

## *Editorial Comment—*

# A Unique Trip For the Senator

Great many people enjoy multiple kinds of diversions away from their everyday duties. Some like to go out to the country to visit relatives and enjoy every minute of it. Some like nights out over the weekend and take delight in visiting nightspots. Some like to camp and some like to hunt. Others like dangerous pastimes that threaten their very lives. And Senator James Buckley of New York likes unusual events and activities tinged with adventure with some touches of danger like participating and observing an honest to goodness whale hunt at the remote village of Point Hope, Alaska.

Senator Buckley had just recently returned from Point Hope in what must have been one of his most unusual experiences in the type of diversion he likes. He observed a real whale hunt — an activity that just about fulfills every meaning of subsistence in the far reaches of the Arctic.

Whaling Captain Seymour Tuzroyluke of Point Hope had consented to take on the Senator with his crew, a favor that was in the planning for two years. Seymour had a very young crew this year, among them a 13-year-old young man. Two weeks ago, that crew caught a whale that measured 50 feet. Which meant that the whale was roughly some 50 tons — a ton to the foot. It was an exciting event to Buckley but perhaps more exciting to Captain Tuzroyluke and his crew and the whole village itself. It meant food for the whole community for months and months ahead and muktuk for other villages such as Kotzebue, Nome, Noatak and other villages in the Northwest Alaska area.

The diversion for the New Yorker and his companions, Laura Bergt of Fairbanks and Mike Kaufman of The New York Times came out as if someone had planned it. The weather was very pleasant. Whaling camp pleasantries prevailed among the crew members and their visitors. Camp food was enjoyed by everyone even to the eating of muktuk by the New Yorkers. The visitors ate and slept in their clothes for five days with the crew out on the rough ice of the Chukchi Sea. They learned a good deal about the Eskimo whaling tradition. They enjoyed every moment along with ever-present hospitality of their hosts.

The eye-witness observation by Senator James L. Buckley of New York can be a most valuable asset to the traditional whale hunters at the village of Point Hope. Buckley saw the human approach to the subsistence way of living in one of its truest forms. The influential New Yorker can, perhaps, be an ally to the hunters throughout the subsistence hunting areas of Alaska especially those of the deep Arctic. Mutual trust between the Senator and Captain Tuzroyluke and his crew, who may have ably represented their fellow whale hunters in the superb demonstration of the annual event, can serve as a bastion or a buffer against those who would do away with the taking of the bowhead whale in the subsistence hunting communities of the remote Arctic Alaska.

— H.R.