

Arrival of North Star III Is Major Event in the Arctic

The North Star III, Bureau of Indian Affairs' 10,000-ton Victory vessel that supplies the remote villages and all government installations in Alaska, has just finished unloading thousands of tons of freight at Barrow.

The portion of the cargo that most excited the folks at the 'Top o' the World' Eskimo settlement was the building material for 36 new homes and some additional material for enlarging six others.

Through loans arranged by the Fairbanks office of the Farmers Home Administration, "Barrow is embarking on its own housing program and the feverish activity of the village builders to complete framing and enclosing the new homes before cold weather sets in, makes the village a busy place," said Hugh Nicholls speaking for the village.

According to Owen Morken, BIA Area Director in Alaska, and his wife Mona, the North Star's arrival at villages along the Arctic coast is a major event — an exciting time and a busy period of heavy labor unloading tons upon tons of supplies for the coming winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Morken had boarded the ship at Kotzebue to travel to Barrow.

"We anchored at Pt. Hope but a heavy wind didn't allow unloading there—too rough," said the couple. "We did want to see the village and the people there so much."

When the wind failed to subside, Capt. Hammond of the North Star decided to weigh anchor and head for Barrow.

"It was the most wonderful experience for us meeting those people up there in Barrow," said Mona Morken.

The couple said that once the ship anchored, lightering started and went on 24 hours a day.

"They unloaded everything—tons of lumber, 50-foot sections of pipeline that will be connected for emergency alternate line in case something happens to the present gas line that is serving the village," said Morken.

"And that Moe—what a wonderful character he is!" said Mona Morken. "As we were going ashore, there were

about 600 children waiting for him. And you know what he did? He shot some firecrackers and rockets into the air to announce his arrival."

Cecil (Moe) Cole is the first officer of the North Star III. Moe is a huge man who weighs somewhere close to 250 pounds and he has become the idol of every Eskimo child all along the Arctic coast.

The children of the Arctic anxiously await his arrival every fall. When he gets ashore, he is greeted with shouts of glee from the children. He brings with him boxes of candy, gum, balloons and other goodies which he passes out to the swarm of tots around him.

He gathers these treats months before the trip to the Arctic. He began doing this many years in the past and the children who greeted him then have children of their own now and these youngsters are shouting, "Hi, Moe! Hey, Moe! Here I am, Moe!" as did their parents years ago.

Indeed "Moe" Cole has made the yearly arrival of the North Star one of the most looked-forward-to events of the year in the Arctic.