

CONFLUENCES AND GAPS

Poverty has been discovered in affluent Canada. It is acknowledged that inequities exist in the "Just Society." There are significant differences between schools — from province to province; from inner-city, to suburban, to rural areas. There is a recognized gap between the opportunity, achievement, prosperity and longevity of the "average" Canadian and those of Canada's native peoples and of other Canadians who happen not to have white skins.

Some of Canada's "coloured" children attend regular schools along with other children of their neighbourhoods; some attend special schools. Most follow courses of study prescribed for all children in the province; some study special curricula. Some have teachers of their own race; others have "white" teachers.

Which is better?



Children and their teacher at Paladi Public School, Paladi, B.C.

Does a special curriculum doom these children to life outside the mainstream of Canadian society and condemn them to second-class citizenship? Or does it really recognize their unique needs?

Does a "native" teacher relate better to the pupils? Or does a "European" have more to offer?

Does the similarity or the difference make for greater equity?

Which helps to lessen deprivation?

How much do good intentions only serve to widen the gaps?



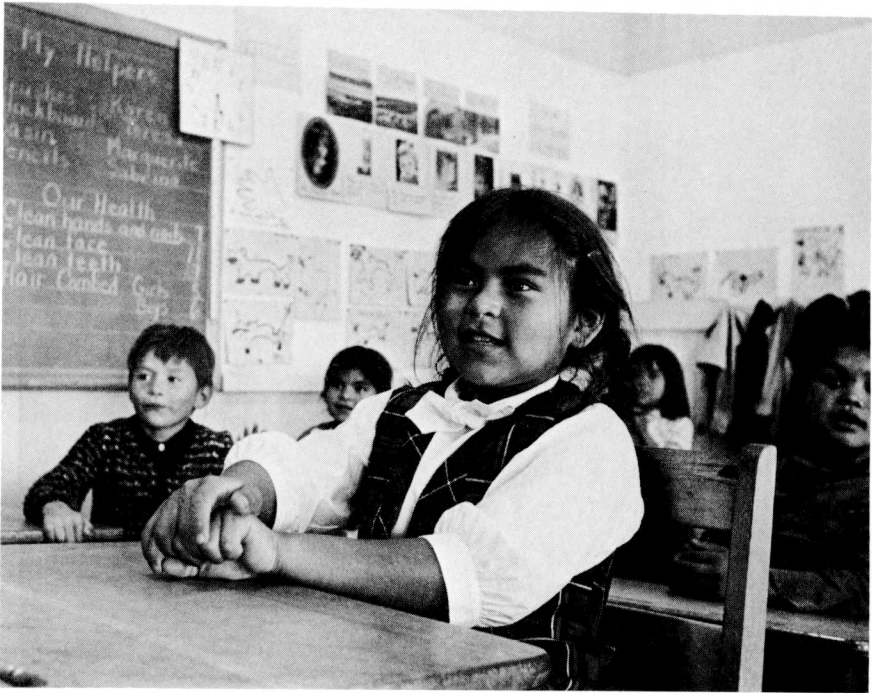
Leah, Eskimo teacher at Resolute Bay, N.W.T.



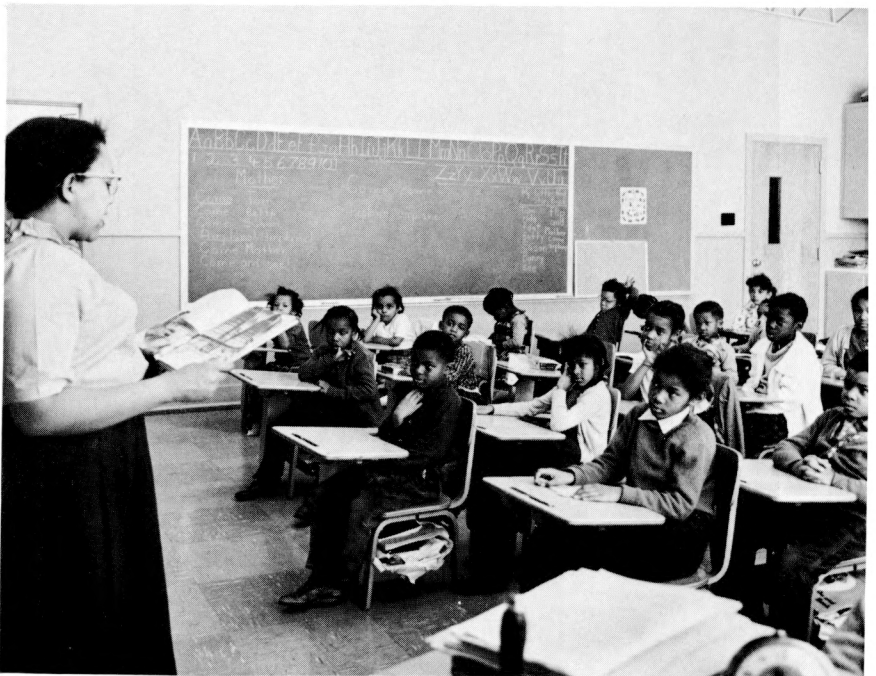
Students at the Japanese Language School, Vancouver, B.C.



In the above picture, young Eskimo and Indian children at the Federal School, Inuvik, N.W.T., seem happily unaware of a clash of cultures as they look, look and see Spot run with Dick and Jane.



Indian children at the Old Masset Public School,
Queen Charlotte Islands, B.C.



A classroom at Lucasville, N.S.