

RurAL-CAP ACTION REPORTS

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FIRE-RAZED NONDALTON AID IS SOUGHT

JOM Grants Cultural Prog.

Dimitri Philemonof, regional director of the Aleutian Planning Commission is pleased that the commission has recently been granted \$59,000 through the Johnson O'Malley Program for the preservation of Native culture on the Aleutian Islands.

The educational program will involve approximately 146 Aleut students in the communities of St. George, St. Paul, King Cove and Unalaska.

The program will include three months of instruction in each of the following areas: (1) Aleut Arts and Crafts (2) Aleut History and Culture (3) The Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act.

The course will be offered in the Junior/Senior high schools of the communities mentioned in accordance with their educational curriculum, and will employ one individual from the community.

The program will be directed through the Aleutian Planning Commission and a Program Coordinator will be hired to directly supervise and assist in the operation of this program.

Training for the four instructors will involve a week in Anchorage meeting with the director and the program coordinator. This will give the instructors an opportunity to become familiar with each other, exchange ideas, and utilize available resources in the Anchorage area.

This program is specifically designed to give students one of the first opportunities that they have been offered to learn about their heritage which was practically lost and forgotten during the cultural transition of the last century.

Philemonof states, "Before a person can be expected to understand another culture and another lifestyle, he must first be able to relate to himself and his people."

After a century of Russian occupation, only 39 villages, out of hundreds, remained in the Aleutians. The old Aleut traditions and culture were virtually destroyed by the invasion of Russia and the population slashed to 10% of what it was previously.

The survivors have been forced to adapt to a lifestyle completely foreign to them, and today, only 11 villages remain."

The Cultural Enrichment Program will begin with the opening of the school year '74-'75. Course I of the program will be a class in Aleut Arts and Crafts.

During the three months of the course, the students will receive guidance and assistance in studying and making Aleut crafts such as boats, sewing skins, beadwork, basket-making, and other traditional relics of the culture.

Course II will then begin with an in-depth study of the Aleut History and Culture. Different community members will be utilized to speak to the classes and relate legends, stories, and other pertinent information.

Course III, a study of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act is a very vital part of this program, commented Philemonof.



PICTURED ABOVE: Archie W. Demmert, new director of the Southeast Alaska Community Action Program (SEACAP).

Noted Former Teacher—

Demmert Exec. Dir. of SEACAP

Archie W. Demmert has been appointed as executive director for the Southeast Alaska Community Action Program (SEACAP) with the central office located in Juneau.

Demmert served as teacher and superintendent of schools in Alaska for 30 years.

He began his career at Klavock where he received his elementary education; taught at Gambell, St. Lawrence Island, after serving two years in the U.S. Army; was administrator of schools at Angoon, which he successfully transferred from the BIA School System to the independent status under the Alaska State Program; he served at Kake as superintendent and began the High School Educa-

tion Program; taught at Sitka, where he was elected president of the Sitka Teacher's Association for one year; and completed his work in education at Yakutat in 1973.

In 1969, he was teacher of the year for the State of Alaska and was chosen for the National Teacher of the Year Honor Roll. The following spring, the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, honored Demmert with an honorary doctor's degree in humanities.

At the dedication of the new school building at Yakutat, October, 20, 1973, the community presented Demmert with a plaque for his many professional contributions to the youth and community of Yakutat.

Prompt, Coordinated Action Is Pushed for Aid Before Freeze-up

Immediately upon hearing of the Aug. 6 disastrous fire in Nondalton, Mike Harper, executive director of Rural Alaska Community Action Program, visited Governor Egan to stress the need for prompt and coordinated action so that the community could regroup and rebuild prior to freeze-up.

Harper reported to the governor that former national director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Alvin J. Arnett, and a small group of OEO officials had visited Nondalton in April to review the effects of the imminent Bristol Bay economic hardships as dictated by the lack of sufficient opportunities in recent years.

Harper noted, "It is ironic that the Village Council met with our group in the school that has now been leveled. The officials toured the OEO-funded Nondalton Co-Op store which was established only recently and had provided much needed groceries at significantly lower prices than the competing store."

Governor Egan's staff had just met to discuss the situation and had taken action to dispatch Don Lowell, Alaska Disaster Office Director, to the stricken community.

The State of Alaska, through the special legislative session,

voted to fund the Bristol Bay region one million dollars in impact money, in light of the depleted salmon fisheries in that region.

OEO, through RurAL CAP, is also granting \$400,000 to that area for the express purpose of providing work projects so that some form of income will be earned in spite of the fact that fishing has not proven successful in recent years.

Harper commented further, "I discussed with the governor the necessity for the various departments of state and federal governments, especially the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to work hand-in-hand with OEO and any other agency that could offer assistance to Nondalton."

"I am very happy that Governor Egan is so concerned over the problem, and I believe if the federal agencies can react comparably, then we can get Nondalton back on its feet, as quickly as humanly possible."

Implicatory—

Statement Could Have Devastating Effect

Michael C. Harper executive director of Rural Alaska Community Program, has recently learned of a statement that could have a devastating effect on

Alaska businesses and local-hire policies in terms of the trans-Alaska pipeline.

He points out that the implication of a statement made by Alex Armendaris, director of the Commerce Department Office of Minority Business Enterprise, at an OMB regional directors' meeting in Dallas, could lead to more intensive outside hire/businesses, when the problems of unemployment of Alaskan residents is still at a high level and will continue to be so for more time in the future.

The actual remark of Armendaris was, "Construction of the \$4.5 billion dollar trans-Alaskan pipeline over the next three years will offer outstanding opportunities for minority firms to participate. The opportunities are there, they are viable, and they cover almost every facet of the construction and service industries."

"It is OMB's intention to make opportunities known to every minority firm in the nation that might have or be able to develop the capability to participate."

In line with the above, Harper believes that outside hiring is already a major problem which needs to be addressed by state and union officials.

The RurAL CAP official commented, "There are still a number of residents especially in the rural areas, who wish to be employed on the pipeline but have been not had the opportunity."



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