

Whaling, Subsistence and Energy

*An Open Letter to the National Marine Fisheries Service,
NOAA, on the Implementation of Bowhead Whale Rules.*

I have lived in Northwest Alaska for over 50 years. In those 50 years of vast technological and industrial development in these United States we have yet to see an industrial complex development in this region. The land is still sparsely populated and the land has continued to support our subsistence lifestyle.

In NOAA's proposed rule limiting Eskimos to 18 whales landed or 26 struts, I hope the administration would consider the efficient use of energy and regional resources of the Eskimos compared to lower 48 states and the nations representing Whaling Commission.

The power sources of energy used and raw materials needed to maintain the very high level of the standard of living in the lower 48 states is enormous. If we reduce all forms of energy and raw materials used to be equivalent weight of coal burned the figures would measure wide comparative use of energy:

Using energy consumption as figures, the lower 48 states uses 20,000 pounds per capita compared to Eskimos' use of 500 pounds. This is not using raw materials because if we used the raw materials the margin would widen another 2.5 times.

While you and Whaling Commission continue to use enormous energy to enjoy good life, we are a complete loss to the logic and reasoning of continuing to penalize the Eskimos who are still using energy resources four times more efficiently than the industrial world.

Why are the perceived diplomatic needs of the United States more important than our nutritional needs. I am asking this question because the United States is one of the original signatories of the 50 nations that signed the United Nations Charter whose Preamble - Declaration of Human Rights reads in part:

"Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Whereas the people of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by rule of law."

What recourse do we have left when these United Nations signatories turn our way of life. It is really a tyranny and oppression that we have to face up to. Are we not a member of human families that are to enjoy their cultural identity and cultural freedom and meet the basic nutritional needs?

Sincerely yours,
MAUNELUK ASSOCIATION
Dennis J. Tiepelman, President
/s/Tommy M. Ongtooguk
Tommy M. Ongtooguk
Consumer Education Specialist