



LITTLE AND BIG DIOMEDE — The enigmatic Island of Big Diomedé, the possession of the Soviet Union, is some two miles away from the American Island of Little Diomedé, foreground. The International Dateline is between the two islands. Eskimos used to live on the Big Diomedé but they have been relocated to the mainland of Siberia by the Soviet government. The Eskimos of the two islands are blood related but they have not been allowed to fraternize by the Soviets except for occasional visitations on the ice in winter. The men of the Little Diomedé are unloading yearly supplies brought in by the lighters of the U.S.M.S. North Star III. —LAEL MORGAN Photograph

Trapping Cabin on High Peak?—

Mysterious Is. of Big Diomedé

By LAEL MORGAN
Associate Editor for
Alaska Magazine

Despite gale winds and rough seas, the Bureau of Indian Affairs freighter "North Star" managed to land a year's supply of groceries on the isolated Eskimo island of Little Diomedé late last month.

The settlement, which has no landing strip, depends on the supply ship for the bulk of its groceries and shelves in the village store were empty on arrival except for one lonely package of spaghetti.

Cecil W. (Moe) Cole, captain of the "North Star" had been

forced to leave the ship a month earlier to have a finger amputated due to a blood clot, but he rejoined his ship in time to make the ticklish Diomedé delivery.

Besides a year's supply of groceries, Diomedé also received fuel oil for the winter and a pre-fabricated building to serve as a new store. Their old store, built in 1931, was so wind battered villagers had had to wire it down and brace it up; and its days were definitely numbered.

Although the "North Star" serves many villages along the Bering Sea Coast Diomedé is the most isolated. From November to late December or January, seas there are too rough and ice choked for Natives to negotiate in their skin boats and there is not enough ice to sup-

port a plane.

In addition, Diomedé has the added excitement of being our closest neighbor to Russia. The neighboring island of big Diomedé lies only two miles off the American settlement, and yet commerce between the two islands is forbidden.

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The Big Diomede...

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On this voyage of the North Star, the freighter landed in fair weather and unloaded for a day before being chased away by 60 mile-an-hour winds with gusts to 80.

On return in the darkness of early morning, two days later, Capt. Cole sighted a large unidentified ship just off the Russian boundry. The stranger fled and Moe and his crew could only guess at its home port. However Little Diomede residents had

seen a moving flashlight on the island of Big Diomede the night before.

Big Diomede is currently uninhabited except for a small "trapping" cabin on one of its high peaks. Little Diomede residents saw Russian unloading lumber there this summer and expect another trapping cabin will probably be built soon. The first one, on it's windy peak must certainly be an inconvenient distance from the trap line.