

A Soviet view of Kotzebue's people

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A Soviet delegation composed of official and Native residents of the Magadan Region and Moscow visited Alaska late in February. For the first time an Aeroflot airliner crossed the Bering Strait en route from Magadan to Anchorage via Anadyr. Novosti correspondent Arkady Kudrya shares his impressions of the trip.

Johnson concentrates on mathematical education, since it underlies many technological fields where there are still few Eskimos.

Future journalists regularly contribute to the newspaper *Tundra Times* published for Native inhabitants of Alaska.

McConnell said that the "Russian period" in the history of Native residents lasted till 1867 when Russia

library with numerous films on the Native residents' history, culture and traditions.

Susan Andrews, the sole staff member of the TV center, said its equipment would be capable of broadcasting, but Alaska's Department of Education lacks money to hire more personnel.

The equipment was purchased during the economic boom; but now the authorities have to save on everything due to plummeting oil prices.

The local radio broadcasts 18 hours daily for all 13 settlements in Northwestern Alaska, including one hour in Inupiaq, the language spoken by the Alaska Eskimos.

NORTHERN NEWS



MOSCOW — While we were flying to Kotzebue, a regional center in Northwestern Alaska, I noticed that most passengers were Native northerners in embroidered parkas and deerskin boots.

A majority of the approximately 3,500 residents of that Arctic settlement are Eskimos.

Kotzebue looks like many small towns in the Soviet North, with its small houses, snowdrifts on the sidewalks and skidoos in the streets.

At the technical education center, we saw some 15 Eskimo girls working on computers in a spacious room. The course of training there lasts several months. Leona Geffe of the NANA Region and Darlene Otton of the Bering Straits Region told me that upon graduation, they hoped for a well paid job and promotion.

Computers are also widely used at the Chukchi College where students study by correspondence. No Chukchi live in Alaska. The college was named so after the nearby Chukchi Sea. Its president, Lynn Johnson, and instructor John Creed said that Chukchi College is a branch of the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. The faculty numbers not more than eight members. Future accountants and journalists study two years.

The teaching staff keeps in contact with the students living in out-of-the-way Arctic villages by telephone and computer linkup. All information is supplied to computer screens.

By means of an activated light pen, instructors can write mathematical formulas and draw geometric figures on the screen. Most of the students are working Eskimo women aged 28-32. Work and home chores do not allow them to study full time. Computers stand them in good stead. All lectures are read in the evening.

The University of Alaska computer network enables students to use the data bank of the Alaska State Library in Juneau or the Rasmuson Library in Fairbanks, which contains 500,000 volumes.

From time to time, members of the faculty visit their students, traveling in light planes or on cross-country vehicles. Students arrive in Kotzebue only to receive their college degree. That usually happens in July when Eskimos from all over Northwestern Alaska go to a traditional trade fair in Kotzebue.

sold Alaska to the United States.

"It's very important to know that Russians didn't sell the land," he added. "They sold the right to govern it."

Native residents of Alaska used this important fact to substantiate their land claims, the teacher pointed out. The efforts of Willie Hensley and other leaders of the Native populations were crowned with success.

Eskimo school children in Kotzebue use special teaching aids to study their mother tongue.

The Kotzebue school has its own television center with a large videotape