

Hopson Takes Diverse View From ASNA on Atomic Blasts

Former State Senator Eben Hopson, of Barrow, this week took a different view of under

ground atomic testing in the Arctic and said he hoped the AEC proposals will be open for further exploration and better understanding.

He warned against tying land claims to atomic testing.

"I wish to point out that the objections raised was that of Mr. Nicholls, and does not necessarily reflect the thinking of the association," Hopson said.

"The well known and highly patriotic nature of the Eskimo is being damaged by the outright objection to the national security program at its announcement, before the majority of us had a chance to read about it in the papers"

Hopson added.

However, Hopson was critical of the AEC's lack of communication with the Eskimo people and Alaskans in the former Cape Thompson project, which was finally abandoned after strong objections were raised.

"With an effective and informative educational program

(Continued on Page 8)

Diverse View . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

prior to the actual preparation on the extent of escaping radioactivity, if any, it is possible that the majority of the Arctic Slope people, if not all, may not object to these tests," Hopson stated.

He further said "a policy of complete isolation and total prohibition in the face of demanding National security, I assure you, is treading on thin ice, and I don't like it."

"I wish to make my stand completely clear on this matter, and I don't intend to weaken the claim of the ASNA concerning our lands, but I do not think the two should be connected."

From my personal point of view, I think it would be a mistake for the association to set a policy prohibiting all government activity within the Arctic Slope area, which is in fact what we are doing" Hopson added.

"This test, I know, is real important to the National Security. Our own future could depend on this one experiment, the health of the Arctic Slope people, the well being of the State of Alaska, and certainly the national security demands the continuation of these tests.

"As you will recall several years ago the Government spent millions of dollars preparing a similar test at Cape Thompson which was abandoned largely due to objections raised by adjacent villagers, which I personally joined while serving in

Juneau as a Senator.

"Lack of communication between the AEC and villagers was largely to blame for their objections. I still feel today that had the AEC waged a more emphatic educational program to inform the people, the objections could have been less emphatic and probably overcome.

"The AEC has conducted underground tests in the lower forty-eight for a number of years. They have conducted tests on Amchitka Island on the Aleutian Chain. If they feel they should now conduct an experiment in the Pt. Lay area it is no doubt, because a test in this geological formation has become a must for continued research.

"It is not hard to figure out that it is of national importance. Knowing that they have conducted many tests, in the lower forty-eight, and have made a test in the Aleutian Chain, and realizing they were forced to abandon their Cape Thompson project, something is surely missing in their research that may well be found by a test at Point Lay.

"Finally, Hopson said, "I hope I have spoken what will, or may prove to be the majority thinking of the people of the Arctic Slope and open the proposals for further exploration and better understanding.