

"Why Tundra Times?"

By MARGIE BAUMAN

On Oct. 1, 1962, the first issue of the Tundra Times went on sale, armed with a banner story on visiting Interior Secretary Stewart Udall and an editorial which has endured as the Tundra Times' reason to be.

Though the masthead of the state's first statewide Native press has changed a bit and the price of the weekly tabloid jumped from 15 cents to a quarter, that first issue proved an accurate preview of things to come.

Eskimo artist turned journalist Howard Rock, embarking on a new career at the ripe age of 51, bannered the Udall story with "Interior Secretary Udall Visits Alaska" Historic Rights and Claims Settlement is Number One Problem Declares Official."

Settlement of the Alaska Native land claims was still nine years off, but editor Rock had faith in the future.

Elsewhere in that first issue, Tundra Times reported on the upcoming second Inupiat Paitot conference at Kotzebue, tape recording as a popular pastime in Arctic villages, seal meat as a means of Arctic sustenance, the Bureau of Indian Affairs taking over the dining program at Mt. Edgecumbe Boarding School and Birch Creek residents starting their own school to emphasize traditional Athabascan culture.

There was a letter of congratulations for the fledgling newspaper from Alaska Congressman Ralph Rivers. Political advertisements urged support of a number of hopefuls, ranging from U.S. Sen. Ernest Gruening, D-Alaska to Ted Stevens, bidding on the Republican ticket for his own U.S. Senate seat.

Stevens' platform thoughtfully included a statement urg-

ing "immediate action by Congress to recognize the rights of all Alaskan Natives." The candidate noted that Congress in 1884 reserved the right to determine means by which Alaska Natives could receive title to their lands, but that 78 years had passed since that promise was made.

Barrow's Guy Okakok, a good friend of the editor, signed on as a contributing editor to the Tundra Times with that first issue, writing "Eskimo Houdini: Unbelievable — But It's True."

It was the first of many colorful pieces by Okakok, who made up for any lack of formal education by charming Tundra Times readers with his special literary style until his untimely death in March, 1976.

Rock pulled together seven writers, including his assistant editor Tom Snapp, to produce that first issue, but it was the philosophy of the fledgling journalist in the first editorial that stands today as the dream achieved of a distinguished Alaska Native newspaper editor.

The controversy that his newspaper caused, the settlement it helped achieve and the Alaskans of many heritages which he brought together in the fight for Native rights and dignity will serve as a tribute to Howard Rock far beyond the plaques in his praise lining the walls of his workbench — the editor's office at the Tundra Times.

When the Seattle artist from Point Hope, Alaska, left behind a successful career in the big city to fight an uphill battle for ideals and dubious financial reward in the north, he knew well what he was about to do.

What was the Tundra Times and what is it today?

Rock said it all in that first editorial:

★ ★ ★ ★

"Why Tundra Times?"
By HOWARD ROCK

Long before today there has been a great need for a newspaper for the northern Natives of Alaska. Since civilization has swept into their lives in tide-like earnestness, it has left the Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts in bewildering state of indecision and insecurity between the seeming need for assimilation and, especially in the Eskimo areas, the desire to retain some of their cultural and traditional way of life.

Noting the need for information to cope with civilization in an informed manner, the Eskimo Inupiat Paitot organization at its first meeting in November, pointed out:

"It is suggested that a bulletin or newsletter be published and circulated every so often to villages about what is being done within the Inupiat organization. This organization should be well established, not to be allowed to die. All the Native villages should be informed what has been accomplished for the good of those villages."

Since the Inupiat meeting, the Athabascan Indians of the Interior Alaska organized at a meeting this past June at Tanana. Therefore we have decided that this newspaper shall serve them as well as other Natives in Alaska.

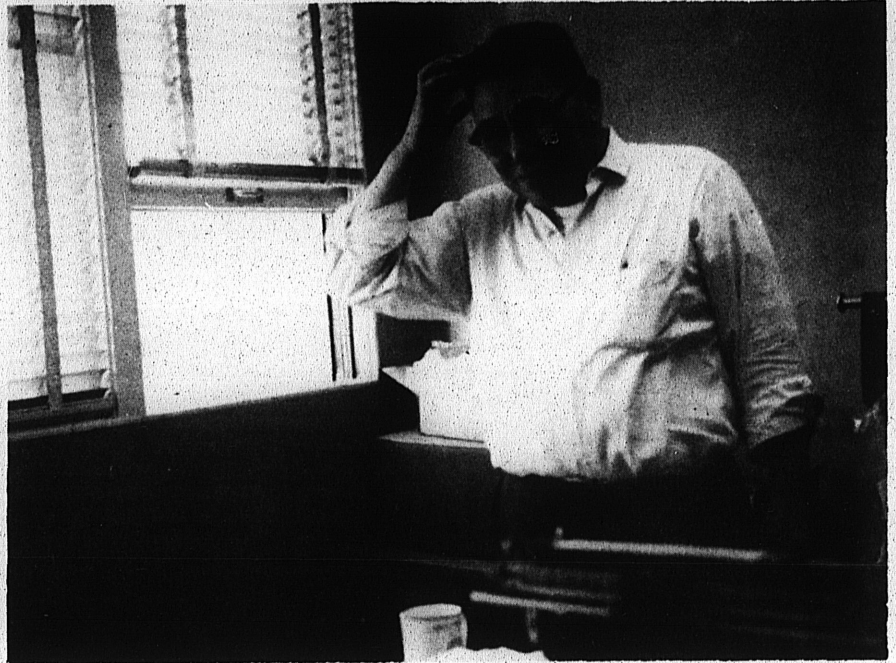
There are two main reasons for the appearance of the Tundra Times.

First: It will be the medium to air the views of the Native organizations. It will reflect their policies and purposes as they work for the betterment of the Native peoples of Alaska. It will also reflect their aims . . . their hopes. It will strive to aid them in their struggle for just determination and settlement of their enormous problems.

Second: It will strive to keep informed on matters of interest all Natives of Alaska, whether they be Eskimos of the Arctic, the Athabascans of the Interior, and other Indians and Aleuts of the Aleutian Islands.

We have also realized that an unbiased presentation of issues that directly concern the Natives is needed. In presenting those things that most affect Natives, we will make every effort to be truthful and objective.

Aside from the more serious purposes, the paper



Why a Tundra Times?

will print articles on what it believes to be an extremely important subject, the culture of the Arctic. We will cover whaling, hunting and fishing, the Eskimo dance, the dog-team, the family unit, legends, celebrations, both ancient and current, customs of the past and present and other things that fall in the category of the Arctic culture. We will include articles on the culture of the Indian and the Aleut.

Politically, the Tundra Times will follow a firm policy. It will not support any political party. Its policy will be independent. It will be non-partisan in airing the views of individual candidates. Occasionally, the paper in its editorial columns, may favor a candidate or certain elected official. If this occurs, it will be because of his stand on Native issues rather than the political party to which he belongs.

A reminder: Natives of Alaska, the Tundra Times is your paper. It is here to express your ideas, your thoughts and opinions on issues that vitally affect you. When you have a subject that you feel needs to be written about, pass that subject along. If you have something to offer such as a good photograph, you think would add to the paper, pass that along, too.

Each offering will be carefully considered and much appreciated. They will aid the success of the paper.

And in a financial way, you can help, too. Support it by purchasing the products or services of our advertisers. Your considered judgment will, and must, be your guide on political matters. Subscribe to the paper and ask others to subscribe.

With this humble beginning we hope, not for any distinction, but to serve with dedication the truthful presentation of Native problems, issues and interests. The paper asks your fine reception and wishes for success and God Speed."

BEA forced into impasse in teacher negotiations

On April 7 the Barrow Education Association was forced into impasse in teacher negotiations by the North Slope Borough School Board. The items in dispute were salary, rent, housing security and contract duration.

The Barrow Education Association, as the elected bargaining agent for all teachers in the North Slope, requested a cost of living salary increase as guaranteed in the current negotiated agreement.

They also developed a subsidy housing plan which would have made rent more equitable with other rent in the community. Teachers on the North Slope have enjoyed subsidized housing for several years as a salary benefit.

Going into Wednesday night's session, the school board denied the teachers' right to maintain the current cost of living and instead offered far below the current agreement in such areas as salary, housing, work load and class size. Under the board's proposal a beginning teacher would receive \$2,853 less than

during the current year. And their proposal offered no increase for the second year.

The teachers' group offered several counter proposals to the board, even lowering their salary request. However, in spite of the BEA's continuing desire to negotiate, the school board refused to consider any of the teachers' many offers and declared impasse.

The board is now required by state law to request a representative of the United States Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to act as mediator.

Following the declaration of impasse, John Anttonen, first-year superintendent of the North Slope Borough School District, left on a 10-day trip to San Francisco and Hawaii.



Courage Is — Resistance to fear, mastery of fear — not absence of fear.

Sentiments are for the most part traditional; we feel them because they were felt by those who preceded us.

SAVOY BAR

423 2nd

OWNER: CURLY LEVI

MANAGER: TOMMY FULLER

Delightfully Unique !