

Man signs over herd for \$1:

University of Alaska
Fairbanks

Togiak council calls for inquiry on reindeer killing

By the *Tundra Times*

The Traditional Council of Togiak is calling for a complete investigation of the recent reindeer slaughter on Hagemeister Island by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Frank Logusak, Togiak's traditional mayor and local member of the state Fish and Game Advi-

sory Board is preparing to lock horns with the federal agency which shot an estimated 742 reindeer on the Bristol Bay island recently.

Logusak; Gary Carlos, Togiak council administrator and Nome doctor Don Olson, who personally financed three airlifts and whose crews retrieved 122 reindeer last month are demand-

ing the Interior Dept., the federal General Accounting Office and U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK) look into what they call 'waste' and 'a sinister plot' to undermine the 1937 Reindeer Act which allows Alaska Natives exclusive ownership of reindeer.

The council received a 30 day stay on the reindeer killing. They are asking for an indefinite stay. Fish and Wildlife (F. & W.) officials says 742 animals were killed with some meat distributed to

nearby villages and to the Anchorage Rescue Mission.

Olson says he is disgusted with the killing. He says out of 200-300 dead reindeer he saw, only 2 were salvageable. The shots were not head shots and were not clean. Olson describes the killings as graphic. Animals were shot in the legs and guts were strewn over the area. Olson's crew packed up and cleaned up camp. 'They were sickened,' Logusak adds, 'We walked away, we wanted no

part of the killings.'

Since last summer, the U.S. F. & W. claimed the reindeer were starving, the men say University of Alaska/Fairbanks studies determine otherwise.

The three men and the council want to know why initial hearings on the reindeer were scheduled while villagers were subsistence and commercial fishing. They dispute F. & W. statements that the Natives were apathetic in
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• 'Too little, too late'

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responding to plans for the herd. The council wants community ownership of the remaining 193 animals. F. & W.'s alternative is to offer to Togiak 60 of the herd. Logasak says, 'That is too little, too late.'

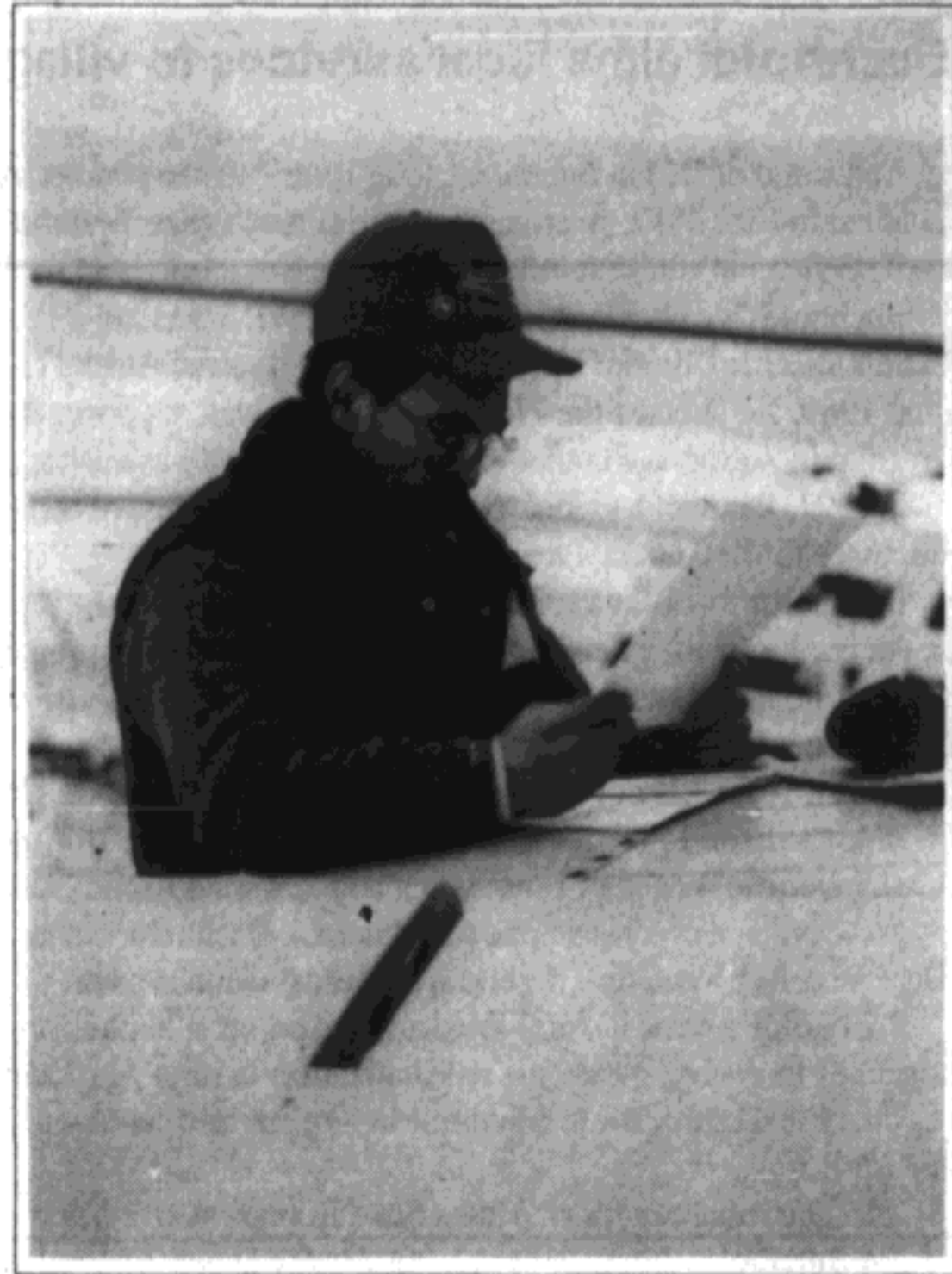
Olson says the ownership of the herd dates back to 1967. The original title holder, Jack Gosuk, was 'induced to sign a document

this June to convey the herd to U.S. F. & W. for \$1.00 and the right to salvage antlers.' Gosuk cannot speak or write English. The council says Gosuk was told by F. & W. officers he might be arrested for cruelty to animals if he did not sign the herd over to the agency. They say the market value is \$600-\$1,000 per animal. Gosuk, perhaps was intimidated by the language barrier, the appearance of

F. & W. officers with 'revolvers on their hips' who had implied court and jail time for him. The agency violated the government's trust obligation to Gosuk a Togiak council resolution states.

The council and Olson are asking for an indefinite stay until the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Stevens' office and others can determine actions and events leading to the Hagemeister killings. 'They can resume the killing at anytime,' says the three men. In their formal complaint to the Interior, the Togiak council is demanding the Secretary of Interior Manuel Lujan, Jr. negotiate in good faith.

Olson says the agency has a history of indiscriminate killing of reindeer and cattle in other areas, including the Aleutians. 'Some of those had great historical value,' adds Carlos. 'They wiped out a herd descended from Russia.'



(File photo)

Dr. Don Olson reviews reindeer manifest on Hagemeister Island.