



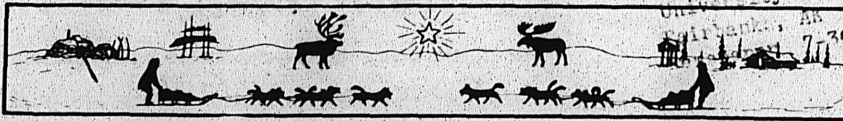
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Vol. 13, No. 41

Wednesday October 13, 1976

Fairbanks, Alaska

Arctic Natives Seek School Control

Cross-Cultural Conference on Education in the Far North Draws Natives from Greenland, Europe, and Canada

By GEOFF KENNEDY

Native peoples in Greenland, Lapland, and Arctic Canada are beginning to gain some control over the curricula of their schools but their children often have to go far away from home to attend high school. This pattern emerged from interviews with participants in the conference on Cross-Cultural Education in the Far North sponsored by the Center for Northern Educational Research at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks last week.

Anton Hoem, of the Institute for Educational Research of the University of Oslo in Norway said that the Same or Laplander students have been taught their native language in Scandinavian schools for the past nine years. He said parents are gaining greater participation in the choice of curricula in their schools.

Hoem praised the government of Norway for responding well to the special needs of the indigenous Same people. He cited an example of parents petitioning the government to close the schools in the Lapland area during the fishing season to allow students to participate more fully in their traditional subsistence culture.

Jose Arriak, a high school student from Frobisher Bay, NWT says the Native Innu language is being taught for the first time this year in his area. He said at present the high schools in his area stress academic subjects. "Traditional skills like hunting are not taught, unless we want it."

But, he added, the community is becoming more involved in deciding which subjects will be taught in the schools.

The first program in Frobisher Bay is a history of the Innu Eskimo people.

Adamie Inukpuk, President of the Kativik School Board in Arctic Quebec, said the school board is a large group that prepares a budget for 14 communities in the region. In addition, a group of local people is preparing programs for teaching native cultures in the school programs.

Inukpuk said the school board is not planning to take over the schools right away; they are studying how to run the schools first.

Ingmar Egede, professor of education at Greenland Teacher Training College, says native people in his area are changing their attitudes toward their native language. In the past, people wanted the prestige of speaking Danish, the language

of the country of which Greenland is a part.

Now, he said, people are not willing to do so. More than 90 percent of the children in Greenland now speak Greenlandic.

Egede said Greenlanders, like Alaskans have had for many years to go away from home, in some instances as far as Denmark, to go to high school. But, now, he said, the situation is somewhat improved. In 12 to 15 communities the schools are providing training up to the ninth or tenth grades. But students from very small villages still have to live in boarding schools if they want to go to high school.

Noah Inukpuk, Vice President of the Kativik School Board in Northern Quebec, said high school students from his area usually have to go as far away as Montreal or Ottawa to study. But, he added, the Canadian government is planning to build schools in the North sometime in the future.

Jan Keskitalo, Chairman of the Education Committee of the Nordic Same Council in Finnmark, Norway, said some Lapland students go to high school in their own areas, but in some places, students have to live in boarding schools or foster homes.

Hoem said educators try to build cottages for boarding home students small enough to approximate home life as much as possible. He said in his experience both parents and students prefer the small boarding home for those students who must live away from home.

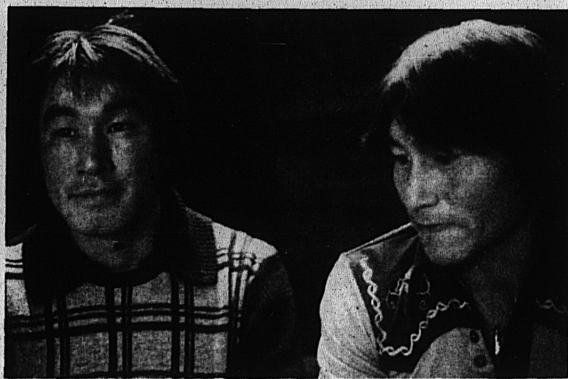
Jose Arriak's hometown of Frobisher Bay, a community of 3000 in the Eastern part of the Northwest Territories is large enough to support a high school so he is able to live at home. But, he said, students from smaller villages who wish to go to high school must live away from home in a "hostel," a dormitory setup.

The effects of sending school children to live in another culture differ in different places. Hoem and Keskitalo said that a small country like Norway is able to plan well to allow the schools to integrate the teaching of modern, urban skills with

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SAM KITO, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives addresses a luncheon meeting of the Conference on Cross-Cultural Education in the Far North. Right, Noah Inukpuk and Adamie Inukpuk represented the Northern Quebec Inuit Association at the conference. (Ruiz Rozell photos)



Aleut Student In Assembly Seat

Ralph Andersen, a student at the University of Alaska, was elected a member of Fairbanks campus Assembly last week. Andersen, who is three-fourths Aleut and one-fourth Danish, was the highest male vote-getter in the election. The assembly provides a forum for university students, faculty and administrators to develop policy recommendations for the campus and the university system.

When asked why he ran for the assembly seat, Andersen said, "There is no native voice on campus. Only SOS (Student Orientation Services) knows what the Native students need and want." Andersen said he wanted to be able to look back on the university and be able to see what he's done for the Native student.

"What I'd like to do is make the administrators, faculty and other students see the Natives like we do. There must be an end to the stereotype Native—the quiet, passive listener—we need loud-speaking people," he said. "Others are always saying, 'Hey, we can get these guys easy. We can say anything to the Natives and they'll accept it.'"

Through the Fairbanks Assembly, he hopes to voice the needs of the Native students to everyone on campus. Most Native students, he said, are not on the same scholastic level as others because of varying educational environments. Tutor programs under SOS are helpful but "we want to turn out educated Natives." There are several educational alternatives, Andersen said, including scheduling courses designed for Native students who are having difficulties in standardized university-level courses.

Andersen, a Native of Clark's Point, said "My whole goal is to let the Native become aware of what is happening and be able to say, 'Hey look at me, listen to me for a while.'"

He expressed interest in working with the Student Affairs Committee of the Fairbanks Assembly. This would involve studies dealing mainly with student orientation, recruitment and retention, items he feels have great impact on Native students.

"College, to most students," he said, "is a game. Native students have to take their education more seriously. They will

have to realize the work we are doing now will not have any effect this year, but ten years from now, they will know that we have established a power base for our children to work from. A lot of leaders will come forward."

Andersen is currently involved with the Native Student Organization (NSO) on campus. The NSO, as he described it, was established for anyone interested in Alaska Native affairs. He hopes to obtain official recognition for the organization, to give Native students more power and status on campus. He is also a member of the ASUA president's cabinet. "ASUA needs different viewpoints from the Native students, and I hope to be able able to do that through this advisory body," he said.

He helped establish a Native American group while a student at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire which he said provided a substantial voice for the Natives there. He later transferred to the University of Alaska and currently resides in the New Married Student Housing on campus.

10th Annual AFN Convention

A decade of hard work and achievement will be celebrated at the 10th annual convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives to be held October 21 - 23 at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage.

The three-day conference includes a heavy dose of issue-oriented workshops as well as marking 10 years of accomplishments for Alaska's Native people.

Stewart L. Udall, former U.S. Secretary of Interior, during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, is the featured keynote speaker. He will address the convention at 11 a.m. Saturday. That same evening he will be an honored guest at the annual

Tundra Times Banquet.

Udall's presence at the convention will serve as a reminder of the crucial role played by the former Interior Secretary in the resolution of the Land Claim's Settlement when he declared the land freeze.

Also addressing the convention during the three days will be Alaska Governor Jay Hammond, and the state's U.S. Congressional delegation: Senator Ted Stevens, Senator Mike Gravel and Congressman Don Young.

AFN President Sam Kito doesn't expect any sparks of controversy to ignite at the convention. He anticipates a "regular convention" with work

the order of the three days.

What has happened in the 10 years since the organization of the AFN has dramatically touched the life of this state's Native population.

AFN Board member Jack Wick sees the anniversary as an opportune time to look backward and assess and to look forward and plan. "We are probably able to recognize the steps of progress we've made in 10 years. Now we have to see where we are, and how much further we have to go."

Resolutions from the bush justice conference held in Kenai last weekend will be sure to surface during convention

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