

OIL IMPACT STIRS ESKIMOS

Barrowites Concerned About Land But Wish Part in Development

By JOHN SACKETT

BARROW, (Special)—The Arctic Slope Eskimos are learning with the swiftness of flying birds that sweep across the Arctic the tremendous impact of the oil industry into their very lives and the necessity to act upon their land and to become an intrical part of the north's development.

At the opening of the meeting over 200 members of the Arctic Slope Native Association listened to Fred Paul, a Tlingit Indian and attorney for the Arctic Eskimos, state that, "the oil companies are coming in and there is no way that we can stop them.

No one cares that this is your homeland. These are bitter words and I would be the first to say so, but unfortunately they are the truth."

Paul also emphasized the dim future of the land claims legislation by stating that presently there is little chance that a bill would pass because of the lack of interest and knowledge of about 430 of the total 435 congressman in Washington. The ASNA has laid claim to 96 million acres of land on the North Slope, and feel that the proposal made by the Alaska Federation of Natives for 40 million acres of land and \$500 million is insufficient.

In this same vein Paul said that "there has never been a national magazine that has taken up the plight of the Alaska native and I propose a public relations man to work for the native people to tell them that the Alaska native is being robbed up here."

Grave concern was shown by Eben Hopson, Sam Taalak,

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Charlie Edwardson and many others regarding the impact of the oil industry on the North Slope.

It was brought out that a pipeline above ground could very easily stop the traditional migration of caribou across the slope thereby making it impossible for people to hunt, and many were concerned that from previous actions of drilling on the North Slope in the 1940's that the few rivers that the Eskimos have to fish in would soon become polluted with oil and chemicals from the oil wells.

Sam Taalak expressed dismay that no one was being hired from Barrow where over 250 residents are available for employment and many are skilled as carpenters, cat skimmers, and truck drivers.

To alleviate this problem the ASNA is requesting a permanent state employment office at Barrow so that the people on the slope do not have to travel to Fairbanks or Anchorage in order to be hired.

Eli Reyes, employee for the Dept. of Labor was taking applications and will be contacting the oil industry with regard to employment.

In ending the meeting the association requested a meeting with the Board of Directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives to work on possible amendments on the present land claims legislation.

John Sackett was present as a delegate of the AFN and the Tundra Times and Peter Three Stars and Bill Metis represented BIA. Tom Brower of Barrow acted as the interpreter.

Another meeting of the ASNA will be called next month to elect a 1st and 3rd vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and Sgt. at arms.