

# Oil Activity Blocking Caribou Migration Say ASNA Officials, Barrowites Uneasy

The people of Barrow and Wainwright on the shores of the North Slope have heard no reply from Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel concerning the caribou migration through their area.

Represented by the Arctic Slope Native Association, the people wrote Hickel last weekend that an oil-oriented geophysical activity south and west of Icy Cape on the Arctic Coast is blocking the caribou migration.

"As guardian of the native people," they wrote, "we ask you to investigate as soon as possible and we stand ready to cooperate

in any way."

The people believe that the caribou are being prevented from traveling east to Barrow by intense activity of huge snowmachines traveling in a north and south direction.

About half of the people in Barrow depend on the caribou for food, Eben Hopson, executive director of the Arctic Slope Native Association estimated. And, thus, they look forward to the seasonal migration which brings the animals close to Barrow.

As stated in the letter, Hopson and Joseph Upicksoun, president

of the native association, have been discussing the possibility of going to Icy Cape and trying to stop the vehicular traffic so that

the caribou might again start migrating east.

Thousands of the animals are  
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# Caribou Migration . . .

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reported to be flocking around the Point Lay airport some 45 miles southwest of Icy Cape.

The native association cautioned Hickel that "a definite unrest among the people seems to be evident."

If the people do not hear from the secretary within a week, Hopson said, a situation that is being treated lightly at this stage might become much more serious.

"We would like to think that nothing will happen as far as

demonstrations but we have no direct control over the situation."

The association leaders said that they did not know what companies were responsible for the activity blocking the migration, but that they have written for the information.

Hopson said that if Hickel would respond in a positive manner by sending someone up to the North Slope to make an observation, "we will be ready to cooperate."