

Tundra Times

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Inupiat Paitot People's Heritage

Den Nena Henash Our Land Speaks

Unanguq Tunuktauq The Aleuts Speak



Tlingit
Ut kah neek Informing and Reporting

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CLAIMS ACT STYMIES VILLAGE

Anaktuvuk Pass Folks Hear Translated Law But Came Up Puzzled

By LAEL MORGAN

Early last month the citizens of Anaktuvuk Pass gathered to hear their land claims settlement with the U.S. Government explained in Eskimo.

"The Arctic Slope will get five million acres, \$32 million and we have only five to seven per cent of the population," Riley Sikvayugak, a council member, reported.

"Can we claim a township down by the oil shale?" someone asked.

"Yes, but we don't get subsurface rights."

"Pet. 4. That's the government."

"Kind of hard to get at," Sikvayugak smiled.

"But where were our fathers before the government came in?" demanded Jack Ahgook.

"There!"

For as long as anyone in the village can remember, their fathers and forefathers considered the whole North Slope theirs. They roamed at will, following the caribou, and the only boundaries they knew were sea and sky.

Now they must talk in terms of little townships, surface and subsurface rights. It is no easy thing to accept, but those who opposed the settlement are quiet now. The whole village seems anxious to do their best by the new rules.

THE LAST OF THE INDEPENDENTS

The Anaktuvuk Eskimos were the last of the independents who kept their nomadic lifestyle long after other Eskimos adopted whiteman's ways and settled down.

In the late '40s, Sig Wien picked the Pass as a good landing spot to supply Dr. Laurence Irving who was studying bird migration in the area with Simon Paneak, a local Eskimo.

Later traders encouraged settlement of Natives who sometimes camped nearby. A post office was established in the '50s and finally, in 1961, the state built a school.

Most of the adults in the area had had no chance to attend school and didn't learn English until late in life. They knew education was important but it was to cost them more than the average citizen.

Before the school, whole families camped in the winter, moving with the game and living in snug tents lined with caribou fur. Now it is not possible to take youngsters out of school to hunt and families must stay to take care of them.

SETTLEMENT CAUSES PROBLEMS

The game soon learned to detour the village and good hunting is now 40 to 60 miles off. It costs about \$8 (plus oil and

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ANAKTUVUK PASS AT 40° BELOW—Cold winds blow drifting snow to veil the mountains of the Brooks Range but the traditional sod huts

of Anaktuvuk Pass stay snug and warm. Winds and low temperatures brought the chill factor there to -110° at least twice this February.

—Photo by LAEL MORGAN

Don Wright Reelected Secretary-Treasurer of NAME

Don R. Wright of Anchorage, Alaska, was reelected Secretary-Treasurer of the Native American Merchandising Enterprises, Inc., (NAME, INC.) at the annual meeting of the board of directors held at Denver, Colorado, last week.

NAME, INC. is a non-profit corporation funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and is totally Indian controlled.

It is dedicated to preserving Native American (Indian and Alaska Native) arts and crafts

and traditions through a national and international marketing concept.

Wright, in addition to his extensive accomplishments as President of the Alaska Federa-

tion of Natives has also been active in high levels of American Indian affairs.

He now serves as Area Vice President for the National Con-

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Dingell Bill Ires AFN Officials— Fish and Wildlife Subcommittee Measure Disturbing

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Legislation to withdraw 67 million acres of Alaskan land for wildlife refuges was introduced in Congress this week by Rep. John Dingell chairman of the Fish and Wildlife Subcommittee of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, and nine other representatives.

The bill, HR 13416, is in great conflict with selections intended by Alaskan Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts under the recent land claims settlement according to Don Wright, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

"We settled on 40 million acres less than three months ago. If HR 13416 is passed, many of our villages will be limited to single township selections. Our settlement would be substantially diminished," Wright said in a statement issued by AFN today.

"The Alaska Natives took a massive loss of historically occupied lands in December. Now the congressman from Michigan would like the rest of our land."

"Congressmen Dingell (Mich.), Forsythe (N.J.), Downing (Va.), Stubblefield (Calif.), Jones (N.C.), Biagge (N.Y.), Griffin

(Miss), Anderson (Calif.), Tierman (R.I.), and Conte (Mass.) want to make sixty-seven million acres of Eskimo and Indian and Aleut land into national wildlife refuges.

"What refuges will Mr. Dingell create for Alaska Natives after he has stolen our land, we ask the

Congressman? Can the Congressman seriously suggest that Alaska Natives huddle in high rise apartments in one small township, going for Sunday strolls through the surrounding zoo. If he were not such a distinguished lawmaker, the Federation might be

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Simplified Explanation of Claims Act— ASNA Counsel Stresses Regions Not Population

An easy-to-read explanation of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement has recently been published by the Arctic Slope Native Assn. for its villages.

The work, submitted by Lisle R. Guernsey, James F. Wickwire (of Davis, Wright, Todd, Riese and Jones) and Frederick Paul, reviews the new legislation with emphasis on points that particularly concern their region.

"The Arctic Slope Native Assn., composed of relatively few villages and only 5-7 percent of Alaska's Natives, but with one of the largest and most valuable land claims, fought long and

hard for the basic principle that there must be a direct relation between what is taken in the settlement and what is received in exchange," according to this report.

In other words, this is a land claims settlement and not anti-poverty or social legislation.

"ASNA's position was that the land and money should be distributed among the various Native regions on the basis of each region's proportionate size not on the basis of population. For example, the Arctic Slope region with its 56.5 million acres represents about 16 percent of

the total land mass of Alaska.

"Therefore, under the ASNA theory, the Arctic Slope Eskimos should have received about 16 percent of the settlement's land and money. Congress was unwilling to adopt ASNA's position with respect to the cash proceeds of the settlement, but did substantially adopt ASNA's position with respect to the land to be retained by Alaska's Natives."

After initial land selection around villages, the bill requires each regional corporation to give additional village acreage among

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Longley of Nome

Appointed Head of Enrollment Office

ANCHORAGE — Gary T. Longley, Sr., an Eskimo from Nome, has been named head of the enrollment office to register Alaska Natives for the land claims settlement.

Longley, 39, is currently an official with the Alaska Area Native Health Service in Anchorage. He is to begin his new job officially on March 19 but is already laying groundwork for his assignment.

He won the appointment over 40 applicants and is well qualified for the job according to Morris Thompson, state director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

A federal government employee in Alaska for over 16 years, Longley has traveled the bush extensively and worked at the administrative level in rural Alaska.