

More on Scout National Guard Manner of Enlisting Men

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According to a small desk dictionary in Tundra Times offices, a volunteer is "one who offers to enter into service, esp., military service, of his own free will."

There is some indication that the Second Scout National Guard Battalion of Bethel has expanded this definition to encompass a somewhat wider definition to encompass a somewhat wider definition.

Harold Sparck of the Tundra Draft and Military Counseling office in that city has charged the National Guard with illegal recruitment and enlistment policies with respect to Eskimos in the area.

Sparck charges that the National Guard for several years has exploited the Alaskan Eskimos' ignorance of Selective Service laws, in effect "drafting" them into the Guard.

It was reported to Sparck that names of "eligible" young men in remote Eskimo villages were being supplied to recruiting officers in the Guard.

Supposedly, the Guard would pick from this list, notify those selected, fly them to Bethel, examine them and sign them into the Guard without informing them of their legal rights.

According to the report, six men from Tooksook Bay were "chosen" three years ago in this manner and taken from their high school. (The Guard sergeant in Tooksook Bay received a special commendation for recruiting.)

Two years ago, six men from the village of Chevak were "selected", and last year, six more men in Kotlik were picked up, flown in Bethel, signed into the Guard, and then returned to the village.

On this last occasion, however, the Guard delayed active duty training for the six and when orders were finally issued, two of the men who were in high school, refused to go.

Instead they filed affidavits

with Sparck which were turned over to Alaska Legal Services. To date, they have not been called for active duty training and are back in Kotlik.

In Togiak, one young man listed as I-Y by the draft, told a non-commissioned officer that he wanted to join the Guard. When the plane arrived to pick him up, the names of three men were read off and they were told to get on the plane.

The two who had never expressed a desire to join the Guard contacted Sparck and Alaska Legal Services when they arrived in Bethel. Ultimately, they were not processed. The sergeant major of the unit said he did not know the men had objections to enlistment.

Sparck first learned of these recruitment practices while counseling at a Catholic high school on the Yukon River. His knowledge of the Tooksook Bay men and the Chevak men is based on conversations but in the case of the two men from Kotlik, affidavits were taken and are on file.

Sparck thinks it would be an interesting project to contact all Alaskan Eskimos in the Guard to determine if they did indeed "volunteer" for service.

Christopher Cooke of Alaska Legal Services recently called attention to inequities apparent in the Selective Service system as it operates in the bush.

Responsibility for education as to the meaning of lottery numbers, of types of classifications and options, has not been adequately undertaken by the draft board, especially in the sense of bi-lingual presentations in villages where the dominant language in Inupik, rather than English.

Prohibitive travel costs make the right of personal appearance before the draft board a practical impossibility. Draft boards in this vast state are located in only four major cities: Nome, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Juneau.

Sparck feels that Alaskan

Eskimos must have a clear understanding of current draft regulations and of their full legal rights in order to decide whether or not they want to enter the National Guard.

The famous book, "Eskimos at War" by "Muktuk" Marston, clearly chronicles the Eskimos' response to military duty during the Second World War.

The Alaska Territorial Guard,

sometimes called the Tundra Army, was composed in large part of loyal and dedicated Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts, who taught the military many secrets of Arctic survival, supply, and housing, forming a vital link in the defense of this country.

The ATG is now part of the National Guard. Many Eskimos will undoubtedly continue to

serve in its ranks.

One Army official was quoted in Marston's book as saying, "The need for the services of our Eskimo citizens who reside in this area permanently remains an indispensable asset to us."

The Eskimos of the Bethel region are speaking out for their right to choose when, where, and how they will serve.



MYSTERIOUS BOMBING — Policemen recover fragments of a bomb that was exploded in front of Fairbanks' Democratic Headquarters Monday night by unidentified assailants.



BEING INTERVIEWED — Larry Carpenter, KTVF-TV personality in Fairbanks, is interviewing Tundra Times Editor. — Photos by FRANK MURPHY