

The Eskimos Speak

FAIRBANKS, ALASKA,

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1961

Northern Eskimos Gather In Barrow For Meeting

Delegates from the major Eskimo natives villages will gather in Barrow Wednesday and Thursday to decide whether Alaska Eskimos should organize into a brotherhood.

The proposed brotherhood would be separate from the Alaska Native Brotherhood in Southwest Alaska and would concentrate on the problems of the Eskimos of interior and northern Alaska.

The organizational meeting is being sponsored by the American Association of Indian Rights, of New York City and Washington, D. C.

Miss LaVerne Madigan, an officer of the association, is in Barrow now.

Miss Madigan made a trip to Alaska this summer in connection with the Barrow duck controversy, as did Dr. Ted Hetzel, another officer of the association.

Both Hetzel and Miss Madigan were also interested in proposed Project Chariot near Point Hope.

Guy Okakok, of Barrow, is to be chairman of the exploratory meeting.

According to Lawrence J. Kozlowski, head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs office here, the bureau is cooperating with the private association in the meeting but is not sponsoring it.

Jim Hawkins, head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska, is expected to attend the meeting as well as a representative of the Alaska Native Brotherhood. It is not certain, however, they will attend.

The American Association on Indian Rights is perhaps the most influential and best established of the approximate dozen Indian affairs organizations in the U. S., according to Kozlowski.

Phileo Nash, the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, is a former director of the organization.

The association, financed by private funds, carries on a gigantic program to promote better understanding of Indian relations and has been especially active in assisting Indians by providing them with adequate legal services.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

SUNDAY DECEMBER 3, 1961

ESKIMOS DEMAND HUNTING PRIVILEGE

Conference Calls on U.S. to Recognize Ancient Right

Special to The New York Times.

BARROW, Alaska, Dec. 2—Eskimos of Alaska are organizing to protect their aboriginal hunting and fishing rights.

Village leaders from many parts of the state have drafted a statement of policy and recommendations after three days of discussion here. They called the attention of Congress and the Interior Department to the asserted need for prompt action in assuring he Eskimos their "Inupiat Paitot," or rights handed down by their ancestors.

These aboriginal rights, at the time Congress voted statehood in 1958, were seen by Alaskans as forming a difficult problem.

The conference of Eskimos noted that the aboriginal land and hunting rights of natives

were recognized at the time Alaska was purchased by the United States from Russia.

"The United States said Congress would define these rights some day," a conference statement said. "The Alaska Statehood Act also says that the state may take over 100,000,000 acres from the public domain in twenty-five years. If Congress does not define our Inupiat rights soon, the twenty-five years will be up and our Inupiat Paitot will be gone. Congress should act now to settle our Alaska native claims."

Conference Sponsor

The conference, of which Guy A. Okakok of Barrow was chairman, was sponsored by the Association on American Indian Affairs in New York. The association's executive director, Miss La Verne Madigan, attended the sessions. John Carver, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, also was present.

According to the Eskimos' statement: "Our Inupiat Paitot is our land around the whole Arctic world where we the Inupiat live, our right to hunt our food any place and time of year as it has always been, our right

to be great hunters and brave independent people, like our grandfathers, our right to the minerals that belong to us in the land we claim."

Nevertheless, Eskimo hunters found their hunting limited last year. Some found this out by being arrested by agents of the Fish and Wildlife Service when they shot eider ducks for food. The arrests were based on a migratory bird treaty with Canada and Mexico.

"Our right to hunt should not be subject to any international treaty without our consent," said he conference recommendations. "We ask the Interior Department to exempt us from this treaty and save us from the need to be lawbreakers."

The conference made these further recommendations:

"All villages should be truthfully informed how aboriginal land and hunting rights can be protected by the Interior Department without restricting the natives' freedom as citizens, and all villages should be allowed to apply for a reservation with full mineral and hunting rights."

"The Interior Department should immediately withdraw from the public domain in Alas-

ka tracts of land around all native villages, pending the establishment of reservations or other settlement of Alaska native claims. Natives should be free to hunt on all withdrawn land and on the sea."

A special problem cited, besides the migratory bird treaty, was Project Chariot. Eskimos along the northwest Arctic coast have had misgivings about this program of the Atomic Energy Commission, which calls for a peacetime test of the feasibility of using nuclear explosions for such things as digging harbors.

The test was to have been conducted at Cape Thompson, below the Eskimo village of Point Hope. No date has ever been set, however, and there has been growing doubt for more than a year that the plan will be carried out, at least in the near future.

Mr. Okakok said members of a committee would visit every Eskimo village next March to discuss the conference findings and get the reaction of the villagers.

After the summer hunting season, he said, another conference would be held with delegates present from "every Eskimo village and good men at large."

Daily News - Miner

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Inupiat Recommends High School Building at Kotzebue

By THOMAS SNAPP
News-Miner Correspondent

This is the first in a series of articles on the recently concluded Inupiat—or first great gathering of the Eskimo people—at Barrow, Alaska.)

One of the major social recommendations made by the recent Inupiat at Barrow was for the establishment of a high school at Kotzebue.

The Inupiat was composed of delegates of most of the larger Eskimo villages of Alaska.

While the Eskimos stated they appreciated the boarding schools at Mt. Edgecumbe, they added, "More and more we have come to realize that loved ones get too far away from home."

"They lose control of their ways when they return home."

In recommending Kotzebue as the site for the high school, they pointed out that it is a terminal for two big airlines, and is a distributing center for outlying villages along the Kobuk River, Noatak River and villages around Kotzebue Sound.

All the surrounding areas or villages are being served commercially by freight lines by air and sea, they pointed out.

They also pointed out that there are good fishing and hunting conditions around Kotzebue implying that students could be well employed during their off-duty hours.

"Kotzebue is easily accessible by boat and dogteam and transportation is not too much affected by weather conditions," the formal Inupiat report states.

Transportation costs that "soak up large portions of appropriations" could be

saved, they explain.

In the opinion of parents, the Eskimos said they believed that a high school at Kotzebue would help morale of students by their knowing they were not too far from home.

If an emergency should arise, it was pointed out a parent or student could be contacted in a matter of hours.

It was also stated that the Eskimos near Kotzebue were beginning more and more to realize the importance of adult education.

"The people realize the fact that time is speeding up so much and they are not able to keep up."

Eskimo Inupiat Stress Need For Roads Near Villages

By TOM SNAPP
News-Miner Staff Writer

This is the second in a series of articles on the recently concluded Inupiat — or first great gathering of the Eskimo people — at Barrow, Alaska.

The need for roads around native villages and air strips was stressed strongly by the delegates at the Inupiat at Barrow last week.

Certain roads, it was claimed, would make possible industries such as saw mills to give employment to those in depressed villages.

It was indicated at Noatak a road was needed from the village to the mouth of the river there. It was claimed during the time when the yearly store supplies came in, the river was so low that much of the supplies had to be brought in by air.

A road from Gambell to Savoonga was also stressed as a necessity.

Many times sea ice makes traveling by boat rough and impossible, it was stated, and travel by air is expensive and not always possible because of weather conditions.

In many instances, it was stated that high grade coal mines at Kuppowruk and Corvin are inaccessible because of

lack of roads.

Saw mills at timbered areas and canneries where fish is plentiful, it was pointed out, was urged to help give Eskimos employment.

Building and maintaining air strips should be stressed for safety's sake, it was stated. There are no strips at Savoonga, Stebbins, and at Buckland, it was pointed out, and that strips at Gambell, Wales, and Noatak needed repair.

"Air strips are necessary for those who ship reindeer meat for sale, for better mail service and for emergencies," according to the Inupiat's formal report.

Road and airstrip projects, however small, it was said would provide short term employment needed greatly in the areas.

Only a small number of men from the villages are able to find year-around jobs, according to the report.

Many contractors, it was charged, "import workers from the lower 48" and discriminate against Eskimos who are members of the unions.

Many Eskimos who can skillfully operate heavy equipment are discriminated against as well as carpenters who can work well under supervision, the conference charged.

Improvement of Housing for Eskimos Asked at Inupiat

This is the third in a series of articles on the recently concluded Inupiat—or first great gathering of the Eskimo people—at Barrow, Alaska.

By TOM SNAPP
News-Miner Staff Writer

Improvement of housing and health were two major concerns of the recently concluded Inupiat at Barrow.

It was stressed by Jonah Tokienna, of Wales, who read the Eskimo convention's final report that better housing was anticipated under the Economic Redevelopment Plan of the state.

"We understand this program will be worked out for those who need housing under long term, low interest basis," Tokienna said.

The Inupiat suggested that houses be made available according to the size of the family and be built to withstand severe weather conditions.

Can't Afford

"Many of our people cannot afford to buy housing in one lump sum payment," he said.

The Inupiat also pointed out the King Islanders had requested approval to relocate themselves on the mainland.

Many of the localities on coastal areas from the demarcation point on to the Lower Kuskokwim are severely affected by housing shortages," according to the Inupiat formal report.

"Poorly constructed houses fail to meet the severe weather conditions and are detrimental to health."

Under the area redevelopment plan, the Inupiat expressed hope that it could be worked out to bring material from timber areas to the

areas affected by the housing shortages.

In the area of health, the Inupiat asked the State Sanitation Department to help in promoting better water systems for the villages.

Eskimos Blast Polar Bear Hunting by Sportsmen

(This is the fourth in a series of articles on the recently concluded Inupiat—or first great gathering of the Eskimo people—at Barrow, Alaska).

The Eskimos at the recent Inupiat in Barrow claimed there is wanton waste by some hunters of polar bear and other animals but claimed they took animals principally for food.

During the last half of the winter, according to the Inupiat formal report, there are as many as 4 hunters in light planes that hunt polar bear near villages on the coast.

"These planes make their kill shooting from plane while flying," the report stated.

"These hunters make their kill, take the skin and leave the carcass."

Some of the hunters, it was claimed, when they found they had killed bears not the right size would leave them untouched. Later, bears containing bullets had been found on the ice or drifted ashore after the ice went out.

"These sport hunters do not kill for eating purposes," said Jonah Tokienna, of Wales.

"As long as planes are used they prevent the bear to get close to the mainland so the natives who need the skin for sale and for eating."

These sportsmen, the Eskimos claimed, are "depriving the less fortunate man, Inupiat, are domineering, selfish, inconsiderate, and not practicing equal rights."

In the way of conservation, the Eskimos charged that there were many predators of land animals and birds and that something should be done about them.

Foxes destroy at the time of rearing their young. Jaegers, hawks, owls, seagulls kill tremendous numbers of animals, it was stated.

"These predators far exceed the number of animals taken by natives," Tokienna said.

It was recommended that a bounty be placed on the predators.

"We were quiet and happy and always thought we had aboriginal rights until last year when Fish and Wildlife Service agents arrested two Inupiat hunters of Point Barrow," the report said.

"They arrested these natives because they shot Eider ducks for food. They told us we could not hunt because of a Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada and Mexico. The other men of Barrow, 138 hunters, all walked up to the Fish and Wildlife agents to be arrested too, each man had an Eider duck in hand.

"Each man said we are all hunters; it is our right to hunt food; and if you arrest two you must arrest all.

"When Barrow natives did this bravely and honestly, Inupiat everywhere started to tell how game laws and other laws were taking away their Inupiat Paitot.

Aboriginal Rights Claimed by Eskimos

Fairbanks NEWS MINER
November 18, 1961

Point Hope Eskimos Claim BLM Had No Right to Issue License to AEC; Conference on Native Rights Ends

The Point Barrow conference on native rights last night claimed the site of the proposed Project Chariot as belonging to the Eskimo people.

It was claimed that Eskimos of the Point Hope area had aboriginal rights to the land and that the Bureau of Land Management had no right to issue a license to the Atomic Energy Commission to do research there.

The research now in progress near the village of Point Hope is for a proposed nuclear explosion for peaceful purposes.

In a formal report, the conference called on the Interior Department to revoke the permit before the experiment is allowed to go any further. It was claimed the explosion would be dangerous to Native health because of the radiation effect on animals hunted by people for food. The conference also strongly protested the recent Russian nuclear testing and requested President Kennedy ask that the explosions be discontinued.

"Inupiat Paitot" or aboriginal hunting rights were stressed last night at the climax of the Point Barrow conference on Native rights. A capacity crowd of several hundred Eskimos jammed into the Barrow Theater as the Eskimos for the first time in history became organized into an association. The association, slated to have annual conference, is to be dedicated to the problems of the Eskimo and their solutions. The basic purposes of the association will be the protection of aboriginal land and hunting rights and economic and social development.

Strong Protest

In connection with the aboriginal rights, a strong protest was made of the arrests last year in Point Barrow of 140 Natives for taking eider ducks. In addition, the conference named rights infringement in many other areas of Alaska. In Kals-

kag and Aniak, on the Kusko-kwim, for instance, the conference said game agents had told the people they could take only one moose a year although moose in the area were in large numbers and children were hungry.

"The rights of us Natives have never been explained truthfully," the formal report of the conference states. "We were told if the government reserved our aboriginal lands for us, we could not be citizens of the United States, could not vote, would be tied on reservation like a dog, could not have businesses come on our land or sell products! That was a lie told to us Natives to take away our aboriginal land and rights."

Pay Stumpage

At Kalskag it was stated that Natives were told they would have to pay a stumpage fee on timber cut for sale. "The Kalskag Natives are very poor and need cash from timber they sell to buy clothes."

The right to cut timber on their land is aboriginal right, the document reads.

Stressed as an infringement of aboriginal rights is the handing of gas from Naval Petroleum Reserve Number 4.

According to the conference report:

"At Barrow, poor families cannot afford to buy fuel to heat their homes and there is hardship. Yet, Barrow village sits on top of great resource of fuel, a great resource of natural gas. The cold people cannot use this natural gas because Barrow is in the Naval Petroleum Reserve. If the Barrow natives had known about their rights long ago and their abor-

iginal land was reservation, they the people could see the fuel. Then someday in the future they could have it developed and have income from it."

The natural gas at Barrow is part of our Inupiat Paitot. "Congress should not pass a law to take this gas and give it to private business to develop. The natives would not get benefit that way."

Own Gas

"The Interior Department should say that the gas belongs to Barrow natives and it should be given back to them when the Navy is through. "The Interior Department should arrange with the Navy for the Barrow Natives to use some of the natural gas now to heat their homes."

One of the main recommendations of the conference was a request that Eskimo land and hunting rights be defined in the near future. It was pointed out that the Alaska Statehood Act provided that 200 million acres could be withdrawn in 25 years.

"If Congress does not act soon, our Inupiat Paitot will be gone," the report stated.

The conference also recommended that all villages be allowed to apply for a reservation with full mineral and hunting rights. It said the Interior Department should immediately withdraw from the public domain in Alaska tracts of land around villages pending the settlement of Alaska Native claims.

"Natives should be allowed to hunt without reservation on all withdrawn land and on the sea," the report continued.

"Our right to hunt should not be subject to any international treaty without our consent. We ask the Interior Department to exempt us from this treaty and save us from the need to be lawbreakers."

Alaskan Eskimos Buck AEC

By Gerald Bowkett

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

Anchorage, Alaska

For the first time, the Eskimo people of Alaska have found a voice, and they have used it to express their opposition to Project Chariot—the Atomic Energy Commission's plan to conduct a nuclear excavation experiment on the northwest coast of the state.

Delegates from the major Eskimo villages met at Barrow last month to discuss their mutual problems. It was the first meeting of its kind ever held by the Eskimos, and it was given a special name—"Inupiat," meaning "the great gathering of the Eskimos."

The meeting was sponsored by the Association on American Indian Affairs, which had learned this past summer that Alaska's Eskimos face unique problems as modern civilization presses upon them.

Agents Cracked Down

Project Chariot concerned the Eskimos, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service agents cracked down on them for the first time for shooting ducks out of season—which they have always done in their fight to survive.

Oliver La Farge, president of the Indian affairs group, announced in July that legal and investigatory services long available to Indian tribes would be offered to Alaska's Eskimos.

The association learned of the Eskimos' plight through appeals from Eskimo leaders, who indicated they did not know which way to turn to resolve their mounting problems.

Eskimo's View

Paul Frankson, president of the Point Hope Village Council, informed the association that his people, some 300 in number, are opposed to the proposed nuclear experiment at Ogotoruk Creek near Cape Thompson, 30 miles southeast of their village.

"All and everyone at this village," wrote Mr. Frankson, "would not like to see this experiment blast at Ogotoruk Creek at anytime in future or at present—with our earnest desire we have been seeking in someone who would help us to overcome the plan of nuclear experiment. . . ."

"We deeply thank you for your wish to stand for us over this Project Chariot . . . for we wish not to be hurt as any kind of race living."

Experts Disagree

The Atomic Energy Commission has pledged it will not go ahead with the experiment if studies show the Eskimos and their way of life will be endangered.

But scientists already have disagreed as to the damage that would be inflicted by the nuclear detonations. A group of scientists at the University of Alaska have declared that fallout from the blast would contaminate a particular type of lichen found in the Cape Thompson area on which caribou feed. Caribou meat is a mainstay in the diet of Eskimos living along the northwest coast.

Atomic Energy Commission scientists replied that their studies confirmed there would be no appreciable danger from fallout.

Prof. Leslie A. Viereck, past president of the Alaska Conservation Society and an assistant professor of botany at the University of Alaska, was one of the scientists employed by the Atomic Energy Commission's environmental study group to make botanical studies of the Ogotoruk Creek area.

Resigns in Protest

He resigned from the group, charging that it is motivated by political rather than scientific considerations and that the group has issued statements which are contrary to the findings of scientists working in the field.

In explaining to Dr. William R. Wood, president of the university, why he resigned from the study group, Professor Viereck wrote:

"Because of the repeated inference that all of the biologists are in favor of the (nuclear) shot and that it has been proven that there will be no biological damage, I feel that I can no longer have my name associated with the project."

"Because the Project Chariot study is not a purely biological study but one intimately connected with AEC politics and directed by an environmental committee that is biased in its decisions and membership, I wish to resign from the project. . . ."

Alaska Gov. William A. Egan, state legislators, Sen. Ernest Gruening (D) of Alaska, and others have cautiously endorsed Project Chariot. They

are in favor of it but say they must be assured that no harm will come to the Eskimos.

The project "will be an extremely useful experiment but I feel it is absolutely essential to know there will be no damage to humans and animals," said Senator Gruening.

At their Inupiat last month, the Eskimo delegates claimed aboriginal rights to the land on which the nuclear experiment is planned, and they demanded that the United States Bureau of Land Management revoke the use permit it had issued to the Atomic Energy Commission to enable it to undertake research there.

Diverse Opinions?

While the Eskimos, as a group, have taken a firm stand against Project Chariot, there is some reason to believe that they, as individuals, may have diverse opinions.

Dennis Swan, president of the Kivalina Village Council, wrote the Anchorage Daily Times:

"We had no troubles here about the blast in our village as we believe it will never hurt our fishing and hunting if it did blast on the month of July or first part of August. [Kivalina, with a population of 150, is 40 miles southeast of Cape Thompson.]"

"But we all men would be willing to work. I sure would like to join the work this summer (1962) if they can call me as I am trying to help you on the Project Chariot of the Cape Thompson blast."

"We would sure like to join the work, if you can help me. Lots of men wanted to work here in our village."

Indian Group Seeks Revocation Of AEC License In Eskimo Lands

The Association on American Indian Affairs that it is continuing its investigation, and plans to explore every possibility.

The Association's Health Committee headed by Dr. Carl S. Muschenheim of New York, has been following closely this phase of Project Chariot, and will issue a statement when all the information is in.

The resolution questions the right of the Bureau of Land Management of the Interior Department to dispose of land which is subject to native claims.

The Association's Alaskan Policy Committee headed by Dr. Henry S. Forbes of Milton, Massachusetts, has been studying the native rights issue in the forty-ninth state, in response to request for counsel from Eskimo leaders.

The protest was aroused by a series of nuclear explosions proposed for the Cape Thompson area of Alaska, known as Project Chariot. The Bureau of Land Management licensed the A.E.C. to use the land, which is subject to claim by the Eskimos of Point Hope, Noatak, and Kivalina Villages.

Recalling the Alaska Territorial Act of 1884, the resolution reiterates the promise that Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts "shall not be disturbed in the possession of any lands actually in their use and occupancy, or now claimed by them."

The resolution further states that after 77 years the land, hunting and fishing rights of Alaska natives still remain undefined and unextinguished; that therefore these rights are protected under law and cannot be disposed of by administrative fiat.

Project Chariot has been criticised on different grounds by the Wilderness Society, the Alaska Conservation Society and the Committee on Nuclear Information. The Committee on Nuclear Information of St. Louis charged that the Atomic Energy Commission's calculations on fallout in this area were highly inaccurate.

The CNI contended that the Project Chariot explosions would contaminate the food chain in the Arctic region resulting in a concentration of Strontium 90 in the Eskimo's bones.

The Atomic Energy Commission responded quickly with a counter argument that there would be no danger from radio-active fallout, claiming that its scientific studies confirmed this view. However, the A.E.C. has assured the Association on American Indian

CAMERA
Boulder, Colo.

TIMES
Reading, Pa

The Plea of the Eskimos Merits Government Study

For many generations — just about from the founding of the republic, in fact—the United States Government has dealt shabbily with the native American Indian whose land we took.

There are some hundreds of thousands of Indians still on reservations, a fact of which we cannot be proud — and a fact which Russia could make capital of if it chose to do so. Our Indians on reservations have inadequate water supplies. They live, for the most part, on sterile land that could be made fertile by irrigation. There are too few schools for the Indian children and these of inadequate quality. In every field we have treated the first Americans shamefully.

Now there is at hand another example of our abuse of the Indian and Eskimo minorities. The Assn. of American Indian Affairs recently called upon the Department of the Interior to revoke the license of the Atomic Energy Commission to use land claimed by Alaskan Eskimos for nuclear testing and research. The association questioned the right of the Bureau of Land Management of the Interior Department to dispose of land which is subject to native claims.

It is good to note, in this connection, that the Atomic Energy Commission is conducting an investigation and plans to explore every possibility. It's about time somebody listened to the Indians and the Eskimos and their friends. There are few enough of them.

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