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TANACROSS ASKS IN ON CLAIMS

State Selections Spurs Urgency for Inclusion In Claims Solution

By MADELYN SHULMAN
Staff Writer

As land claims is once again debated in Congress, the native people of the Upper Tanana River renew their efforts to include their people in any land claims settlement.

Since Alaska became a state, the natives of Tanacross, Northway, Tok and Tetlin have been battling for their land—which has been selected by the State of Alaska under the provisions of the Statehood Act.

For several years, the Tundra Times has sought to make Alaskans and others aware of the problems of Tanacross and the surrounding Athabaskan villages of the United Crow Bands.

During the summer of 1969, Tundra Times reporter Thomas Richards, Jr., documented this extent of the land claims filed by the people of the Tanacross area.

Their claims date back to 1917, the year a trader named Newton reportedly had the natives mark hunting trails, fishing sites and ancestral burying grounds on a map which he registered with the Territorial Commissioner for the Upper Tanana.

Since that year, the people of the Upper Tanana have filed repeated claims with the Interior

Department, especially since 1950 and the enactment of the Native Allotment Act.

Yet, in 1971, two land claims bills pending before Congress exclude these villages whose lands have been tentatively approved (TA'd) by the BLM for State Selection.

"Our people are greatly concerned that the land claims bills exclude our people from any selection on tentative approved lands to the state," writes Andrew Isaac of Tanacross, Traditional Chief of the United Crow Band.

"Our villages have all been given tentative approval to the State. The State of Alaska is holding tentative approval to nearly 7 million acres; within are more than 15 villages on subsistence lands. Since statehood, our people have been treated badly by the State and

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ANDREW GRANT II—Tiny Andrew Grant II of Minto is dancing with his elders from the village of Minto at the annual FNA potlatch at the Lathrop High School gym last Saturday.

Festivities began with plenty of native foods. About 3,000 people attended the gala affair.

—MADELYN SHULMAN Photo

Oodles of Native Foods—

3,000 Enjoy Gala FNA Potlatch

By MADELYN SHULMAN
Staff Writer

Spring came on Saturday night and with it—the Potlatch. At least three thousand native people, young and old from villages near and far gathered at Lathrop H.S. to greet friends and acquaintances unseen during the long, frozen Alaskan winter.

They gathered, on a day when spring seemed near, with the many feet of snow piled on Fairbanks slowly melting in drops falling from rooftops. They came early, to wait in the endless line inside the high school—old people in traditional dress, youngsters in jeans and mini-skirts (the midi has never caught

on in Alaska.)

They waited, it seemed for hours, to reach trays of moose, salmon, fish, bear and reindeer. Some chicken and ham for the "gussuks." Eskimo ice cream, purple and resplendent with wild berries. We saw no muktuk, an item many missed.

To add to it, local women made macaroni and potato salad, and homemade bread.

From far and wide the native people came, from many towns and villages. Few children though. FNA limited the crowd to those over 14 this year and the few children belonged to the dance groups from the villages. Many non-native Alaskans came, join-

ing native friends.

They stood on line and greeted friends and talked about land claims, about the long, hard,

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Considered Non-Priority Point—

Mail Service Frustrates Ft. Yukon

There are no roads to Fort Yukon. Although there is daily air service, the villagers of Fort Yukon find they receive supplies, communications and other necessities days and even weeks after they are mailed.

Last week, frustrated by the decline in mail service since the Post Office inaugurated its "two track air transport system" in September, 1970, the villagers of Fort Yukon submitted a pe-

tition to the U.S. Post Office to "restore mail service to at least its previous level of adequacy."

One hundred and forty-five village residents signed the petition, which charged the Post Office with causing damage to local business, transportation, and morale.

The "two track air transport system," according to Mr. Everett Wilde of the U.S. Post Office in Fairbanks, divides Alas-

kan points into priority and non-priority areas.

"Certain main line offices are considered non-priority points. Bush offices, with less frequent service are considered priority points," he explained.

Fort Yukon, along with Tanana, Galena, Nome, Kotzebue, and Barrow is a non-priority point. Its non-priority mail—everything except first class—is

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Harold Greenway Wins North American Classic

Harold Greenway of Fairbanks was the surprise victor at Sunday's end of the 1971 Men's Open North American Championship Sled Dog Race.

Driving Bill Taylor's team after Taylor dropped out after Friday's race, Greenway won an upset victory over both the favorites going into the final race on Sunday.

The part Athabaskan victor passed Dr. Roland Lombard of Massachusetts and George Attla, the Huslia Hustler, both favored as the top contestants.

Greenway posted the fastest time for the 30 mile final leg of the 70 mile race at 195.98 min-

utes. His time for the full 70 miles was 257.95.

In fact, after it was all over, Dr. Lombard, the 59 year old six-time winner of the North American wound up in fourth place. The race was expected to be between Lombard and Attla, with Attla having to make up 3.24 minutes going into the final heat on Sunday.

Lombard posted a slow time Sunday, 111.62 after having trouble in the starting chute which made him lose almost two minutes at that point.

Greenway took over from Taylor after Friday's race when

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Atty. Chides Congressmen on Lack of Knowledge of Natives

To Alaskans, familiar with seeing Alaska Natives in all types of professional, business and technical positions in the State it seems difficult to comprehend that Congressmen in Washington doubt the Natives' competence to manage their own affairs.

Yet, Congressmen, familiar only with reservation Indians in the lower 48 often view Native leadership as a thin veneer of trained "leaders" whose followers are mainly poor and uneducated people, incapable of managing large amounts of funds

such as would be provided in a land claims settlement.

To combat this image, Tanana Chiefs' attorney Barry Jackson is trying to develop an Alaskan Natives "Who's Who."

This exhibit would list brief biographies of natives who are professionals, businessmen, technicians and public servants—to establish that Alaskan Native leaders are not just the 20 or 30 AFN board members seen lobbying in Washington.

They are trying to show Congressmen that trained and com-

petent Alaskan Natives fill positions in all walks of life, not just politics. Also, that many native permeate the lower 48, many of whom would return if sufficient opportunities become available.

"Based on our Washington, D.C. contacts," Jackson told the Tundra Times, "and discussion with our Congressional delegation, we have discovered that many Congressmen and Senators who are familiar only with the depressed condition of Indian

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