

Aleut Cannikin Suit Loses—

Judge Plummer Closes Avenues of Protest

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A court decision yesterday in

Federal District Court in Anchorage appears to have closed avenues of protest to Aleuts who fear the Cannikin atomic blast, scheduled this week.

Federal District Court Judge Raymond E. Plummer turned down an Aleut League suit asking for an injunction against the Cannikin blast. The Aleut League had charged, according to attorney Hugh Fleisher, that the proposed action by the AEC (exploding a 5 megaton nuclear device on Amchitka Island) endangered the lives, livelihood and property of the Aleut people.

"Based on the testimony we introduced and AEC testimony and documents Judge Plummer dismissed the case," according to Fleisher.

Judge Plummer wrote in his decision that the Aleut League had failed to prove the AEC had taken insufficient safety precautions or had violated provisions of the National Environmental

Policy Act.

According to Mike Swetzof, newly elected president of the Aleut League, the primary concern of people in the villages of Aleutian Chain is evacuation.

"Survival in the event of a miscalculation is beyond the reach of the villagers," he said. "We are hopeful that in the case of a disaster the governments in Juneau and Washington would provide for the evacuation of all people who might be harmed as a result of the test.

According to the Coast Guard, no special provisions have been made to evacuate the Aleutian villages in the event of an earthquake or tsunami.

The AEC has announced it will be ready to explode the 5 megaton underground nuclear test by November 5. However, Alaska Senator Mike Gravel reported last week that the AEC blast is scheduled for Thursday.

In Washington D.C. on Mon-

(Continued on Page 6)

Aleut Suit Loses . . .

(Continued from page 1)

day, U.S. District Judge George L. Hart turned down requests by environmentalists to halt the huge 5 megaton blast. Lawyers for the Committee for Nuclear Responsibility, which instituted the suit against the AEC, planned to file an immediate appeal to a higher court. As the maneuvering continued, it appeared likely that the issue of whether the blast will go off would reach the Supreme Court before Thursday. A parallel issue, whether disputed "secret documents" held by the AEC should be brought to light, may also go to the high court.

Meanwhile, preparations at Amchitka for the blast are proceeding into their last stages. The explosion will occur in a mile deep chamber sealed to contain heat and radioactivity. President Nixon gave his go-ahead to the blast last week. The AEC says the bomb is in place and will be ready for detonating by Friday.

At the United Nations in New York last Thursday, the day after President Nixon gave the blast his go-ahead, representatives from Canada, Peru and the U.N. Secretary General's office spoke against the Amchitka Island blast.

In Juneau, 150 students from Juneau-Douglas High School held an orderly march around Governor William A. Egan's mansion to protest the blast. They took a recess period to chant "Stop the Bomb, Stop the Bomb," and "Cannikin Kills" before returning to classes.

In Anchorage, the Alaska Mothers Campaign against Cannikin wired President Nixon: "We would like a response to our petitions with 3,000 signatures against Cannikin. All the people of the world have the right to receive an explanation as to why you approved Cannikin."

Senator Mike Gravel (D-Alaska), who a week before had marched in protest in front of the White House, likened the shot to a game of "Russian Roulette". If you plat it once and win, then its even stupider, he said, to try again.

A Canadian protest ship, with 28 aboard, dubbed Greenpeace

II, left Vancouver last Thursday for Amchitka. The 154 foot ship is a converted minesweeper—bigger and twice as fast as the original Greenpeace, which is returning to Vancouver. The ship planned to meet Greenpeace I off Vancouver Island before heading out and take aboard some members of the Greenpeace I crew. Greenpeace II plans to anchor offshore Amchitka Island during the detonation of Cannikin.

In Vancouver and other West Coast cities protest groups are organizing processions of cars, campers and trailers away from the coast starting Monday.

Alaskan Natives have been at the forefront of the protest movement against the AEC test designed to test the missile warhead for the Spartan Antiballistic Missile.

"3500 members of the 'Aleut League' are concerned with the word 'fear,' Seattle AFN P.I.O. Officer Jay Mallot told a Seattle rally, "a word that until testing began in 1965 (with Long Shot) and again with Milrow in 1969, did not have much meaning for them..."

"Already it is known that we in Alaska and the Northwest are contaminated due to the raining of fallout contained in the precipitation that is spread by weather patterns that nourish our wildlife that we in turn consume in a continuing effort to survive," he told Seattle residents.

The five megaton nuclear blast will be the largest of the United States' underground test blasts and the second in a series of giant multi-megaton blasts at Amchitka Island in the Aleutians. Amchitka has already been the site of the 80,000 ton Longshot blast and the 1.3 megaton Milrow blast in October 1969.

The Atomic Energy Commission has announced extensive provisions for media coverage of the blast including an Anchorage Communication Center in the Royal Room at the Royal Inn Hotel. A news pool of reporters will be at the control point on Amchitka at shot time, according to AEC plans.