

Historic Conference at Mt. Alyeska ... Yakutat Title I Grant

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sity courses and on-the-job training programs.

—Establish a system of constables, local police who would be under the control of the village councils, available to take care of local problems on an immediate basis.

—Create a training program to familiarize state police and other law officials working in the bush with Native cultures and languages.

—Bring court and administrative procedures out into the bush. This means having state superior courts travel circuits to rural communities, hold court and hearings in the areas affected by their rulings.

—Develop community mental health care centers in the bush and enlarge access of rural persons to treatment in resident centers in other parts of Alaska.

—Recognize customary adoptions without complicated legal procedures.

—Authorize the issuance of package and by the drink liquor licenses to corporations owned by municipal corporations or village councils.

—Provide legal education for young people and adults through junior high school and adult education courses to introduce Native people to judicial procedures.

—Find alternatives to legal sanctions in areas such as alcohol related offenses and juvenile proceedings.

The recommendations were the conference members' reactions to problems introduced by speakers during the first two days of the conference. The speakers portrayed a picture of Native Alaska which was unfamiliar and shocking to the mostly white legal profession representatives at Mt. Alyeska.

The Native's only exposure to the judicial system is when he commits a crime. He has little access to judicial and civil procedures which might aid his life, for example, adoption, divorce and civil suits.

In the bush, the State Trooper is not available on an immediate basis. Village council president Elias Joseph of Alakanuk gave the conference one example where he requested a State Trooper months ago, and received no answer.

In many cases, village councils provide an ad hoc form of justice which is remarkably effective, Joseph illustrated. Yet, when it is necessary to call in outside agencies, these agencies often do not respond.

Natives are brought from the bush to Fairbanks, Anchorage and Nome, released on bail without funds to return to their own areas, caught without witnesses or help in cities where they don't speak the language.

Legal assistance is often not available in the bush. One of the conference's recommendations was the establishment of para-professional legal information people. These would be Natives with some training, able to give simple advice and interpret the legal system.

At the present, the overwhelming problems of alcohol abuse and mental illness are neglected, with the only effect of the law to jail such people.

Alcohol and mental illness treatment facilities in the bush are almost nil. Natives are locked up and sentenced for alcohol related offences with a harshness that would rarely reach a middle class white in the state.

Probably, most of the problems in the bush are closely related to the incredibly low standards of living, inadequate housing and other problems which no one conference can

solve.

Robert Willard, State Director of the Human Rights Commission and a former State Trooper, outlined some of these problems in his talk to the groups as did other speakers.

Willard does not believe in overnight changes, but many of the recommendations proposed are just that—simple answers which will eliminate some of the more patent injustices.

Among the people who outlined problems of justice, or rather injustice, in the bush was Nora Guinn, district court judge in Bethel, who explained a situation where emotionally disturbed people must be put in jail for lack of other facilities. Probation officers, she said, rarely speak the language of the people, or understand their culture.

"Police should be able to come into view not only when the law is broken," she said. "They must develop relationships of trust with the people they serve. This is true of the court system also."

Chief Justice of Alaska George F. Boney, the organizer of the conference recognizes the problems in the bush which will take generations to solve.

In his requests to Juneau for funds to make more immediate changes, he is now backed by the support of most of Alaska's most influential ju-

dicial figures, including judges, lawyers, public service and law enforcement representatives.

"Our focus here had to be on what reforms the court system itself would be able to effectuate, either through administrative action or through the advocacy of statutory reform in Juneau," Boney said.

What the conference can accomplish is to bring justice closer to the people, put Natives and bilingual people in judicial positions, provide a way of giving legal advice, and some accommodations to a cultural system which rejects the concept of the adversary legal system.

"Some of the avoidance of conflict which characterizes Eskimo life," explained UA anthropology professor Arthur Hippler, "will lead Eskimo defendants to plead guilty rather than go through the hassle of a court trial."

Many Native defendants also say "yes" they understand in order to not disrupt the system—leading to serious injustices and refusal of important rights to counsel, jury trial and other safeguards of the legal system.

What the conference at Alyeska may have accomplished is to educate people in the system about its problems. People like Arthur Hippler were not hesitant to explain the effect of racism on the system—racism by white magistrates, State

Cliff R. Hartman, Commissioner of Education announced that the Alaska State Department of Education has approved a Yakutat City School District Teacher Aide Program.

The Title I grant of \$5,715 was awarded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Title I funds help support programs for educationally deprived children.

The Yakutat City School District will hire teacher aides to work individually with classroom teachers and students in grades 1-6. The program hopes to provide a foundation for

Troopers, judges and other law enforcement personnel.

As a start, perhaps the conference will convince the Alaska State Troopers that 5 feet 10 inches is an unrealistic height requirement which excludes Eskimos and others.

"I see no reason for arbitrary standards of height for this sort of thing," commented Chief Justice Boney. "Brains come in all sizes, ability in all races."

"I believe and I hope something will come out of this," Elias Joseph of Alakanuk said before he left Alyeska on Friday. "With so many high class people, the state will have to reckon with it."

strengthening learning experiences by individualizing instruction.

Students were selected for the program on the basis of socio-economic deprivation, attendance at school, physical and mental health, attention span, language development, and their inability to learn from other types of reading programs.

Emphasis in the program will be placed on language readiness.

FNA Potlatch ...

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Tickets to the potlatch, which will go on sale February 1, will include dinner and Native entertainment—Indian and Eskimo dancing.

The money raised by this event is used to support the work of the FNA, pay for scholarships for Natives, donations to people whose homes have been burned out and to send representatives to the various Native Association and other conferences and meetings out of town.

The FNA will pay transport costs for the meat. For information, contact Al Adams at 452-1155 or the Fairbanks Native Association at 456-5008. The Native Association is located at 520 4th Avenue in Fairbanks.

Medical Treatment ...

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and a method of teaching the student how to extract information he needs from available facilities. Studies have proved these programmed training packages as effective, if not more, than standard classroom methods.

Why a new method? What is wrong with medical education today?

If a medical school for Alaska must be the conventional massive university hospital type, Alaska will never have such a facility in the foreseeable future.

No city in Alaska, not even Anchorage, has enough people to support such a research-teaching facility. Also, the State does not have the money.

A new medical school at the University of Massachusetts cost the university \$120 million before admitting the first patient.

"Also," explained project missionary Dr. Rosi, "conventional medical schools train doctors to minister to white, middle class, urban patients. Medical students tend to come from the top 5 per cent median group. The high cost of medical school locks out many of the most able young people, who can't afford ten years of expensive higher education."

Under the preceptor system, doctors will be evaluated on their ability to practice good medicine and to teach students. They will be brought up to date on the newest methods, continually educated and paid for their teaching services.

What the program does not need is expensive buildings, since clinical work will be done in already established facilities.

What the program needs to become a reality is the concerted support from the Alaska State Medical Association, US, AMU, and AFN and the state government—support strong enough to push through a federal grant which would allow the program to start in 1973. This is Dr. Rosi's mission in Alaska—to obtain this support.

Some of the support is already forthcoming. The UA has endorsed the program.

In January, Dr. Rosi will fly to Anchorage to confer with

Lloyd Sutton, Chairman of the Health and Welfare committee of the AFN, seeking that group's strong support.

The University of Missouri in Kansas City has already adopted a preceptor-programmed learning system, similar to the pilot project proposed for Alaska.

What Alaska provides, for the specialists at Northwestern University who developed the medical school pilot project, is an ideal experimental area—which the decentralized system should suit perfectly.

"One of the opportunities it provides, is that of developing more flexible standards of admissions," explains Dr. Rosi. "Instead of restricting medical school to people with three or four years of college and good grades, we may be able to open it up to those with other experience."

"It might include those with experience in nursing, social work and other health related fields. While medical schools are moving towards more flexible admissions standards across the country, there is no way yet to evaluate previous experience to make it applicable to the student's further training. We think we have those methods."

Right now, Dr. Rosi hopes to speak to young people interested in medical or paramedical education, trying to find out how wide interest it.

"Other medical schools are based around a building, one location. What we are trying to develop in Alaska is a program based in Alaska and open to the world," Rosi proposes.

"It may include contracting other medical schools to provide specific instruction, bringing the students and doctors to two week sessions for specialized training, allowing specific students to study for short periods anywhere in the world."

This spring, when his PHS grant runs out, Dr. Rosi will return to Chicago, hopefully with support to back a federal grant proposal.

He expects to return in June, with his wife and nine children, to work towards making this plan a reality.

ASNA's Return Unites

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ASNA president Joe Upicksoun expressed their satisfaction last week with the compromised settlement which emerged from a four day meeting of the AFN board and the ASNA directors.

The final settlement recognizes the ASNA position that land claims should be based on land lost, while giving concessions to some of the Native groups with larger populations and less land.

"There is a unified front going to Juneau," Upicksoun told the Tundra Times in an airport interview in Fairbanks. "The president of the AFN performed in a fashion that showed he wanted action from the board to give him direction on a united front. He held the board till they came to basic agreements."

"If the State and the Natives go to Congress together," Upicksoun said about the meeting this week, "we might have some impact on the Department of Interior."

AFN President Don Wright told the press on Saturday he was "very optimistic" about chances of getting the increased land claims bill through Congress in 1971.

Wright has been hired by the AFN board of directors to represent them in Washington during the Congressional session next year.

A U.S. Senate bill passed in this year's Congress cut the Native and settlement to 10 million acres, with a \$500 million cash settlement and \$500 million in overriding royalties. The House did not act on the bill and it is expected to die at the end of the session.

The four day AFN board meeting in Anchorage, which started Saturday, December 5, brought tempers flaring as board members debated distribution plans.

Varying from open to closed executive sessions, the meeting included talks by visiting experts, lawyers, and a number of pipeline people who came as observers to listen to the debates.

By Monday, about 20 board members remained in Anchorage

to come to a settlement.

The ASNA withdrew from the AFN last October 20 during the National Conference of American Indians convention in Anchorage. At that time, ASNA executive director Charles Edwards, Jr. charged the AFN with losing sight of the "fundamental principles upon which the entire settlement is premised. That is, this is a land claims settlement, not a federal welfare program or another piece of anti-poverty legislation."

The small population of the Arctic Slope, which claims 56.6 million acres of Arctic land above the Brooks Range, felt a population distribution system was unfair to their people, whose land encompasses many areas presently sought for oil and mineral exploitation.

Also, the traditional Eskimo mode of life requires vast tracts of land for subsistence living, land which will be sacrificed in a land claims settlement.

During the four day board meeting the AFN considered going as high as 100 million acres in its land claims demands, before settling on the 60 million acre figure.

Several suggestions, including one to distribute the \$500 million on a pure per capita basis were debated by the AFN board before State Sen. Willie Hensley (D-Kotzebue) suggested the \$8 million cash formula.

"Although most of us would like to get the most out of what we're after," commented AFN board member Robert Willard, "there's such a thing as being practical."

The 60 million acre claim was decided upon to satisfy regions such as the Arctic Slope, which could not be satisfied with a 40 million acre claim.

Willard voted for the compromise, despite the fact his own Tlingit-Haida area would gain more out of the former per capita distribution system.

Under the new proposal, areas with high population and less land use, such as the Southeast and Southcentral areas, will not gain as much land or money.