



NOME SEA MAMMAL HEARINGS

Eskimos Express Deep Concern for Mammals As Food, Crafts Sources

By LAEL MORGAN



LISTENING AND WAITING — Emma Willoya, waits between two friends for her turn to testify at the Congressional hearing in Nome on the Sea Mammal Protection Act. "Sharing and help-

ing each other," that's how the Eskimos have survived, she told the committee. Although blind, she walked straight and tall and she proved an articulate witness. —LAEL MORGAN Photo

NOME — Eskimo and Indian hunters laid aside their rifles and harpoons this week to travel hundreds of miles to testify at hearings held by the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee on the Sea Mammal Protection Act.

The legislation, which has already passed the House, would put a five year moratorium on the taking of all sea animals. An exception is made for subsistence hunting by Alaskan Natives but, as the bill currently stands, there could be no taking of an endangered species and no selling of products gained through the taking of any sea mammals.

Sen. Ted Stevens, who is ranking Republican on the Commerce subcommittee considering the bill, said it was not usual to hold local hearings while Congress was in session but that there was a need to learn what impact this act would have on Alaskans.

With Sen. Mike Gravel of Alaska also participating, he chaired hearings in Nome, Bethel and Juneau which attracted nearly 200 witnesses.

"This conference, whatever you call it, is something I don't know too well about," began

Edwin Tunguk 80, of Golovin, who like many Eskimo representatives had to struggle with English translation.

"I deeply concerned when they talk about seals. I know that much whiteman not a fool. He got big head. Someone outside in United States want to cut this seal hunting off. They must have seen something I haven't."

"Now we've got to have cash," explained Thomas Menadelook of Teller, who apologized because he had a language barrier.

"In the old days it was something known as trade. The only item we could get any cash income is sea mammal itself.

"How will we survive if it stops. You might just let my people die. I am an ivory carver like many people in my area. I am proud to say that I could supply my family. I have a family of five. I don't have to depend on welfare and I'm proud of it. I don't believe in welfare."

Marge Seeganna, Arctic Native Brotherhood, testified that her husband had a boat which required four walrus skins to cover and their oldest son needed four or five big oosgrook for his craft.

"I don't think that we have a substitute for hunting like Native seal boots for going on sea. Our greens can last and last in seal oil. We don't have

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State Cries 'Wolf' But Hutchinson Gets Acquitted

By JACQUELINE GLASGOW
Staff Writer

The state of Alaska brought charges last week against William Hutchinson, formerly of Fairbanks and now manager of the airport in Bettles and maintenance supervisor in eight other villages.

Mr. Hutchinson was charged with hunting wolves without an aerial permit and failure to seal wolf hides on demand when ordered to do so by State Trooper Maurice Christie of Bettles.

The six-man jury, composed of three men and three women, found Hutchinson not guilty on both counts.

The four-day trial brought a raft of witnesses in from the bush to testify on the charges.

It was alleged by the defense that Mr. Hutchinson was being harassed by the Fish and Game Department, and by witnesses that they had heard Fish and Game were "out to get him."

While the jury was out in deliberation, State Troopers anticipating a guilty verdict impounded Mr. Hutchinson's airplane on the charge that it had been used in illegal aerial hunting. They released the plane the following day.

On the night he was asked to tender the wolf hides for sealing, Mr. Hutchinson and other witnesses testified he was engaged in a rescue operation for two hunters whose plane had gone down in an adjoining area, Dan Saylor of the Weather Service and Allen McKibben.

McKibben was reported to have very little survival gear. Considered by many people to

be an expert pilot, Hutchinson flew out and rescued the two men, after being requested to help in the search by Mrs. McKibben.

McKibben then turned state's

witness, testifying that Hutchinson asked he and Saylor to claim the two wolves tied to the wing seats when the plane returned to Bettles. McKibben stated

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Conservationists Back Natives—3 Conservation Groups Strongly Back Natives

NOME — Alaska spokesmen for three conservation organizations testified strongly in behalf of the continued use by Alaskan Natives of ocean mammals at the hearing in Nome, held Thursday, May 11, conducted for the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee by Senators Mike Gravel and Ted Stevens.

The spokesmen endorsed exceptions for the marine mammals legislation now in the Senate Commerce Committee which would allow continued subsistence hunting of ocean mammals and the use of their parts for continued arts and

crafts within Native cottage industries.

Arthur Davidson, Anchorage, Alaska Representative for Friends of the Earth, a national conservation organization told the hearing that Alaskan Natives have always lived "in balance" with their environment and that Friends of the Earth has realized such and would work to support legislation which would reflect this and which would allow continued Native uses of marine mammals.

Ernest Mueller, Fairbanks, President of the state-wide, 900-member Alaska Conservation

Society told the hearing that, while the Society "strongly supports the protection of marine mammals," it does so on the basis of management of each species rather than under blanket regulation of all marine mammals such as that proposed under pending legislation.

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Editorial Comment—

Is Bowhead Whale an Endangered Specie?

The Eskimos of the Arctic may become victims of genocide if the great bowhead whale is classified an endangered specie. This classification, if allowed, could be included in the sea mammal bill in Congress that would impose a 15-year moratorium on sea mammals. If the bill passes the Senate, and becomes law, the whaling communities of Arctic Alaska would be greatly endangered.

To the Eskimos of Point Hope, Barrow, Wainwright, St. Lawrence Island and Kivalina, the bowhead whale is the mammoth creature around which rich cultures were intricately established through the centuries in the past, especially at the two major whaling communities of Point

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Jimmy Finds 'Cuba' Is Wrong Word

Jimmy Huntington, Native leader from Galena, who likes a good joke as well as the next guy, found out that the Federal Aviation Administration has little sense of humor when the word Cuba pops up from a passenger seat.

Kidding around with the stewardess of a Wien Consolidated Airlines, Flight 52, from Galena to Fairbanks on May 11, Jimmy casually said: "I have just been reading U.S. News and World Report: I wonder if this

old plane could go to Cuba."

Apparently an FAA man on board took the remark quite seriously. Passengers were removed from the plane and after some awkward standing around, a state trooper arrived.

He happened to know Jimmy Huntington very well, and looking a bit sheepish, he said, "Jim, I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to search you."

It was quickly determined that Flight 52 was not going to

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