

# FLOOD RAVAGES SMALL TOWN OF NENANA

## Subcommittee Visits Flood Ravaged Nenana

By GEORGE SUNDBORG  
NENANA, ALASKA, Sept. 1—A special 4-man Subcommittee of the House Public Works Committee visited this flood damaged town at the confluence of the Tanana and Nenana rivers today to gain information which will enable the Congress to take steps necessary to avoid flood disasters in the area in the future.

The subcommittee, headed by Rep. Jim Wright (D-Tex.) were dispatched to Alaska by Rep. George H. Fallon (D-Md.), chairman of the parent committee, at the request of Senator Ernest Gruening.

Senator Gruening, who has been in Alaska visiting flood ravaged areas for the past ten days, surveyed the situation in Nenana last Sunday.

Other Congressmen accompanying Rep. Wright, who is chairman of the Permanent Watershed Development Subcommittee of the Committee on Public Works, were Don Clausen (R-Cal.), M. G. (Gene) Snyder (R-Ky.), and Jack H. McDonald (R-Mich.).

Traveling through Alaska with them were public works staff committee members, Robert F. Spence and Clifton W. Enfield; Lt. Col. Lewis A. Pick, Jr., office of the chief of engineers; Lt. Col. Michael Kolvasky, U.S. Army escort officer; Robert Y. Phillips, director, Emergency Operations Office, Office of Emergency Planning, Executive Office of the President.

Robert W. Maffin, general deputy Renewal Assistance Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Sylvester Ridge, chief, Defense Plans and Operations Division, Bureau of Public Roads, Department of Transportation; and Edward J. Gully, deputy national director, Disaster Services, American Red Cross.

Yesterday the group visited Fairbanks. Later today they were to rendezvous in Anchorage with Senator Gruening.

Following his Nenana inspection, which he made with Col. Lura E. Hearn, commanding officer of the Clear Ballistic Early Warning Station, Senator Gruening suggested that study be given to the possibility of moving Nenana to a higher location, a suggestion which Col. E. L. Hardin, district engineer, U.S. Army, said



**VISITING BY BOAT**—An elderly Nenana man is visiting a neighbor in his small boat. This was a common mode of transportation even as late as two weeks after the flood. Rampaging Tanana River submerged the community under ten feet of water as it crested. Nenana is working hard to brace for

winter and spurred on by its mayor, Norman Suckling, who said, "The people have been working like dogs. We're going to beat the winter. This town will be back on its feet again."

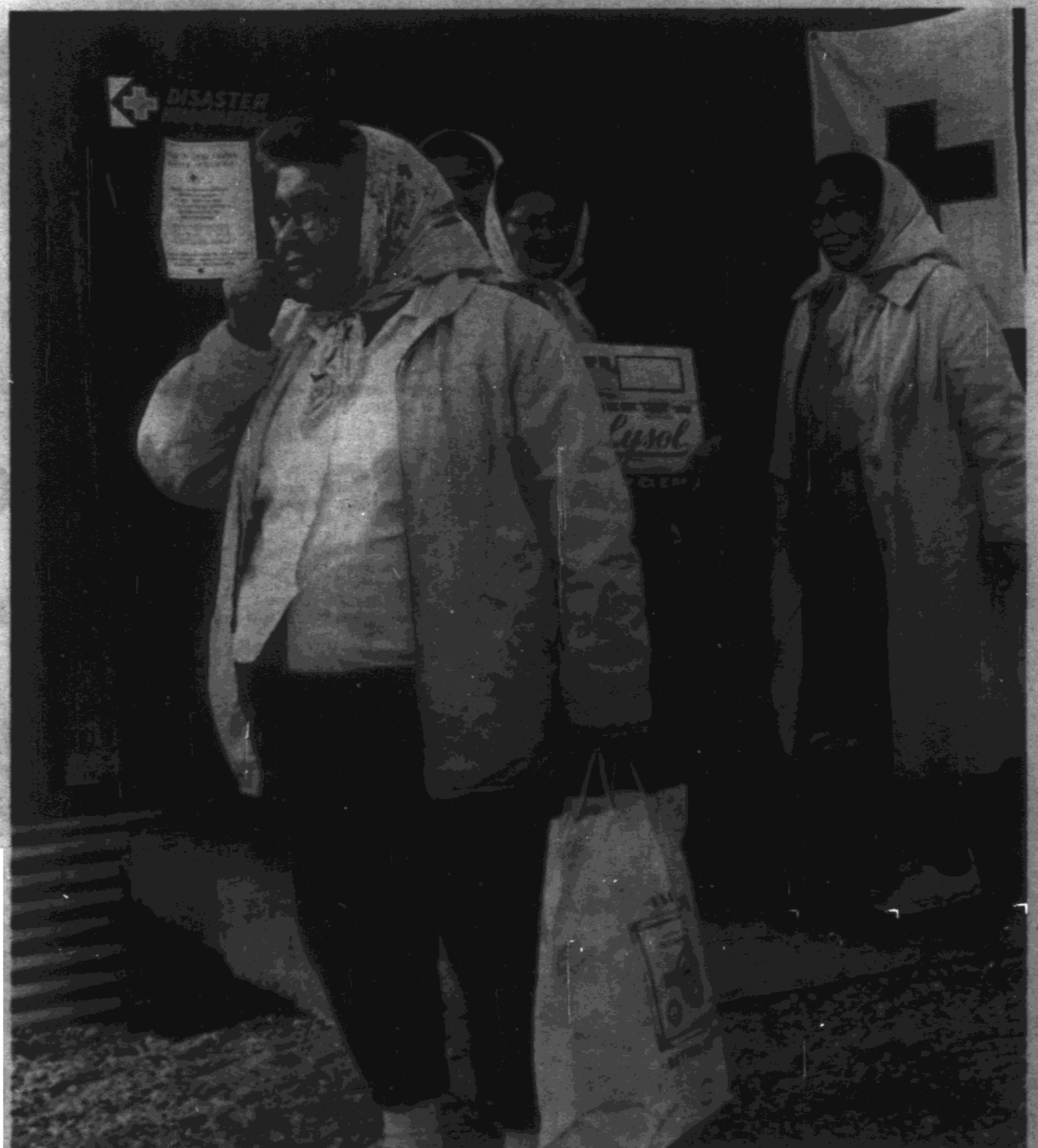
—AMERICAN RED CROSS Photo by MACK SLEE

would be investigated.

Col. Hardin said he was of the tentative opinion, however, that a flood control project which would protect the existing Nenana townsites even from a flood of the unprecedented height of the one which struck the town three weeks ago, could be constructed for about \$1.5 million.

The colonel said that inasmuch as the road bed of the Alaska Railroad, the two large bridges which carry rail and highway traffic across the Tanana River at Nenana, the new state highway, the dock and the airfield must be protected in their existing locations any way, protection for the business and residential community would in effect be furnished at no additional expense.

The big flood of 1967 sent water 38 inches over the Nenana dock which had never been flooded before. Mayor Norman Suckling accompanied Senator Gruening on his tour of the town which was still covered with water in many places.



**EMERGENCY FOOD**—Four Athabascan Indian women of the flooded town of Nenana, 50 miles south of Fairbanks, are receiving emergency food supplies from the disaster headquarters set up by the American Red Cross when the people began to come back to their flood-ravaged homes. Minto village, about 35 miles downriver on the Tanana from Nenana, also suffered

flood damage. Along with Fairbanks, the flooded communities of Nenana and Minto are facing problems that may arise when cold weather sets in in the near future. Work is being rushed to make homes habitable during the freeze in the interior.

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