

Tlingits Assimilating Eskimos?—

Eskimo Totem Pole!

The Alaska American Revolution Bicentennial Commission has endorsed as an appropriate Bicentennial project the carving of an Eskimo totem pole.

Ferdinand Sorensen, a Danish woodcarver in Solvang, Calif., is chiseling an Eskimo totem pole to represent the State of Alaska at a museum in Denmark.

This chain of circumstance was forced through the efforts of the Rebuild National Park Society, which annually stages a July 4 celebration in Aalborg, Denmark, the only country to hold the festival other than the United States.

Alaska is one of two states not represented at the society's museum in Aalborg. A committee was formed to provide something typical of the 49th State for the museum.

The society ran into problems when it was learned that not only are there no totem poles available for sale in Alaska, but that the art of carving large totems is nearly lost — and very expensive.

At that point, Sorensen agreed to carve a replica of the famed Koteen Totem Pole. The pole, 18 feet long and weighing up to 2,000 pounds, is of pure cedar.

It will be carved into a half dozen or more figures, including a chieftain, a frog, a fox, what appears to be a beaver and a bear.

When completed it will be embedded into a rock base along with a plaque detailing its mission and purpose. The totem pole will be finished and painted by May and shipped by freighter to Denmark.

The gift will be unveiled at the 1974 July 4 celebration. Gov. Egan, who lent his help and support, will be invited to attend the festival.