

Let Us Spray

The radio news item which mentioned that several people in Whitehorse had registered complaints about being kept awake by the noise of aerial spraying planes, came as a shock to us. Then we realized that there are probably many people now living in Whitehorse who never experienced summers here before the days of spraying. In a word, they were awful.

Picture if you can, warm sunny summer days that invited you to sit out on a hillside or on the riverbank...and of mosquitoes so thick that you were driven indoors. There was little pleasure in taking a walk in the evenings because you were slapping at the insects all the time and scratching when you got home.

It was toughest on the kids. After long winter months of being cramped up in small quarters because it was too cold to play outdoors, they found that their summers were ruined by mosquitoes. We've seen mere babies with their faces so swollen by bites that they could scarcely see. Some of them got infection. And it didn't cease with the end of the mosquito season because then came the black flies and no-see-ums which were even worse.

We've known carpenters who had to wait until there was a strong wind to blow away mosquitoes so that they could carry on with their house-building. Otherwise their hands became so puffed with bites that they couldn't hold their hammers.

The army started the spraying program in the Whitehorse area. After they left there was one summer when no spraying was done, and the return of the insect pests was so fast and furious that the territorial government started its own program at the insistence of the public. Now almost every community in the Yukon will benefit.

As far as we are concerned the roar of those planes laying down their spray is music to our ears. It seems a small price to pay for an enjoyable summer.

By the way. How come Old Crow doesn't come under the program?