

Tanacross Puzzling Knot...

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POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

(1) Find a good volunteer supervisor. They've tried but with no success.

(2) Forget the whole thing and wait until government funding comes through to do the job. But for too long they've been living on the wrong side of the river, ferrying their kids across to school. They want to move NOW. They're anxious to start work.

(3) Borrow \$15,000 from a private bank on the promise of work experience funding. Pay the maximum wage to each village worker and then get each worker to sign over his check to the village treasury.

The bank loan can be used to hire the supervisor because it is free and clear of any strings. The work experience money, once it's turned into the treasury, can be used to pay off the bank loan.

DECISION: Solution number (3) made by Wally Craig, regional director of the BIA, who flew to Tanacross to discuss it last week with Ron Stuart of Arctic Health Research and

Melvin Charles, Rural Affairs, Anchorage.

Carl Charles, Chief of Dot Lake, was also on hand to explain his people had used this system when all else failed last year on their housing project. It worked, he told them. Villagers did sign over their checks as promised. They even got a return on their income tax. And they were into their new homes in four months.

Tanacross villagers were dubious.

"It's sort of confusing immediately," admitted Oscar Isaac, chief. Craig and company certainly agreed with him.

"It would be easier to tell you there's no way to hire a supervisor," Craig said. "This is the only way I can think of."

"You may think you're working for nothing but, by God, next year you get a new house," Charles reminded them.

True, Tanacross decided, and not a bit too soon. So they'll probably give Solution (3) a good try.

BIA's Wallace Craig...

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and Craig passed to consider the implementation of that policy.

"Funding ... If you control the funds you control the program. If we ask involvement in a true sense of the word ... trust and confidence, we have to give vital evidence of that trust and confidence."

Which is why he's happy when his board makes waves. Why he sometimes provokes it.

"There are 455,000 Indians nation-wide in the bureau. There's somewhere in the neighborhood of 60,000 in Alaska; over 12% of all the Indians the Bureau represents. Where do we stand on funding?" he demands.

"We get approximately 6-7%. This is the type of thing the Alaskan Native people should be thinking about ... That they should ask their area director and Congressional delegation about."

"We have about 9,000 people in our Fairbanks area. Two per cent of the U. S. Indian population. Two per cent of the U. S. Employment Assistance budget would be \$814,000. We actually get about \$120,000 plus some added federal services."

The board is considering requesting an evaluation of Craig's agency and he hopes it will.

"If they do we'll have to restate our goals and policies. Establish a long range program; a base to submit other programs."

This approach does not endear Craig to entrenched bureaucrats. In an interview with Stan Patty of the Seattle Times Craig recently stated, "The natives are fully capable of running their own affairs. This is the only

path as far as I am concerned. And, frankly, I think they would make better use of the funds and do a better job."

Of course a lot of bureaucrats are saying things like that now with self determination policy in, but as for implementation ... Well, Craig is in the front ranks and occasionally he gets shot at.

When word got out last month he was planning to leave the Fairbanks office, some worried for fear his transfer might have been engineered.

Not so, he said.

"I don't give up that easily. It's a personal thing. In Anchorage I had earthquake losses and then flood losses in Fairbanks to a total of about \$40,000. I'm in a position where I'm spending more than I'm earning and I have a family to consider."

He hopes to transfer to Wind River, Wyo. There's no opening at the moment, but he's enjoying the wait.

"I happen to like Alaska and Alaskans. They're so adaptable to change. The human resources have always been here but have you noticed how many young leaders are coming up? Women too, are coming in for their share."

"One really interesting thing is the degree of sophistication they show. The adaptativeness with which they pick up the non-native capabilities of persuading, selling, enforcing and compelling."

As for his agency role, "It's a matter of listening to people and trying to understand what they tell us."

Center Seeks Furnishings for Day Care Center

WANTED-Toys, kitchen equipment, curtains, a mechanic and a plumber. Fairbanks Native Community Center.

Leonard Hamilton, director of the Native Center, is trying to furnish a new Day Care Center which is slated to open next fall with 20 youngsters.

Recently the federal government turned over to his agency the old Head Start building on Gilliam Way. Volunteers from the Campus Ministry, University of Alaska, have spent three weeks renovating and painting. Now furnishings are needed.

The Twilight Homemakers of Fairbanks donated \$150 for mini-kitchen equipment for the youngsters. Some dishes and kitchen equipment are needed, too.

Toys, simple furniture, curtains and some decorating items are sought. There's also electrical work and plumbing to be done and a school bus to be renovated.

The Native Center just received a federal grant of \$192,194 which may cause some to wonder why volunteer labor and donations are being recruited. The answer is the grant is budgeted for other use.

"We originally requested \$250,000," Hamilton noted. "So we have to cut a few corners."

The money will go to hire a

full time researcher on Native community problems, a youth counselor, job developer, assistant director, accountant and clerical staff.

Oil Could Kill Salmon...

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a dose of kerosene for croup?" the scientist asked. "About the same thing."

Morrow has discovered fish that survive volatile oil have slightly less potassium in their blood and slightly more acid and chloride.

"The most peculiar thing of all is that one protein component of the blood almost entirely disappears," he noted. "We're working on identifying that but it's a tough job."

As for the taste of oil adapted fish, there's a difference. Dr. Morrow shudders at the thought of being taken too seriously on this point but he has experimented in a casual fashion on the gourmet aspects of the problem.

"Just for fun we fried up a few survivors and asked people around here to comment on the

"We anticipated this grant when we moved to our new building," Hamilton added. "Without it we could not have moved."

taste. Results were almost universal. The ones that had survived the most oil tasted bad. We used from 1/100th of a gram per liter to 3 1/2 grams.

"The fish that had 6/10th of a gram was voted as tasting best. Of course, it was only 11 people, you know, and it could have been the cooking."

Morrow is currently using silver salmon in the experiment, duplicating as closely as possible ocean conditions found in Prince William Sound and Valdez harbor, which could be terminus for the North Slope oil pipeline.

Next year, if the project is funded, he hopes to experiment with sockeye salmon and, to isolate the volatile substance in oil that makes this fish story a sad one.

Native Languages...

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preparing - as a monument to a dying people.

Yet, in the Southeast of Eyak territory, the Tlingit and Haida Indians despite their numbers in thousands face the same extinction of their language.

Haida is dying, doomed, Dr. Krauss explains. Only the older people speak the language and only in a tiny number of villages.

In the Tlingit villages, the situation is approaching this. Hardly any children anywhere speak the language.

Among the Tlingit people, however, many are becoming concerned with the death of their language. From Canada and the lower 48 black and Indian nationalist movements are having their influence on Tlingit youth.

The Tlingits are a highly political people. Reawakened nationalism could combine with a resurgence of cultural interest among the young to lead to a Tlingit renaissance.

As of now, the position of the language is perilous, says Dr. Krauss.

Yet, in half a dozen high schools in Southeast Alaska and in Alaska's three colleges a handful of teachers are presenting classes in Tlingit as a second language.

At the University of Alaska, Dr. Krauss, who began the first course in Eskimo at the college in 1961 now teaches Tlingit. At Alaska Methodist University Nora Florendo teaches Tlingit conversation and grammar.

She is from Hoonah, one of the Tlingits campaigning to renew interest in her language and culture.

She is spurred on by the realization that Eyak is nearly extinct, fewer than 100 people speak Haida and the Athabascan languages are approaching this state.

As of now, the scattered teachers presenting Tlingit work in the dark. They are widely separated and each must painfully put together his own curriculum.

However, on June 1, the Tlingit teachers will meet at Sheldon Jackson College to coordinate a program for Alaskan schools. At Sheldon Jackson, they plan to organize curriculum and adopt the standard spelling devised by Constance Naish and Gillian Story of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

With work, the Tlingit people

could save a literature for their 10,000 people, teach Tlingit in the schools and perhaps reawaken it among the young of their tribe.

For much Athabascan, or Athapaskan, is one the white men applied to the Indian people they met in the interior of Canada. It comes from the name of a lake.

Actually, the Athabascan languages in America comprise several dozen separate but related languages belonging to tribes from Alaska to Apache Country. The Navajos, 140,000 strong, all speak Athapaska.

About 10 of the Athabascan languages are in Alaska and with few and scattered exceptions the languages in Alaska are moribund.

In Tananacross, a few children speak their language. In Tetlin it is strong. It is weaker in Northway. A few isolated villages in northeast Alaska also retain their language - Arctic Village, Venetia, Chalketzi, Birch Creek. Probably, they comprise only a few hundred people.

Overall few Indian children speak their language. Already, for many dialects, only a few of the old people still remember of use only to linguists and historians trying to preserve the language for future study.

Almost no Alaskan Indians have any knowledge of what it means to be an Athabascan - of the widely separated peoples who speak their language and share many parts of their culture.

In the schools, Indian children do not learn of the 140,000 Navajos who speak Athabascan, often read and write their language and preserve a proud and powerful heritage in the southwest.

Yet, the children are fed numerous facts about white Americans and the European history these late comers brought with them. Their own history and culture is kept largely secret.

Not knowing these things, parents devalue their language and do not teach it to their children. Some feel others will teach them - the schools, authorities, somebody. Yet, the truth is that a child can learn his language only in his home - from his parents. He can learn English from almost anyone.

NEXT: Eskimo - a last hope.

Arson...

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proval by church factions because dancing was to be allowed, but this, apparently, had been resolved by the time the center opened. The facility had been operating three weeks when it burned May 25.

RURAL CAP originally funded the facility through the Parent Child Center at the request of Kotzebue teens. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and Air Force donated materials and about 50 townspeople and teens volunteered labor.

Equipped with juke box, ice cream machine and complete cooking facilities, the center was expected to pay its own way.

Mayor Armstrong said the council has voted to let the teens conduct a summer program in the Community Center. A drive is now underway for funds to rebuild.

Olympics...

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Mrs. Neil (Laura) Bergt is chairman again, assisted by Al Adams. Daphne Gustafson, former Olympics queen, is queen chairman. Ron Senungetuk and Betty Clark are doing the booklet and Dorothy Perdue is in charge of tickets.

The record profit from last year's event is being used for a \$500 scholarship to be awarded this year. Peter Threestars of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bob Egan of the University of Alaska are cochairmen of the scholarship committee.

Some new games will be added and the committee is considering speeding up the show by staging two events at once.

Some boasting has come from the Canadian Eskimos that they have the ear weight contest all sewed up.

"In fact, they say they can carry a five gallon can of water," noted Mrs. Bergt. "And we certainly plan to have one on had for them to demonstrate."

Food, lodging and ground transportation will be provided for participants again this year. For information on the event or the scholarship to be awarded, contact the Tundra Times, Box 1287, Fairbanks, 99707.

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