

# Smaller Schools... Northway Protests...

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for final debate on nine resolutions accepted by the conference. Almost all had been brought up earlier in the conference, however, and attorneys helped with the wording in several cases.

Delegates passed a motion asking that the next conference be by three days long, and gave informal approval of a plan to hold a meeting in the fall to prepare resolutions for the next legislative session.

The meeting ran into some early problems when only one officer—Ralph Perdue—was able to attend. President John Sackett was in Juneau for the closing of the State Legislature—which also kept the featured speaker, Alaska secretary of state Keith Miller, from attending.

The first subject presented was health problems in the villages. This was presented by Dr. Wherritt of the Native Health Service and Dr. Lauster of the Public Health Service.

Dr. Wherritt stated that the biggest problem was to provide total health service in 200 villages scattered all over Alaska with a limited staff.

At present, his organization can provide an average of two visits a year for a doctor, and three to four visits for a nurse, in each village. Smaller villages get fewer visits, and larger ones get more.

However, people get sick every day of the year. To provide better health services, Dr. Wherritt said that action was being taken in three areas—treatment, prevention, and treatment of chronic conditions.

For treatment, the idea was to provide each village with a radio and 2 health aides. The aide would be able to consult with a doctor on the radio, describing the symptoms, and would follow the treatment prescribed by the doctor.

About \$100,000 has been asked for in next year's Federal budget to start the training program for aides. They will get eight to 12 weeks training at the hospital in Anchorage, followed by one or two weeks practical training at the service area hospitals, before being returned to the villages.

There is no firm plan for salaries for the aides, because the pay for 200 aides, even two hours a day at the lowest Federal level, would be \$1 million a year. Some money may be available for salaries after it is proven that the aides save money by avoiding trips to the hospital for minor illnesses.

One other question was whether the aides should be paid by the Federal Government or by the villages. Payment by the villages was the method advocated, because the aides will represent the villages, not the Federal Government.

However, it was recognized that many villages did not have the resources to pay the aides. One suggestion was that legislation be introduced to supply some money to the villages, so that they could pay the aides.

One other problem was the poor radio communication with some villages. The aides will be given standing instructions for treatments when they can't contact the doctors; this will avoid charges of practicing medicine without a license. The communications problem was also discussed later.

The prevention program involves using the health aides to provide education in the villages, providing immunizations, and arranging extended visits to the villages by experts in various areas of health.

One important consideration was involving the Natives in this prevention campaign. The health committee of the Alaska Feder-

ation of Natives was suggested as a means of providing this involvement.

Dr. Lauster of the Public Health Service spoke on the programs to provide water and waste disposal service in the villages. The program started in 1960, when a law was passed allowing the PHS to participate with Native villages in such projects.

Several projects have been completed, and projects are expected this summer at Tanana, Tanacross, and Tetlin. The requirements are that the villages participate in the construction, and then handle the operation and maintenance of the equipment.

To start a project, the village council submits a project proposal. It is considered, along with other projects, by a review committee. If it is accepted, a priority is assigned.

Next, the project must be included in the Federal Budget. After the money is obtained, the PHS and the village prepare a project summary describing the project and the participation.

A memorandum of understanding is then signed. This is a legal commitment, describing what the PHS and the village will each contribute. The project is then constructed and turned over to the village for operation.

Normally the completed project is entirely in the hands of the villagers, but it may be possible to get Federal funds in case of disasters, such as the fire at the water system at Unalakleet. One factor in getting such funds would be the care given to the facilities—indicating how greatly the village desired project.

Next, Dr. Hartman, acting commissioner of education, gave a report. He stressed the importance of "What do you want for your children" in the plans of his department.

Hartman said that the department was drawing up several alternate plans for regional high schools, and that the Training Corporation of America plan had not been finally accepted. He added that the rural population was undergoing changes, and it was not possible to make firm plans too far into the future.

His own philosophy was that practice, as demonstrated by past experience of the Alaska school system, was a better guide than theory.

On rural high schools, he said he preferred that the students attend smaller high schools, close to home and with a minimum of boarding facilities, up to the tenth grade.

He felt that 150-250 students was the proper size for such schools, although an adequate program up to that level could be given in schools as small as 100 students.

For the 11th and 12th grades, he felt that the students should be given the option of transferring to larger high schools, for more specialized training, or graduate from the smaller schools.

He used auto-mechanic vocational education as an example of a program which would have to be offered in central locations. Also, the central schools would evolve into community colleges if there is such a demand.

He said that steps were already being taken to provide small boarding facilities at Tok and Glenallen in line with the idea of smaller, local high schools for the rural population. Tanana was another example of a town where such schools could be developed.

Asked about school facilities, Dr. Hartman said that a school should have a multi-purpose room, and that it should not be necessary to use makeshift quarters for some classes. However,

ache then; we've had a headache for the past 29 years."

Since 1938 when the first Bureau of Indian Affairs School began in Northway—in the home of Walter Northway—to the present. Albert claims there has never been a student who graduated from the BIA Northway elementary school who has gone on to graduate from high school.

"We've only had about six people from our village to graduate from high school and all of them were able to do so because they were moved to other schools while in the lower grades."

Albert, himself a high school graduate, was sent to special elementary school at Mt. Edgecumbe as a small child.

The school situation at Northway points up the dual education system existing in the state today. The BIA village school with one classroom 19 by 25 feet in size has about 40 students; the state school at the FAA two miles from the village has about 50 students.

The BIA school has exclusively native students; the state school has predominantly non-native students.

The state school has two classrooms and a trailer which is utilized for eight graders. The village schools is for grades one through

there is a problem in obtaining the money to build all the desired facilities.

On the quality of rural schools, he commented that the first-grade students at Tanana showed reading ability above average. However, he admitted that more isolated communities might not do as well.

One problem, he continued, was that the village students did not have as wide a range of background experiences as city children. "Every experience a child has is education," he said. Also, there was sometimes a language barrier in the rural areas.

Adults who did not have a high school diploma, Dr. Hartman said, had three opportunities: First, take a G.E.D. test at a community college. This test will show if a person has the education normally gained in high school. If so, a certificate is granted, and this is accepted as a diploma in most cases.

Second, the adult can take correspondence courses to get a diploma. Third, adult education programs can be given where there are enough students. Normally, 15 students are required for a class in a subject.

Hartman suggested that these classes could be given using the facilities and staff for a small regional high school.

"The ideas and ambitions for developing Alaska will not come from Juneau or Washington, but from the people on the spot," Dr. Hartman said. "Then it will grow from within..."

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seven. Prior to this year it accommodated only grades one through six.

"Students have just been passed through the village school whether they could do the work or not," Albert claims.

"We have over 15 men who have completed at least the fourth grade at the school who have not been able to serve their country because they could not pass the military test for reading and writing.

For the past seven years, Albert said he and the village council had been pushing for the building of a new school.

"We have been promised and promised a new school but we always seem to end up at the bottom of the totem pole."

Early this year it was announced that the state take over the operation of the village

as of July 1, this year, school/under a Johnson O'Malley contract.

"We were hoping they would build a new school, but we understand now they are simply remodeling the teacher quarters at the village school and are going to use it as another classroom."

"We are dead set against that," Albert said.

Lee Hayes, area supervisor for the State Department of Education, says that the state has advertised for three portable classrooms for the Northway state school.

"We know that the village is opposed to continuing instruction at the village school and we hope to be able to put all the students together at the state school at the FAA facilities," he said.

"Depending on the bids, we will probably get either two or three of portable classrooms."

The building in the village will probably be used for teacher quarters, he said.

While the state is adding the portable classrooms, he said a request was being made for the amount of money the BIA would have to spend to construct a proper facility.

In his personal estimation, he said this would amount to about \$250,000.

Hayes said the state was endeavoring to obtain former ACS buildings near Northway for state teacher quarters.

"We used to have good attendance. This year the kids are getting discouraged and we are getting discouraged. The kids don't want to go to school anymore."

"Education is our only hope, that's why we're willing to fight for a school for our kids. We hope that people will back us up," Albert said.

## Rabies Vaccine Now Available At Lower Cost

Rabies vaccine will be made available to Alaskan villages at cost, announces Sigmund Restad, director of the Department of Agriculture at Palmer.

Villages interested in obtaining the vaccine should write to Mr. Restad at Box 800, Palmer, Alaska, 99645.

## Kuskokwim Assoc. To Hold Election

The Kuskokwim Valley Native Association will hold elections on Monday evening, April 17, reports the Bethel City News.

Offices open are the president, two vice-presidents, a secretary, treasurer, and a sergeant-at-arms.

The Association is also considering a campaign to draw the village people into the KVNA. President Lewis said that there was interest in the villages of Kwethluk, Goodnews Bay, the United Villages of Nelson Island, Newtok, Napakiak, Tuntutuliak and others to become KVNA chapters. At present, only Mekoryuk is organized.

## Gold Bill...

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McGee (D-Wyo.) George McGovern (D-S. Dak.), Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.), Joseph M. Montoya (D-N. Mex.), Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) Frank E. Moss (D-Utah), Karl E. Mundt (R-S. Dak.) and George Murphy (R-Calif.)

## Pills, Pills,...

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date. Dr. Thomas Moulding, of the National Jewish Hospital at Denver, suggests the possibility of supervisory home visits by nurses or health workers.

Writing in the National Tuberculosis Association Bulletin, he acknowledges that this would be expensive but points out that it would help free some public funds now spent on TB patient hospitalization.

Any way you look at it, TB remains an important problem. Ask your Alaska Tuberculosis Association, 406 G Street, Anchorage, Alaska for its free booklet, "Facts About TB and RD" (Respiratory Disease).

## What Saith the Scriptures?

THE COMMANDMENT "And this is the commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another..." 1 John 3:23

THE RECORD "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" 1 John 5:11

THE CONFIDENCE "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" 1 John 5:14

THE ASSURANCE "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life..." 1 John 5:13 We invite our readers to the undenominational meetings at Fox Chapel, 11am Sunday & 8pm Friday L.T. Crook 10 mi steese hy, Fairbanks Alaska



"Please enter my name in your pen pal section. I am 13 years old and stand 5 feet tall. I have brown hair and eyes, and I go to Leroy High School. I like about all types of sports and all popular singers and groups. I like to sing, dance, and listen to the radio. If anyone would care to write, I will answer all letters I receive."

—Diane Tower, Leroy, Ala., 36548."