

Enrollment Begins in Alaska ...

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pare within two years from the date of the enactment of this Act, a roll of Natives who were born on or before, and who are living on, the date of the enactment of this Act."

A Native is defined as a citizen of the United States of one-fourth or more Alaskan Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut blood, or combination thereof. The term includes any Native as so defined either or both of whose adoptive parents may not be Natives.

In the absence of proof of blood degree, it also includes anyone who is regarded and accepted as an Alaskan Native by the village or group of which he claims to be a member and whose mother or father was regarded as a Native by the village or group.

Out of the technical requirements of the Act came the practical working out of the enrollment process. Very simply put, it meant that all possibly eligible Alaskan Natives had to be counted and listed according to village, group, and region. The BIA calls this Enumeration.

"Enumerate," according to Webster, "is to count, to name one by one." This job of one by one counting was assigned by the BIA to the twelve Regional Native Associations.

Each region made a separate contract with the Department of the Interior for funds to carry out the work, based on area, number of villages, accessibility, etc.

One or more enumerators will be sent to each and every village in Alaska. Their job is to assist the village Natives in filling out the necessary forms. In the smaller villages, the enumerator may go from house to house.

In the larger towns and cities, an enrollment center will be set up. The enumerator will be able to answer any questions about enrollment procedures or will refer them to the regional enrollment office for clarification.

It is not the job of the enumerator to decide who is and who is not a Native under the terms of the Act. He may not refuse an application to anyone claiming to be a Native. However, the members of a village may question a person's eligibil-

ity and the final determination will be made by the Coordinating Office in Anchorage.

The application form for enrollment has spaces for all manner of data: name, address, sex, birthdate and birth place, degree of Native blood, past addresses, names of parents, social security number, etc. Most of the answers are facts.

Somewhat misleading then is space No. 16, "Your Permanent Residence as of April 1, 1970," since the term "permanent residence" has some ambiguity under the rules and regulations for enrollment, and the answer can reflect a certain element of choice by the applicant.

Because the process of enrollment assigns a Native specifically to a village and a region as of this date, April 1, 1970, this is perhaps the single most important question on the entire form.

By his answer, the applicant denotes not only his place of residence but his membership in two corporations, village and regional, and becomes a stockholder in valuable land assets and other shared resources.

"Permanent residence" is defined officially as "the place of domicile on April 1, 1970, which is the location of the permanent place of abode intended by the applicant to be his actual home. It is the center of the Native family life of the applicant to which he has the intent to return when absent from that place."

"A region or village may be the permanent residence of an applicant on April 1, 1970, even though he was not actually living there on that date, if he has continued to intend that place to be his home."

For example, a family who moved from the village of Minto to Fairbanks twenty years ago can still elect to be enrolled in Minto by stating that they consider it to be their "permanent" home.

An out-of-state Native has several options. He may elect as his "permanent residence": the region where he lived on April 1, 1970, or the region where he resided for an aggregate of ten years, or the region where he was born, or the region from which an ancestor came, or en-

rollment in a proposed 13th region for permanent non-residents of Alaska.

This last option seems highly unlikely as such a region, if established, would have no land assets in comparison with the present twelve established regions.

The Native Claims Settlement Act created Native-owned billion dollar corporations owning millions of acres of land. The enrollment process creates the stockholders of those corporations.

Since every region has a certain number of variables, the new emerging Native corporations may find that the distribution of wealth is not precisely equal, and the choice of the village or region one elects to call his "permanent residence" may be not so much a sentimental choice as one of economic advantage.

Enumerators from 38 villages attended a typical three-day training session in Fairbanks on March 29, 30, and 31, conducted by the Tanana Chiefs and the BIA. Janet Parks, head of tribal operations for the BIA in Washington, D.C. worked with Alaska BIA staff members, Johnnie Nusunginya, Pearl Charlie, and Regional Coordinator, Lucy Carlo.

The first day of training brought varying comments from the future enumerators. Some said, "It's like going through the first grade again," while others seemed bewildered by the complexity of forms and procedures.

Questions were forthcoming: "How do you enroll a man's common law wife?", "If a child is adopted and the parentage is unknown, how do you determine the degree of Native blood?", "What if a man is out on a trapline when you're enrolling the village?", "What if a child under 18 is married and not living with his parents?"

All the questions were answered in time and the trainees took turns conducting interviews with a fictitious family and filling out sample forms.

They heard a taped talk by Morris Thompson of the BIA. They watched video tapes on enrollment procedures and were taped in turn by the local television station. By the end of three days they were more confident and ready to return to the villages and begin work.

Lucy Carlo stressed the importance of the time limit, two weeks to complete the village enrollment in the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

There were comments from several of the enumerators about the time allotment. "We need more time to train and more time to enroll," one spokesman said. "Three days is kind of crowded. I am not speaking for myself but for my people. My people are worth more than that, more than two weeks."

Another man complained directly to Janet Parks. "In my village," he said, "often the mail takes ten days to get out. How do I complete enrollment in two weeks? That is white man's time. A man from our village may be out on a trapline for weeks, even months."

Janet Parks explained that a member of the man's family, or his next friend, or the village enumerator himself could sponsor the man, filling out a form for him in his absence.

This was true for anyone living "outside", away at school, in a hospital, or a mental institution. The enumerator, she explained, had only to count those actually present in the village or known to be away, and other names could be sent in later.

The expected date for getting

Delay ...

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time is very important." Ferguson said that the first small appropriation of \$12.5 million for fiscal 1972 is probably most important "more important per dollar than the later authorizations because that's the planning money" he said.

"Everything will depend on how the planning money is used. If the planning money is not used very well maybe they won't get ten per cent, maybe they'll get eight per cent.

"But if they do well, maybe ten per cent won't be a conservative estimate at all. Maybe they can invest at 12 to 16 per cent" he said.

Ferguson reiterated the warning of regional native leaders that there are a lot of people trying to divide the regions - trying to make money from big expensive individual contracts with the regions.

In addition to business hoping to profit from the land claims, the Native corporations are battling against inflation which will cut down the value of the money they receive. No money can be used until enrollment is completed so there will be no real investment for 18 months or so.

"That 18 months ought to be used to figure out a good investment strategy. They ought to do it in a way that will protect them from the people who are pushing everything from down in the lower 48," he said.

all the information back in from the villages throughout the state is May 8, 1972. "But that is only a target date," Miss Parks stated. It is anticipated that the latest applications will come from the lower 48 and overseas.

In order to allow for appeals and final preparation within the two year time limit set by Congress, the Secretary of the Interior has fixed March 30, 1973, as the final deadline for the filing of enrollment applications.

The original plan hoped to have the enumerators trained and out in the villages several weeks earlier than is being realized. The general feeling was to try to complete the roll in the outlying villages before the spring break-up, which could cause even further delay.

An undertaking of this scope was bound to have its complications. The mere processing of so much data is a complex operation. Nevertheless, the enrollment process, as it begins now to take shape, is, in the words of Morris Thompson, Area Director for the BIA, "the first step to make the Native Claims Settlement Act a reality."

In addressing the enumerators Mr. Thompson said, "This reality will give the Native people of Alaska an opportunity to build and create on their own, with their own leadership, in their own way and time. And hopefully from this will come improvements in job opportunities, education, and the general health and welfare of all Alaskans, especially those who need it most, the people of village Alaska."

Barrow Reaction ...

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place but if you can't lick um, you've got to join um," he said. "I'm even considering running for borough chairman."

Nusunginya points out that his area never received a single benefit from the \$900,000,000 oil lease sale of Slope land by the state and that there is no reason to believe that state control of the Slope now would produce any better results for his people.

"It's our country and it's being taken over by Texans," he complains.

Jack Chenoweth, city manager of Barrow, has considered sending plane loads of Barrow women for a sit-in demonstration at the "Arco-Humble Hilton" in Anchorage or perhaps staging a Mobil credit card burning.

"The only problem is we don't use Mobil credit cards up here," he grinned.

In a more serious vein, he's considering a "Tennessee Plan" for Slope residents much like Alaska used to gain statehood when the federal government refused to grant it.

"The Attorney General has already set Feb. 23 as the borough election date and I think we should go ahead and hold the election, whether or not the court finds it's valid. That would put us ahead when we

eventually win the suit." The city manager is a graduate of Harvard Law School and an able researcher. On his desk he has the records of all Alaskan testimony in behalf of statehood and he's discovered no end of useful material presented by people who now oppose creation of the North Slope Borough.

Classic is a quote one Gov. William Egan made before the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs in 1957.

"I think the feeling among many people of Alaska is, after you reach the time when a majority of the people are certain they are ready to assume the responsibilities, and can assume them, and then when the status is still denied the area, it becomes in their minds something that is undemocratic. You can't - it is hard to put in words just what is actually in the hearts of the people," Egan said.

Joe Uppikson puts it simply. "A first class borough would bring government closer to the people than it would be run thousands of miles away in Juneau."

"Remember back in 1959, '66 - when Fairbanks and Anchorage and Kenai were ripping off huge sums of money on oil and gas? Why, all of a sudden, change the laws now?" Chenoweth concluded.

Burglin Interview ...

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20 billion barrels.

This makes it one of the fifth largest oil fields in the entire world, including the rich Middle East fields. For an example, Prudhoe Bay has twice the amount of oil as all of the fields in Canada.

Even the people in Alaska, he felt, were not entirely aware yet of the complete implications of this much wealth and the changes it is destined to bring to the state's economy.

With every conceivable kind of interest group scrambling for a piece of this new wealth, Mr. Burglin commented that "Alaska is like a beached whale, and everyone is taking a bite out of it."

Having made his views known at the outset of the public proposals for the formation of the North Slope Borough, Mr. Burglin was invited by the oil companies to join suit with them, which he did.

When asked if he thought the non-Native, business community of Alaska and the Natives could sit down together and exchange ideas toward mutual interests, he said, "Certainly, but not on the North Slope issue."

He discussed the immediate influx of outside "experts" following the oil discoveries, and cautioned the Natives against the

hiring of people without years of experience in Alaskan affairs.

"Unless you have lived here," he pointed out, "you can't imagine what a temperature of -70° is like, or a chill factor of -100° or that you could freeze in the distance it takes to walk from here to there," he said, indicating the space across his office.

Alaska, he felt, had its own special characteristics and problems, which could best be worked out by the people who live here.

When asked, if he were an Arctic Slope Native, would he not have acted to control the Prudhoe Bay area, he thought carefully for a minute and then said firmly,

"No. I would not want that much responsibility."

The amount of wealth of Prudhoe Bay, he felt, would generate an equally vast amount of responsible management. He is convinced that this is best done at the level of State government rather than at the borough level.

"Wealth and power," said Mr. Burglin, "bring obligations with it. I am not sure the Alaskan Native is aware of these obligations, not just to his own peoples, but to all the peoples of the state."



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