

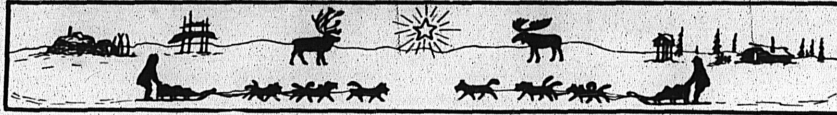
# Tundra Times

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Inupiat Paitot People's Heritage

Den Nena Henash Our Land Speaks

Unanguq Tunuktauq The Aleuts Speak



Tlingit  
Ut kah neek Informing and Reporting

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## ESKIMO DANCE: WITCHCRAFT!

### Kotzebue Based Church Labels Cultural Dance Shamanism, Witchcraft

By LAEL MORGAN  
Staff Writer

Is witchcraft and shamanism being taught in the Kotzebue day school? Concerned parents descended on the Kotzebue School Board last week to find out and discovered the answer might be, "yes".

It began with a petition that read: "We are against Eskimo dancing being taught to our children in the Kotzebue day school and request it be removed from the school program."

The request was signed by 124 Kotzebue residents and presented by Jack Jones, school board member and parishioner of the Friends Church.

"What's wrong with Eskimo dancing?" asked officials who had worked hard to get \$80,000 federal funding for an Eskimo cultural program.

Jones explained his ancestors had once danced for joy after a successful hunt but that they also danced at big meetings where witch doctors were present.

"We were made to understand in this dancing is some sort of witchcraft," he said.

A gussuk member of the school board looked quite surprised.

"I think some of my kids are taking Eskimo Dancing and I wonder if they're learning witchcraft."

Nellie Ward, president of the Student Council, got the floor. A lot of kids are getting up and coming to school at 8 a. m.--before classes officially start--to take Eskimo dancing, she defended.

"Some of them like it so much they're even getting interested in the Eskimo language. It's beautiful."

"They keep telling us we're losing our culture. Why try and stop our teaching it?" wondered Mrs. Mae Shroyer, a school board member. "We asked everybody. Advertised it before we started the course."

Dick Grissom, manager of Alaska Airlines, cited a Supreme Court decision (Brown vs. New Jersey) that religious organizations cannot interfere with the workings of a public school.

"If Eskimo dancing is a religious ceremony, I would suggest the Friends Church sue the school and myself," challenged Charles Perry, principal of the school. "Does the Friends Church have a right to impose its moral values on people who are not members of the Friends Church?"

"I think it would be re-  
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AFN PRESIDENT--Last Saturday, AFN President Donald R. Wright addressed the Republican convention in Fairbanks. Wright's eloquent speech had apparent clarifying effect on the cap-

city audience. Wright's address and that of Senator Ted Stevens cleared the air a great deal in regard to Alaska native land claims.

--LAEL MORGAN Photograph

### Wright, Murkowski Address Confab

FAIRBANKS--The Alaska Natives land claim is a real estate transaction, not a welfare vehicle, Don Wright, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives told members of the Republican Central District Convention last week.

But how much of that real estate should belong to the state, wondered Frank Murkowski president of Alaska National Bank and former commissioner of Economic Development for the state.

It was not a debate, just an "information session" which, most participants agreed, helped clear the air on the land claims issue.

Murkowski's fear was that the

native claim would take so much land there would be little left for the government which still

has 77 million acres to select of a land dowry received at state-

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### Aleut, Indian, Eskimo Languages--

## Dr. Krauss Preserves Dying Alaska Native Languages

By MADELYN SHULMAN  
Staff Writer

(First of four parts).

After ten years at the University of Alaska, Dr. Michael Krauss finds much of his work as a linguist concerned with preserving for future study of remnants of Indian languages and cultures that have been systematically exterminated by white America.

As a linguist, he spends much of his time corresponding with other linguists and educators from various parts of the world--all concerned with studying and preserving the Athabaskan, Tlingit, Eskimo and Aleut languages. Yet, in Alaska, the people who speak these languages are unaware of their fellows in other countries. In numerous families, parents who speak their native language speak only English to their children. And the language dies.

To what extent the policies of white schools and desires for assimilation have succeeded in killing the native cultures is only now becoming fully apparent. Many of Alaska's once proud languages are moribund--the children of the tribes no longer

speak their native tongue.

What is left will be a few scattered old people, available for linguistic scholars trying to write down their language to preserve for scholars to write long treatise on.

That this extermination is unnecessary is apparent if Alaskans look outside the United States, or outside Alaska, toward Eskimo and Indian groups in other countries.

In Greenland under a century of Danish rule, Greenlanders all speak their native language--an Inupiat Eskimo language similar to that spoken in Barrow.

The population is literate in their own language, with Danish the language of only a tiny elite class and the small percentage of resident Danes. To paraphrase--42,000 Eskimos can't all be wrong.

Yet, how many Alaskan Eskimos learn in their village schools about the people of Greenland, all of whom speak and read Eskimo in their schools, their daily newspapers, magazines, books and radio.

The very existence of these people is hidden from Eskimo children in the mass of informa-

tion they must learn about their fellow "countrymen"--the people of the lower 48.

While American educators sought throughout the early  
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## Flood Threat Chases Students Home Early

Village youngsters enrolled in Fairbanks High School are on a vacation to end all vacations. They were evacuated last weekend on notice schools would close due to flooding.

This proved to be a false alarm but by the time authorities realized their mistake, it was too late. Almost 100 students had been flown home and it would cost too much to bring them back.

"They're probably out there having the time of their lives, muskrat trapping and whale hunting," speculates Mrs. Betty Magnuson who coordinates the boarding-home program for the State Department of Education.

"We've had our evacuation

plan set for a month. What was supposed to trigger it was a notice the schools would close. The first plane load went out at 5:30 p. m. Friday and then shifts seven, eight and 10 Saturday morning. By the time we heard school was going to open again, it was too late.

"The youngsters were told if they wanted to stay they could, but who'd want to! Only about 30 of them are still here," she added.

It would cost about \$10,000 to get everybody back and authorities figure that price is too steep for the two weeks of school remaining. Grades have been kept up to date in anticipa-

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### Native Housing Timetable Raises Doubts

KOTZEBUE--Can a newly funded federal home building project for Alaskan natives get off the ground on schedule? George Ashby, head of the Nome area Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Program, has his doubts.

"I'd hate to see the Alaska Federation of Natives get into something and have it backfire on them. Trying to get the thing off the ground in July like the report says may present some problems. I think Mr. Wright (Don Wright, federation president) has some ideas about the program that are not correct."

Early this month Ashby met  
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