-Indian community.¹

A number of the broader social programs operated by the Band provide benefits to the non-Indian community. The preschool program serves Indian and non-Indian residents alike, the recreation facilities; i.e., baseball diamonds, soccer pitches, bank parks and beaches are used extensively by the community at large.

1 A special study conducted recently by the Band and the Provincial Government indicated the tax levy on Westbank reserves on non-Indian interests totalled \$102,000 for 1980. (Based on 1979 Assessment.)

The same study indicated a total actual value of land and improvements on reserves #9 and #10 of \$36,309,977. Of this amount \$27,080,125 was classed as "Indian" interest, and \$9,229,852 as "non-Indian" interest.

Extensive improvement has been made to the approaches of Highway #97 to the City of Kelowna. This is the first "urban standard" highway approach designed and built outside of the lower mainland. The cost of this improvement was 11.6 million dollars. This route cuts through Reserve #10. Agreement on the upgrading came about as a result of extensive consultation between the Band and the Provincial Ministry of Highways. The benefit from this improvement in infrastructure will flow both to the Band and to the surrounding communities.¹

In short, the extensive development that has taken place on the Westbank while providing an important economic base for the Indian community has provided extensive benefits to the adjacent non-Indian communities.

LONGER TERM GOALS

The Westbank Band is currently in full flight in the implementation of its development plan. Fundamental thought, however, is also being directed toward the future.

In a strategic sense increased emphasis is being given to expanding the Band controlled land base and hence the capacity to capture greater revenue which can in turn be used for the collective benefit of the Band.² The Band is also anxious to develop a more mature, more arms-length working relationship with the Department.

1 In the process of negotiating the highway approaches the Band was also able to negotiate for secondary supportive infrastructure in the form of storm sewers, sound berms and street lights.

2 The Council executive note that over the past two years Band land holdings have been increased by 95 acres.

In particular they are interested in having a greater say in program content and in the ability to allocate funds. They hope to be able to tie such concepts in with the Band's human resource plan in such pragmatic ways as using social assistance funding to meet their goals for full employment for unemployed employables. They plan to provide closer and more effective management of their lands by employing staff to carry out inspections and enforce by-laws on the reserves.

In terms of business development plans include completion of the major real estate development and the establishment of a Band-owned insurance and trust companies as a complement to the existing Band-owned real estate, real estate management and construction companies. Plans are also progressing for major developments in shopping centers, a hotel and convention complex, a golf course and an industrial park.

Community infrastructure will be enhanced by the establishment of a Band/Commercial office complex and a community hall.

Social programming goals include the establishment of an intermediate care facility, development of special housing for the aged and improved and enhanced recreation facilities.

In short, it is the Band's intention to continue and possibly further accelerate the very rapid rate of social and economic change on the reserve. Band investment will be governed by the policy of "pay as you go" - to limit debt and to have their business operations show a regular return.

SUMMARY

The decade 1971/72 - 1980/81 has seen rapid and fundamental change take place at Westbank. This did not happen by circumstance, rather it happened in large part because of the foresight, planning and leadership established by a succession of Chiefs and Council. In a conceptual sense a number of key initiatives were set down.

These included:

- The establishment of a clear and comprehensive development strategy which was articulated in an overall community development plan.
- The adoption of basic operating principles into a series of Band by-laws.
- A policy of membership involvement in the change processes and a willingness to take controversial Band issues to Band referendum in order to obtain clear direction from the membership.
- A policy of updating and adjusting plans at regular intervals.

The more obvious results of these policies are detailed in the section "Some Indicators of Change". Suffice it to say that the Band's development plans and strategies resulted in a major wave of investment on the reserve, the establishment of a number of Band and private Indian-owned businesses as well as non-Indian enterprises.

A spin off from this growth has been an increase of over 450% in Indian employment and a 3,500% increase in the lease revenue flowing to the Band and locatee interests. Tied to the economic shifts has come a series of social improvements in housing, education, health, recreation and community services.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

The changes that have occurred at Westbank have not all passed quietly. There have been bumps in the night. Serious divisions have occurred among the membership particularly over land-related issues. These have diminished as a result of such initiatives as a formal community plan, greater involvement of the membership in the affairs of Band Government and the flow of tangible benefits (i.e., greatly increased and improved Band housing) nevertheless they have caused serious strain for a number of hard pressed Band administrations.

Over the past 2 - 3 years the Band has moved decisively to bring land lease revenues into line with land values and to correct anomalies which exist in a number of leasing contracts. While the majority of these negotiations have been productive and businesslike - some have not and the spillover has found its way into the public press, into legislative forums and has impacted negatively on the more immediate objectives of the Band.

The change - from a small agriculturally based Band, dependent primarily on Government to fund and sanction its most basic initiatives to one which has an aggressive and competent administration, a well articulated development strategy, visible, tangible signs of progress at the

reserve level, this rather remarkable shift has not always been understood or accepted. Malicious public criticism, personal vendettas, suggestions of impropriety¹ have been some of the byproducts.

This all leads one to pose the rhetorical question - "How, in light of these difficulties did the Band successfully manage a complex developmental initiative and at the same time cope with a series of very taxing internal and public credibility problems?" Leadership was one of the key ingredients. Two factors stand out. First, since the establishment of the Band as a separate entity the elected leadership has worked consistently with the membership to establish a policy framework for development. This has succeeded in large part and as a result, despite the buffeting the Band did not lose its sense of direction. Secondly, since the mid-1970's the Band has elected a tough-minded, goal-oriented Chief and Council that have demonstrated the will and the competence to reach established objectives.

There is a message here for bureaucrats, politicians, businessmen and perhaps for other Indian Bands who may wish to examine the Westbank experience. But there is also a message for those who wonder if Indians are "moving too fast", are "taking over things they cannot manage", or "that disappear when the going gets tough". Westbank provides a clear affirmation of one Band's ability to manage change.

J. W. Evans

1 Chief Derrickson notes that over the past 7 years there have been 11 different investigations, general audits and reviews of Band affairs. All he notes have given the Band a clean bill of health.