

With Ferry Link on Yukon—

## Rep. Mike Bradner's Bill Calls For Fairbanks, Nome Highway

State Rep. Mike Bradner, D-Fairbanks, has introduced a bill in the State House to develop a highway west from Fairbanks to Nome, and is urging more immediate completion by the temporary use of a ferry along the route paralleling the Yukon River.

Bradner said the TAPS Highway has created access to the Yukon on the Fairbanks end, and called for an immediate beginning of highway construction on the Nome end to make a highway connection to the river from the Seward Peninsula.

The Fairbanks legislator said skipping the mid-section of the highway along the river, and temporarily using a ferry, would bring the highway project within the realm of possible financing.

"The all-land route would cost upwards to \$300 million," Bradner stated, "while cutting out the 300 miles along the river, plus expensive bridge work, would bring the ferry route to a cost of only \$70 million."

Bradner said under projected federal and state highway funding there would be no possible way that Fairbanks and the Northwest could command the funds to build the all-land route within 10 years.

He continued: "The Yukon River ferry link in the highway system is a temporary solution for what will ultimately be an all land route."

Bradner described the ferry as simply Phase I in the all-land

highway."

"It just makes good sense to make use of this natural seasonal highway to get our foot in the door," he added.

"Such a route would allow cheap overland freight to flow into the mineral rich Seward Peninsula, and if costs are lowered may permit the mineral development necessary to build a deep water port on the Seward Peninsula to get minerals out," Bradner stressed.

The Fairbanks lawmaker says over-emphasis on oil development has made the Northwest the "forgotten land," despite the fact that it will undoubtedly one day be the "Mineral breadbasket" of Alaska.

Bradner, who is Chairman of the House Rules Committee, made no bones about the fact a highway west is one of his pet projects.

"Everyone's worrying about transportation north years after when they should have been," he said. "If we worry about an East to West highway link across Alaska now, and a deep water port in the West, then for once we may be ready," he added.

Bradner said he would seek to have the Yukon River officially declared part of the State Marina Highway System, pass a proposed general obligation bond funding

for ferry construction, and get the State to commit to beginning highway construction between Council and the Yukon River near Koyukuk.

He stated that a thrice weekly ferry service would be possible by only one ferry vessel operating between Koyukuk and the TAPS crossing. The ferries would be of sufficient size to carry about three hundred passengers if necessary, large cargo vans, and up to sixty cars.

Bradner first submitted the highway concept in 1967 and managed to get a \$2 million ferry appropriation in the last general ferry bond issue. However, that bond issue, principally for southeastern ferries, failed at the 1968 general election.

Also included in Bradner's proposal is a ferry vessel operating between the terminus of the Steese Highway from Fairbanks on the Yukon at Circle City, and the terminus of the Klondike Highway at Dawson City, Yukon Territory, some 285 miles upstream on the Yukon.

Bradner said the Upper Yukon Ferry could be started without any new highway construction, would turn the presently dead ended Steese Highway into a through route, and create one of the state's most beautiful tourist trips.

## 51st State Proposed

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scheduled for the near future, and in the meantime, an appeal will be made for assistance and support from individuals and organizations regardless of racial or ethnic orientation and for additional members of the Interim Congress.

This Congress will later transfer its authority to the actual Congress of the Alaska Native State to be comprised of one representative from all towns and villages in the proposed new state, according to members.

The group is not a part of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Nakak stressed, although it fully supports the AFN in its land claims efforts.

The Interim Congress, he continued, wants more than the AFN is requesting in its land claims settlement proposal.

And, he added, the idea for a 51st state did not originate from a recent speech made by AFN president Emil Notti. In the speech, Notti said he would advocate the creation of a separate Indian nation in Western Alaska if Congress does not pass a "fair" claims bill.

As described in the petition now being circulated, the boundaries of the new state would run roughly from where the Yukon River crosses the Canadian border west to Livengood, then in a straight line to Mt. McKinley and toward and down the center of Cook Inlet embracing all territory and islands North and West of the described line.

Other questions remain unanswered.

There are no answers on what form the state government would take, the location of the capitol, or methods of obtaining revenue.

These are all matters to be decided by the actual congress of the new state, according to the current group.

But on the question of sources of revenue, there seems to be little concern, for the territory staked out contains the rich North Slope as well as fish, timber, and mineral resources.

The members are uncertain

of the steps necessary in creating a native state but stated that they will pursue their plans regardless of any land claims settlement coming out of Congress.

The creation, they say, might require the approval of Congress and even the state legislature, where they definitely expect opposition. The state now has possession of and is leasing much of the oil land on the North Slope.

Such questions are to be answered, the petition states, by a five-member commission appointed by the President within 30 days after receiving the petition.

The commission is to meet with the Congress of the Alaska Native State within 9 months and then within 60 days is "to make recommendations and develop reasonable procedures to implement the creation of a new state and, in addition, to otherwise remedy the injustices to Alaskan Natives."

The injustices referred to are listed in the petition. They comprise a major portion of the 6-page document and cover such areas as land acquisition, lack of native representation in State government, lack of an effective means of self government in the villages and other activities "which have denied the Native People the equal protection to which they are entitled."

The Interim Congress plans to petition the government of the United States for a redress of these grievances according to its rights under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

Undoubtedly, the group has a long way to go from its first meeting last weekend.

In the coming weeks spokesmen have stated that they know the idea will undergo severe testing as the petition is circulated in the villages and distributed statewide.

And, also facing them will be the possibility that the natives themselves do not want a new state.

## Calif. Trade Fair To See Laura in Mini



... Laura and her mini.

—RICHARD COOK Photo

## 250 Lb. Musher

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flake the dogs were tangled up worse than the Gordian knot.

I threw on the brake, dropped the snow anchor and tried to straighten them out. Precious minutes were lost and the team behind zipped out in front.

Soon I had shoved the dogs into the right order again and shouted "Hike" and they were off like a herd of turtles.

It soon became evident to me—and I guess the thought entered the minds of my three dogs that they were pulling a very heavy load, what with my eighth of a ton, plus the weight of my clothing and my sled.

This was the annual news-media race sponsored by the Alaska Dog Musher's Association to raise money for the heart fund.

Thinking about the heart fund, I appealed to the dogs' better selves: "Have a heart, fellas, pull for the heart fund. Mush! Hike! Fish! Blubber! Go, Dogs, Go!"

On we plodded around the turn as I shouted, "Gee, Brownie, Gee!" At first it looked as if he wouldn't. Gee, but finally he did, just at the last moment.

I suppose he knew just where to turn, but as that cut-off fence hove into view and I had visions of crashing into it, I was about ready to jump off the sled.

"That's the way, Brownie! Go, Go, Go. On Gary, On Prince, On Brownie. You're good dogs, yes you are," I said, thinking that if I praised them I might appeal to their pride and get more speed.

Well, to make a long story tedious, we finally dragged into the finish line in 25 minutes and 30 seconds, placing 15th out of 16 teams. The only one behind us was Stu Rothman of the Arctic Oil Journal who took nearly 27 minutes.

As we came up to the post to tie up after the finish, Brownie just lay down on the snow, utterly exhausted. I petted him and his two colleagues and praised them well.

"After all," I said, "you guys had the heaviest load to pull and you did it with distinction. Just remember that you got good practice today for the freight races."

I gave Brownie a final pat on the head and reminded him: "It isn't whether you win or lose, it's how you run the race."

Beauteous Eskimo Lady, Laura Bergt, will again be lending glamor to Alaska's part at the trade fair at Costa Mesa, Calif., March 12-21—the Alaska Travel and Trade Fair.

Laura will definitely be distinctive as she wears and models a qiviut musk ox wool mini-skirt fashioned by Mrs. Ann Schell, textile specialist for the Musk Ox Project of the University of Alaska.

How much is the mini-skirt? "I know the mini-skirt part of it alone is \$75 but with the rest of it—the dress—I believe it would cost \$150," Laura said.

"I'll be wearing the mini with a 60 year old ivory necklace and a 50 year old ivory bracelet," she continued. "They seem to go beautifully with the mini."

The ivory jewelry items were given to Laura by her mother, Ricka, of Kotzebue.

The qiviut mini is natural color somewhat lighter than chocolate brown and it was knitted with an Eskimo design taken from an Eskimo harpoon by Mrs. Schell specially for Laura to wear at the California fair.

"George (George Sullivan, mayor of Anchorage) told me that I will be appearing on the Today Show shortly after I arrive at Costa Mesa," Laura revealed.

Laura said other appearances on television and radio were being planned for her. At last year's Trade Fair in California, Laura appeared in such shows as Jackie Joseph Show, Ed Nelson Show, and Donald O'Connor Show.

"They were really exciting—challenging," Laura pointed out. "I never knew what was going to happen next. You walk into the studio completely cold but even then, the programs get so interesting and made me wish they were longer."

"And you know what?" she continued. "I'll be showing a recipe on moose nose, beaver bellies and tails and I want to find out about seaweed recipe of the Tlingits."

"And they are eternally interested in mukluk out there." Laura was told that she might also like to tell the viewers about the recipe on curried bowhead whale mukluk.

"Oh my, that sounds interesting and good," Laura said.

At the fair, Laura will be demonstrating Eskimo yo-yos, show King Island masks, Point Hope whalebone masks, Anaktuvuk Pass caribou skin masks, Tlingit Indian totems, and Eskimo women's knife, the ulu.

"I will again perform in the blanket toss," she added.

Alaska Travel and Trade Fair is the program of the Alaska Business Council under the chairmanship of Mayor George Sullivan of Anchorage.

Laura said many dignitaries are expected to visit the Alaska portion of the trade fair including California's Gov. Ronald Reagan. Some State legislators of the Alaska legislature will also be there.

Veteran tourism promoters, Helen and Chester Seveck of Point Hope and Kotzebue, will also be the part of the personnel of the trade fair. The couple has long performed Eskimo dances and has demonstrated many arts of the Eskimos.

Laura will be leaving for Costa Mesa on March 3 to help to promote and prepare the Alaska Travel and Trade Fair.

"I'll be there with my reindeer horn Eskimo eyeglasses with slits and the Eskimo breast plate armor of bone," quipped Laura.

## PR Chief..

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only if the settlement terms are viewed as poor by Alaska Natives, and only if the land freeze would be continued to allow Congress to consider the claims legislation again next year.

"It is a matter of public record that Secretary Hickel intends to lift the freeze December 31 of this year. So we do have a deadline for justice," stated Thomas.

In spite of this deadline, he added, AFN efforts have brought significant results. "Our Washington State campaign alone has generated some 7,000 letters," he told the Council.

Thomas concluded his remarks by urging the churchmen to further aid the AFN effort, particularly through a letter-writing campaign to Washington legislators.

The speech was well received by delegates of the Alaska Council of Churches and by the many Kotzebue residents attending the Assembly.

Thomas left Kotzebue Tuesday evening enroute to Washington, D.C., where he joined the delegation of Native leaders on hand for the Senate Interior Committee mark-up session.

## VISTA...

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attack in recent months by former and present volunteers and by some of the villages where volunteers have been assigned.

Many of the criticisms have focused on the administration of the program which is done by the State, charging that the program has not been responsive to the wishes and needs of the people.

Stevens said, "I will continue to follow this matter closely and hope that we can work together to provide a sound and significant program to the rural villages of our state."