

PAUL FRIGGENS WRITES ABOUT ALASKA

By BETSY BRENNEMAN
Staff Writer

Paul Friggens has been writing for Reader's Digest for 29 years. During much of that time his "yearning desire" to know more about Alaska persisted and he began writing about the state in 1969 with a story on the oil strike on the North Slope. Two more pipeline articles followed, the most recent appearing over a year ago after he traveled the full length of the line.

As he became aware of the land claims issue, Friggens began gathering material, talking to native leaders like Emil Notti, John Borbridge, Willie Hensley and Howard Rock, and keeping

up an active file. In the back of his mind he was "writing" a future article on the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act.

But he decided to wait until the act was implemented and the corporations were off and running. "This is a very complex place," he says. "You don't just come up here and write a piece on Alaska overnight unless it's very superficial."

At the same time another idea was brewing. Friggens decided that it was time that Reader's Digest's estimated 100 million readers worldwide know about Howard Rock. Friggens had met with Rock, founder,

publisher and editor of the Tundra Times, several times in the past and says that he found him to be "one of the most interesting, sensitive, quiet, soft-spoken people I'd ever met."

This summer, when he returned to Alaska for his sixth trip, the roving editor from Boulder, Colorado, was shocked to learn that Rock has passed away in April. Now, the personality piece may never be written.

However, an article on land claims is being seriously considered by the magazine,

although Friggens says he never knows when and if any of his stories will finally appear. He's fascinated with the idea of bush stockholders and says he's very impressed with the cadre of young, capable, articulate natives in government and business management.

Paul Friggens also says that when he speaks with state officials and other knowledgeable people, it is universally agreed that the impact of land claims is just beginning and that it will be far beyond what anyone suspected. He's convinced

that the native corporations are a tremendous force in the development of capital for the state.

An update on the pipeline may also come out of information he's gathering this month but what Friggens would really like to do is submit a piece on Alaska for the Digest's "Armchair Travel Log." It hasn't been done before and he says it would not just be about the state's amazing natural wonders, but also about the Alaskan spirit, its people, its motivations, and its future.

Common Inuit language

Eskimo Point-Communication in the north may take a giant step forward this month, as a number of Inuit gather to decide upon a common writing system for the whole Canadian north.

Delegates to the meeting, which will take place August 30 to September 3 in Frobisher Bay, will include regional language commissioners, and members of a special advisory subcommittee who have been studying the language situation for two years.

Jose Kusugak, director of the Language Commission, which operates through the Inuit Cultural Institute in Eskimo Point, explained that a common written language in the north would do much to alleviate communication barriers between Inuit in different regions. Right now, there are five different written systems in use in the north.

In addition to Inuit advisors, language commissioners, and representatives from the six Inuit regional associations, delegates to the meeting are expected to include representatives from the various churches as well as the territorial government.

They will listen to the reports of studies done during the two years the language commission has been in existence, and then decide whether they wish to adopt these proposed systems.

If these systems are accepted, delegates will spend time working on an implementation plan to teach Inuit of all ages the new writing systems as soon as possible.

The new systems are based on a 21-letter roman alphabet and a syllabics system which has been reduced from 48 main syllabics symbols to 42.

For more information contact: Jose Kusugak, Director, or Terry Reilander, Information Officer, at Inuit Cultural Institute, Language Department, Eskimo Point, N.W.T., XOE OEO. Phone 857-3323 or 857-8820.



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"By the time the pipeline comes on stream 75% to 85% of the costs of operating state government will come from taxes and royalties from the oil industry."



Bob Underwood

"The owners of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline have delivered their 1975 property tax return on the pipeline. The total valuation submitted with this return was \$3.35 billion. To my knowledge this was the largest tax return that's ever been filed — certainly in the United States, and as far as I know in the entire world. The taxes from this will be approximately \$68 million. This income will be shared by the various municipalities and the State."

If you compare the tax structure in Alaska with other states (as it applies to the petroleum industry) Alaska levies the highest taxes of any of the oil producing states in the Union.

In the past four or five years for example, if you total the lease sales, and the taxes and royalties coming from petroleum operations throughout the state, you'll see that the contribution from the oil industry already amounts to some 45% to 50% of the total state expenditures.

Now if you look down the road, to the time when Prud-

hoe Bay production commences, 75% to 85% of total state expenditures will come from the oil industry.

Clearly the oil industry pays its own way in Alaska.

And for that reason we feel the oil industry is uniquely suited to the needs of Alaska. It's a capital intensive industry. It brings large amounts of capital to the state, in lease sales, investments, royalties and taxes — without the need of spending most of this tax income of the industry or its employees.

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