

Cultural beliefs of Athabascans protected under the 1st amendment?

FAIRBANKS—Alaska's regulations concerning the taking of moose clashed with the ancient practices of Athabascan Indians at funeral ceremonies as pre-trial hearings for Carlos Frank of Minto were held in Fairbanks last week.

Frank admitted to killing a cow moose last Oct. 16 between Livengood and Minto where a potlatch ceremony was being

held for a recent dead in the Native community. He is being charged with transport of an illegally killed moose.

The case is the first of its kind in the United States and its outcome will set a significant precedent, according to defense lawyers Robert H. Wagstaff and R. Collin Middleton of Anchorage.

The defense is arguing to

dismiss the charge on grounds it is unconstitutional as it applies to Frank. The cultural beliefs of Athabascans are of the same importance as religion, and their beliefs are legally defined as religion; and therefore are guaranteed protection in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

It is unthinkable for Athabascans not to make funeral

potlatch when someone dies, Middleton told the court. It is essential there be Native foods including wild game and it is essential they be fresh, he added.

Middleton pointed out that the Athabascan culture is ancient and was practiced before the treaty between the U.S. and Russia purchasing Alaska in 1867, before the statehood act in 1959 and before the Alaska

Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971.

One of the defense's arguments was that the Native Claims Settlement Act was intended to preserve the Native way of life in this state.

Frank's lawyers were hired by the Native Corporation Doyon, Ltd. Doyon has an estimated 9,000 shareholders, most of (Continued on Page 6)

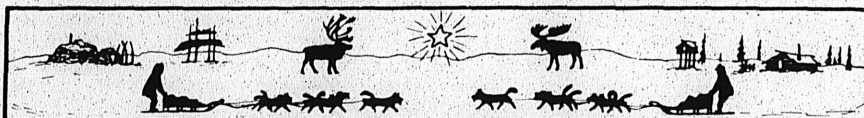
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Inupiat Paitot People's Heritage

Den Nena Henash Our Land Speaks

Unanguq Tunuktatq The Aleuts Speak



Tingit
Ut kah neek Informing and Reporting

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Morris Thompson visits Alaska

Thompson and area director Clarence Antioquia meet in Bethel to discuss Alakanuk school situation

Commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson, visited Alaska this past week to discuss problems of the Native people of Alaska with some of Alaska's Native leaders.

Thompson, and area director from Juneau, Clarence Antioquia, met in Bethel with school officials from Alakanuk to discuss the situation concerning Alakanuk school.

The village of Alakanuk moved about two miles downriver in 1966 because the Yukon was eroding the old site. The school stayed at the old site and the 150 children traveled across the river to school. BIA was supposed to construct a new school at the new village site in 1975.

A month ago the villagers said that starting next fall they would not send their children to school unless BIA moves the school to the new village site.

Thompson has given Alakanuk several interim options for educational facilities for the next school year. Four of the options are: (1) move the old facility to the new village site; (2) upgrade homes in the new site to serve as an interim school; (3) ask the state for the use of a portion of the high school to use until BIA can construct the new building; and (4) bring in temporary facilities until the new school can be built.

Thompson stated, "I am positive that the appropriations for the new school will go through. They have passed the House of Representatives and I've talked to Sen. Ted Stevens about their status in the Senate."

In Fairbanks Commissioner Thompson commented on BIA's intent in establishing the Regional Educational Attendance Areas (REAA) to take over the jurisdiction that the previous State Operated School System (SOS) had.

He said that BIA's intent is to make a positive choice in concert with the village.

Antioquia added that BIA will only control those areas that ask to be controlled. As of now BIA will still have control over 48 schools in Alaska.

When asked why so many BIA schools have burned over the

past few years Thompson responded saying that in the remote villages there are no fire departments and no running water, so when a structure catches on fire there is not much the local communities can do to stop it.

He added that arson was expected in a few cases but no one has ever filed suit.

Antioquia also pointed out that many of the schools are older. When they were built they were up to the fire standards that were in existence at that time. BIA is trying to update (Continued on Page 6)

Tundra Times surveys grocery prices in Alaska

By LAEL MORGAN and ALBO GREGORY

A Tundra Times survey of four bush outposts and three major cities in northern Alaska shows Nome to have the highest grocery prices, despite advantages of jet service and a viable seaport.

The survey was made during April and May with a bush-oriented shopping list, quite unlike those commonly utilized in federal surveys.

Nationally, food prices declined 0.8 per cent during the last three months according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Statewide, the U.S. Deptment of Agriculture reported a 2.9 per cent decline with a 4.2 per cent price drop in Fairbanks. A less impressive Fairbanks price decline of 1.8 percent was reported by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Impact Information Center.

Even with slightly falling prices, a look at the following chart shows that Alaskans must foot a much heavier food bill than "stateside" diners, and with ever increasing shipping costs, there is little relief in sight.

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Laura Bergt appointed Commissioner

Laura Bergt has been appointed Commissioner of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board to complete the unexpired term of Howard Rock which continues through July 7, 1978.

In a letter from Secretary of the Interior, Thomas S. Kleppe, the secretary commended Ms. Bergt for her dedication to the cultural development of Native American people and said that she will be an important contribution to the work of the board.

Ms. Bergt is a member of President Ford's American Revolution Bicentennial Council, the National Health Manpower and Shortage Areas Council, the Council of Regents for Institute of American Indian Arts, the State Rural Affairs Commission, the State Commission for the Handicapped, the Alaska Plan Policy Board, the University of Alaska's SOS Advisory Board, University's Village Arts and Crafts Upgrade Committee, the (Continued on Page 6)



LAURA BERGT, Commissioner of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board
—NELSON'S Photo

Sixth annual NAIWA conference

The Self Determination Act (Public Law 93 638) will be the subject of a major workshop at the 6th Annual Conference of

the North American Indian Women's Association (NAIWA) to be held June 23-25 at Cherokee, North Carolina.

"The tribal chiefs have been ignoring us womenfolks too long," President Mary Jane Fate of Fairbanks maintains with a chuckle. Actually her organization is not strong on "Women's Lib", but it is emerging as a powerful force on the national front.

"Self determination is a controversial issue," Mrs. Fate admits. "A lot of tribes are afraid of it because they see it as meaning termination. But we've had more inquiries on it than any other single thing and we want to learn more about it."

The theme of this years conference is "involvement and participation". Gov. James E. Holshouser Jr. of North Carolina has been invited to attend along with Thelma Thompson and her husband, Commissioner Morris Thompson of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Lou Young and her husband, U.S. Representative Don Young.

Also invited will be Emery (Continued on Page 6)



DAPHNE GUSTAFSON, NAIWA secretary and Mary Jane Fate, president, prepare for the June conference.

Photo By LAEL MORGAN