


Wah-Shee suspended by his board

By LOIS KEATING
INUVIK, N.W.T.—January 6, 1976, one of the biggest things that has affected the north



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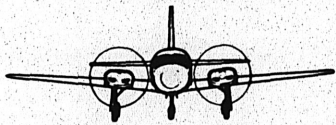
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recently was the six-weeks-long mail strike, from October 21st to December 3rd. This strike, followed by the Christmas rush, has meant that mail service throughout the country, and especially in the north, has been extraordinarily slow, and it will still be a while until it gets back to normal.

Many people, especially those in the isolated settlements, were unable to order or receive items in time for Christmas. I guess the stores in Inuvik must have had an exceptionally good season, since it was so hard to obtain anything from outside.

Also, many people from the settlements made special trips in to Inuvik for shopping. Mail is still slow, and newspapers and magazines published during the strike period, are still dribbling in each day.

C.O.P.E. (Committee for Original Peoples' Entitlement) is now publishing a magazine called "Inuvialuit". The first issue came out in October, and the second issue, delayed by the postal strike, is due to arrive any day now, while the third issue is almost ready to go to press.

An item of major importance is that at the beginning of

November, James Wah-Shee was suspended by the board of directors as president of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories.

All of his powers (and the office keys) were taken away from him, and the directors said that the specific reasons for his suspension would be made available at the Brotherhood Assembly to be held the first week of December.

Tension mounted throughout the area during the month following the suspension, with various people taking stands pro and con. At the Assembly, which was held at Fort Rae, Wah-Shee's home area, the directors gave reasons, personal and political, as to why they felt Wah-Shee should be removed permanently from office.

In contrast, many people also spoke in his behalf, especially most of the older chiefs. However, toward the end of the week, Wah-Shee submitted his resignation. The delegates voted, and the resignation was accepted 26-17.

This means that for the time being the Brotherhood is without a leader as, according to the constitution, a new president cannot be elected until the next assembly, which is scheduled for May. Until that time the Brotherhood will be controlled by the Board, with the Yellowknife office under the direction of vice-president Richard Nerysoo.

Feelings are still running very strong, and many of the people hope to be able to get Wah-Shee back in again in May. In the meantime, the Brotherhood membership is very much split,

at a crucial time in the land claims proceedings.

Such a split could not have come at a more unopportune time for the people, who have long spoken of unity and the importance of speaking with one voice.

In late October ITC (Inuit Tapirisat) held a land claims meeting at Pond Inlet in the eastern arctic. Three delegates from each Inuit community were asked to attend. The ITC land claims proposal is now being revised and will be presented to the government and made public on February 5th.

In late October, Edith Kaye, wife of former long-time chief Johnny Kaye of Fort McPherson, passed away. And in mid-November, another old-time, Amos Tumma of Inuvik passed away. Amos was born in Alaska and was well known to many people in the Point Barrow and Kaktovik area.

That same week, a tragedy occurred in Tuktoyaktuk, when Richard Rufus, 20-year-old son of Peter and Agnes Rufus, became lost on a hunting expedition. A period of high winds and storms hampered the search, and it was almost a week before his frozen body was found a short distance from his skidoo, 30 miles from Tuk.

The ice roads on the river channels were opened up before Christmas this year, and people have been constantly going back and forth between Aklavik, Tuk and Inuvik. Also, there is now a regular bus service on the Dempster Highway from Inuvik to Arctic Red River and Fort McPherson.

The Tuk people and Sachs Harbour people have gotten a lot of caribou this year—and also those across the mountains in Old Crow—but so far Aklavik and Fort McPherson are short of meat, although they have plenty of fish.

On December 30th Rev. Doug Dittich and his wife Jean and their three daughters left Inuvik after 7 1/2 years to go to Kamloops, B.C., where Doug will again be actively involved in parish ministry.

Over the past two years, he has been on a leave of absence to work as Northern Games Coordinator and to do other community work in Inuvik. He was especially involved in the planning of the new Friendship Center, which hopefully will be completed late this year. Doug has worked with Northern Games since its beginning in 1970, and is known to many Alaskans.

The days are beginning to lengthen, and today marks the return of the sun to the Inuvik area.

How to save Fuel out in Rural areas

People who live in rural Alaska have unique problems when it comes to conserving fuel. The methods appropriate for the residents of Chigago just won't work for the villages of Alaska. With this in mind the Alaska Energy Office offers the following conservation suggestions that will save energy and money, using the resources usually available.

These measures can be followed if a village's fuel supply is late in arriving, or if a supply is running low for some reason, or if a rural Alaskan would just like to save some of his energy dollars. In many villages where the cost of fuel is \$1.50, \$2.00 and up per gallon, the savings from conserving fuel can be substantial.

Following these conservation tips can save 20% of your heating bill, or more, depending on the weather factors and home construction:

You can save a lot of heat by banking or skirting your house by enclosing the open space between your house and the ground. Blocks of tundra are a very good insulator. Stack them up around your house so cold air will not seep up through your floors.

Sacks filled with dirt will also help, and then nailing tar paper or plastic to the bottom of your house, draping it to the ground and holding it down with rocks, bricks or snow. Snow and ice can help with insulation.

Shovel snow over the sacks or tar paper to fill in air spaces and it will help keep heat in and cold winds out. However you can, block off that open space under your homes and the fuel savings will mount up fast.

Close off any rooms that are not absolutely needed. To close off rooms or extra outside doors, fill cracks around edge of doors with folded newspapers or cloth. Tack on plastic screen if you have any visqueen or similar material.

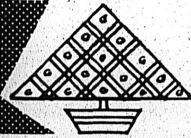
Windows cause a major loss of heat. Extra windows should be blocked off with wood over newspapers or cloth.

Another way to close off windows is to glue four layers of cardboard together and place it over the window from the inside, making it large enough to be tacked to the window frame. Put wadded up newspapers between the window and the cardboard, then glue aluminum foil on the side facing the inside of your room, with the shiny side facing the room.

(Continued on Page 11)

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