

'I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend you right to death'

Editorial—

Rescue Units Could Use Alaska Native Members

Something of a criticism emanated from Barrow people recently when Joash Tuke and his whaling crew were thought to have vanished in the treacherous currents of the Arctic Ocean after running out of gas while towing a huge 70-ton whale the crew had caught.

Words like, "Those guys don't know how to look for anything," came out of Barrow. The subject was, of course, the search conducted by local flyers and rescue units who tried to locate the supposedly missing whalers. When they were found, they were sighted by the Eskimo Mayor of Barrow, Wyman Panigeo, whom the Search and Rescue plane had wisely taken along on the second day of the search.

We do not know at this time how Wyman Panigeo and the search plane in which he was in happened to be at the location of the stranded whalers, but we can guess.

Panigeo, an experienced whaler himself, we may strongly assume, probably reasoned the probable location of the lost crew because he knew the currents, the wind velocity around the immediate time of the emergency and may have been instrumental in guiding the search plane to the area he thought the stranded whalers might be. What Panigeo knows about the Arctic in his area is no accident. He has been taught by his older people what Arctic currents will do and how the wind will affect the ice conditions. This knowledge is vital to the native people in that part of the frigid north and this should be tapped by those who would conduct search and rescue in times of emergency.

The know-it-all attitude should not be tolerated. It might have happened to some extent at Barrow which resulted in great anxiety and worry for the local people when they were told that there was no trace of the whalers or that they had vanished.

The Arctic is the country that offers deadly challenge to any man who lives within its confines. The native people who live in it, in order to survive at all, had studied its ever-changing treachery. They have vast knowledge of its many sided dangers. They could be of invaluable assistance in times of search and rescue.