

## *Editorial Comment—*

# Natives & North Star III

There has never been such an uneasiness stirred in the villages especially those along the coast. The cause of this disturbed status is the possibility of discontinuing the annual voyages of the Bureau of Indian Affairs supply ship North Star III that brings year's supplies to Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association native stores, BIA day schools and Public Health Service hospitals.

The crux of the matter is that some private carriers are wanting to take over the supplying services of the North Star from Annette Island (Metlakatla) to Unalaska to Barrow at the top of the world.

The villages are alarmed that they will never get the services they have gotten used to since back in 1920's. They have welcomed the supply ships beginning with the small U.S.S. Boxer that was succeeded by the original wooden North Star I which in turn was succeeded by North Star II and the latter was succeeded by the present North Star III.

The villagers are afraid that if the private carriers take over, the services North Star gives, which in many cases approach personal services, will not be continued by those that would take them over. Many times North Star delayed its sailing date for days on days waiting for favorable weather which a private carrier probably would not do because of expenses. There has been many instances when the North Star sails on a mercy mission involving doubling back from Nome to Little Diomedes to bring a dangerously ill Eskimo to the Nome hospital, as one example.

The continued services of the Boxer to the present North Star III have become a tradition and, certainly, filling important facets of everyday life of thousands of Alaska native people from the Tsimshians, Haidas, Tlingits, Chilkats, Aleuts and Eskimos.

We are very much in sympathy with the alarms of the folks. We ask for continued services of the famed North Star.