



BIA SEWAGE SOURS MEKORYUK

Nunivak Is. Eskimos Charge Local BIA of Polluting Environment

Ecology is a matter of concern throughout the United States, and nowhere are people more concerned than in the tiny village of Mekoryuk, an Eskimo settlement on Nunivak Island in the Bering Sea.

In Mekoryuk, the pollution problem is sewage - raw sewage dumped in the Bay by the Bureau of Indian Affairs - from its school and teacher's homes.

Resolutions and other administrative actions have been to no avail.

So, this month when spring breakup began to reveal the odorous sewage deposit area in the partially frozen bay, Mekoryuk residents staged a two day protest against this B. I. A. practice.

In temperature of 19 below zero, Eskimo residents of all ages stood outside with placards proclaiming their protest. "This is our playground" they wrote. "Our fish eat sewage".

Indeed, the BIA dumps its

untreated sewage into the bay - about 100 feet in front of the village. The noxious wastes have melted the ice and snow on the bay in an area where small children play and snow machines travel. Villagers fear their children could break through the ice and drown, or a snow machine could fall through. Of the 200 villagers, 98 are school children. So, a sign has been posted above the pit. "Sewage Pit - DANGER - Keep Away". The 200 villagers of Mekoryuk, whose view from the village is normally a beautiful panorama of sea, hills and bay now look out towards the ocean to see a giant, ugly sign proclaiming this danger.

Ocean tides on Mekoryuk Bay carry water swiftly pass the village and far up the Mekoryuk river. Due to the tidal action, any debris tends to remain in the bay - instead of being washed out to sea.

There, the contaminated particles infect the shell fish, fish and other marine life which the villagers use for food. To proclaim this, older members of the community demonstrated carrying dry fish, bullheads, tomcods.

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DEMONSTRATORS—Residents of the tiny village of Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island recently demonstrated against the Bureau of Indian Affairs for that agency's practice of dumping sewage

on Mekoryuk Bay in front of the village. Folks of all ages demonstrated. The oldest one was 60 year old Grandma Excelia.

Apprenticeship Program for Minorities

By MADELYN SHULMAN
Staff Writer

For many years, while other barriers came tumbling down, the skilled building trades unions remained closed to minority group members.

In Alaska, native people faced crippling unemployment while government construction projects in their villages employed hundreds of white, many of them out-of-state workers.

A man can not get a job as a plumber, an electrician, painter, skilled cement finisher unless he has the necessary and detailed skills and training. He can not be qualified as having had that training without serving as an apprentice in one of the unions and the unions closed their doors to minority applicants.

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Could Get Them Between 1971 and 1972—

Rural Areas to Get 1200 Houses

By JOHN SACKETT

In a large conference in Anchorage on Sunday afternoon, approximately 500 people learned that Alaska's rural areas will definitely receive 1200 houses within 1971-1972.

Don Wright, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives and Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) coordinated the conference by gathering the top officials of all interested federal agencies in Washington to formulate ideas and coordinate the basic plans for construction on the homes.

In an interview with Senator Stevens previous to the conference he stated that contrary to anything heard otherwise the money for Alaska's rural houses is approved and is in the budget so that initial planning and building by the native people can be

gin soon.

Included in the conference as speakers were William Dockser of HUD in Washington, D.C.; Oscar Pedersen, regional director of HUD in Seattle; Robert Butler, executive director of Alaska State Housing Authority; Mr. Del Larson, Chief of Indian Health Facilities out of Washington; Dr. Jim Wilson, director of

OEO's Indian Programs in Washington, D.C.; Ronald Peak BIA Housing Program Director and Senator Ted Stevens.

Don Wright opened the conference by stressing the need for better housing and that poor housing had been the burden of the native people for centuries. He stressed the fact that we as



FLYING CLINIC - Last week the army demonstrated their new "flying crane" helicopters and the central "pod" they carry. One of these will be outfitted as a flying medical unit to travel to

native villages along with U.S. Army medical teams. The giant helicopter creates 100 mph updrafts as it takes off at full speed. (See story on page 5).

John Sackett TT's New Columnist, Column Every 2 Weeks

Starting this week, Tundra Times is introducing its new columnist John Sackett of Galena. John will write under the heading of "Galena Area Currents." The column will appear every two weeks.

John said he has been thinking of doing a column for the Tundra Times for some time "giving my views on all parts of Alaska living including old customs, local events in the

Galena area, various people's views on existing and new programs for rural Alaska, land claims, etc."

He added, "I can't guarantee it won't be controversial but I do guarantee it will be interesting!"

John Sackett, formerly of Huslia, also is a former state legislator from District 8. He is in business at Galena, running a lodge.