

RURALCAP's ACTION REPORTS

RurALCAP



Partners for Progress
with Alaska's Communities

The weekly newsletter of the NON-PROFIT, PRIVATE CORPORATION
which serves rural Alaska in the battle against poverty in our state.

An information and education function of Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.



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Equipment Arrives at Seward Dock

The ship Linden Wood Victory was scheduled to arrive in Seward yesterday, May 8, with 21 pieces of heavy equipment for Alaska's villages.

The Military Sea Transport Service vessel sailed from Japan with the equipment about 10 days ago. The long-awaited heavy equipment was obtained for the villages by Rural Alaska Community Action Program under a military surplus acquisition project originally sponsored by RurALCAP and the Office of former Sen. Ernest Gruening.

It was the first time surplus heavy

equipment held by the Agency for International Development - - equipment which is used for foreign aid projects - - had been obtained instead for poor areas in the United States.

Announcement of the scheduled arrival of the ship was made today by Larry Brayton, director of RurALCAP, and Tim Smith, director of the surplus acquisition program for RurALCAP.

The heavy equipment will include 10 D-4 caterpillars, eight D-7 caterpillars, one grader, one dumptruck and one reefer van, or self-contained freezer unit on

wheels. All the caterpillars and the reefer van are slated to go to various villages. The dumptruck and grader will be retained by the agency and loaned out to villages for specific projects.

Most villages slated to receive the equipment have indicated they will use them primarily for work on airport runways and roads not funded by the Department of Highways and for moving buildings and logging operations, Smith said.

Approximately 60 persons from vil-

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Board, OEO Clash Over Conditions

RurALCAP's board of directors and Office of Economic Opportunity officials clashed last week over OEO's decision to place conditions which would restrict RurALCAP's flexibility in operations and budgets on an \$843,000 grant.

Board members approved the conditions and officially accepted the grant only after OEO officials conceded to a compromise solution. The board originally rejected a condition requiring RurALCAP to stick to a line item budget unless changes had been approved by the San Francisco OEO office.

OEO officials indicated the conditions were necessary to insure better communications between RurALCAP and OEO and to allow OEO to monitor RurALCAP's plans and work programs more closely. RurALCAP officials and board members said they thought the restrictions would hamstring the agency in its dealings with other agencies and in meeting any emergency needs.

The requirement, in effect, meant that RurALCAP could not purchase any goods or work on any programs not originally listed in the 1969 grant application turned in several months ago. The compromise

version of the condition said RurALCAP could proceed with plans for changes if an answer on the request was not received from OEO within 13 days. It also called for OEO to review RurALCAP's programs for the board's meeting in June to see if the condition could be eliminated.

The \$843,000 grant from OEO is intended to support RurALCAP's 10 regional development corporations and action centers throughout the state, regional community organization plans and central administration.

Jim Young, OEO district supervisor for Oregon, Washington and Alaska, told the board members the special conditions would allow OEO to "get a handle" on what RurALCAP and its priorities are about so OEO can be a strong supporter of the agency.

Two other special conditions on the grant applied to the military surplus acquisition program and the Seward summer youth program. Both were approved by the board.

The first condition says RurALCAP cannot ship military surplus equipment to the villages until detailed work programs describing what, when and how the



Jim Young: "Need better communications."

villages plan to use the equipment have been submitted and approved by OEO.

Some 20 pieces of heavy equipment are scheduled to be shipped from Seward May 24 to various villages, and it may prove difficult to turn out 20 detailed programs by that date, according to Tim Smith, director of surplus acquisition.

Detailed work programs could not be submitted beforehand, RurALCAP officials said, because it wasn't known

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Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

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Mary Ann Stotts helped prepare RurALCAP Head Start display.

RDA Awards Village Grants

Grants totaling \$18,500 for the development of four villages has been awarded by the Rural Development Agency, the Office of Gov. Keith H. Miller announced last week.

Minto will receive \$8,500 to help relocate its village on the northern side of Rock Island Lake. The village is presently on the Tanana River and has been threatened by floods every year.

A grant of \$5,000 will go to Tuliksak to construct a community hall building. Also, construction of a community hall building is for Kiana, near Kotzebue. Kiana will receive a grant of \$2,500.

Akhiok, located on Kodiak Island, will receive \$2,500 for construction of a dam.

Natives Attend State PTA Conference

The Alaska Congress of Parent Teachers Association met in Kenai April 25-26 for its statewide conference and for the first time Alaska's villages were broadly represented.

Twenty three Native parent leaders - 13 of those representing RurALCAP - attended the state PTA conference as part of the PTA's Native Parents Project. Maj. O. H. Entwistle Jr., president of the congress, and Marge Frelin, member of the PTA board of managers, were both instrumental in arranging for the project.

Parents and leaders sent to the conference were representative of RurALCAP, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Tlingit-Haida Association of Anchorage.

The RurALCAP delegation was selected by the Head Start staff and some of the delegates are teachers or teacher-aides in the Head Start Program. More than

half were parents. Natives at the conference observed and participated actively in the convention workshops.

Miss Sally Miner, director of RurALCAP's child development programs, said "Head Start for a long time has been trying to get parents involved and the PTA has helped stimulate parents to work and cooperate with teachers." She said many of the delegates are now considering establishing PTA's in their own villages.

Mrs. Edward (Charlotte) Ryan of Massachusetts, national PTA legislative chairman, gave the keynote address to about 150 persons at the PTA meeting and said she believed the children must be kept involved in their own education and in PTA.

Maj. Entwistle and Mrs. Ryan on Tuesday, April 27, visited Nunapitchuk, the only known Alaskan village with an organized PTA. Mrs. Barbara Nick of Nunapitchuk was also asked to speak before the convention.

Other speakers at the meeting were Dr. Vivian Harlin, Seattle physician who discussed the PTA's smoking and health project, and Dr. Harry Smallembury, who spoke on the PTA's children's emotional health project.

Representing RurALCAP at the conference were Laura Ramoth, Mary Ann Stotts, Mary Ayojiak, Virginia Demmert, Dorothy Kelly, Billy Nashoalook, Helen Skeek, Tim Wonhola, Carol Hunter, Justine Albert, Helena Nelson, Elena Nick, Martin Moore, Miss Miner, Mary Alice Seville and Margaret Connet.

The Alaska PTA paid for food and lodging for the delegates while RurALCAP supplied the airline tickets.

The RurALCAP teachers and parents brought with them to the conference a large display of Head Start activities and work, Miss Miner said.



Mrs. Charlotte Ryan of Massachusetts, representative of the national PTA, was keynote speaker for the state PTA conference. Here she talks with Mary Ayojiak and Mary Ann Stotts.

Kuskokwim Battle: The Story Behind It

Editors note: The RurALCAP board of directors last week passed a resolution supporting the Kuskokwim Fishermen's Cooperative in its efforts to be an independent business and in its rights to proceed with competitive business transactions without interference from the Fish and Game Board. RurALCAP helped the cooperative last year in getting established. The following analysis of the situation is reprinted with permission of the Anchorage Daily News.

BY JOHN WIESE

Fisheries Editor, Anchorage Daily News

The big flap over Kuskokwim river salmon, a fishermen's co-operative and Japanese buyers involves a broader issue than that which appears on the surface. It's like an iceberg

At first glance it appears to be a case of officialdom looking askance at a small group of Native fishermen delivering salmon to a foreign outfit, with some observers disapproving because they feel that it amounts to unwarranted action against a deprived people, while others see the Kuskokwim project as an unfair activity on the part of those fishermen and foreign competitors.

Beneath the surface there is a history of chronic conflict that involves a long-established set of fisheries operators - generally called "the Alaska canned salmon industry" - and most of their fishermen.

The industry people are almost exclusively from out-of-state. The fishermen are principally Alaska residents, including Natives and non-natives.

In the past few days the Alaska Board of Fish and Game adopted a policy opposing any arrangement to allow foreigners to buy salmon from Alaska fishermen. The board's act - the exact impact of which is hazy at this time - drew reactions from several leaders among

fishermen that help to illuminate the issue.

For the most part these expressions condemned the board's position. Where it wasn't condemned it was condoned - but out of a feeling of futility.

Truman Emberg, a veteran leader of Bristol Bay resident fishermen, observed: "The board sure exceeded its authority in that one. In the past, whenever any fishermen's group has gone to the board for a regulation based on an economic rationale, the argument has been rejected with the excuse that the board only has authority in biological - conservation matters.

"This makes a man wonder who got to them. If the fishermen in Alaska are ever going to make any headway they've got to get some competition to face the canned salmon industry and it looks like the board acted to make sure that this won't happen."

In Cordova, fishermen's co-op business manager Harold Hansen said, "This is an issue affecting fishermen of the entire state. The canned salmon boys must have influenced the board. And the board did something that makes it clear that they want to remove the Alaska fishermen from any competitive market whatsoever.

"They want to keep the fishermen

here in the state totally dominated by the Alaska canned salmon industry. Their action to try to keep Japanese competition out is completely arbitrary and it comes from a board that wants to see the fishermen totally dominated by the canned salmon industry, just as they were prior to statehood."

In Kodiak, Sam Selvog who is president of a fishermen's marketing organization said, "It is unrealistic to try to use Japanese buyers as competition and it isn't going to make any difference."

Selvog contributed this pessimistic observation supporting his sense of futility:

"We have tried to use the threat of Japanese against our canners but over 90 per cent of the fishing fleet is owned and controlled by them in one way or another - at least here in Kodiak - and we're only kidding ourselves trying to run a bluff with a threat like that.

"We had cases here recently - when we were trying to make a deal with them - where they cut off the groceries and credit and forced fishermen to take what they wanted anyway. I can't see bucking a situation making empty threats. It only does harm in the long run.

"The Japanese have never left us anything good anyway, as I see it. So I don't see why we should let them in."

Commercial salmon fishermen of Alaska are faced with a unique condition that is historic and chronic. They are producer-laborers in an outmoded industrial operation in which few modern-day benefits reach them.

Technically they are "independent entrepreneurs" but their independence is largely mythical. They are legally restricted from employing any effective form of collective bargaining.

As a substitute they are permitted to get together in what is termed "marketing co-operatives," but which are usually ineffective because of legal restraints and because they lack any appreciable degree of independence from canners.

Leaders in the past several years have placed hopes for a remedy in a three-pronged assault on the status quo:

1. Bring in meaningful competition to the established canned salmon industry, even if this means bringing in Japanese buyers as a temporary expedient. This was begun in 1964 when Cordova fishermen and canners deadlocked and the fishermen, aided by a sympathetic state regime, sold most of their catches to

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Board, OEO Clash on Special Conditions

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until very recently exactly which equipment would be available.

George Irvin, OEO's field representative to Alaska, said about the surplus acquisition program: "If the program is a success, we'll consider an expansion of it - and that's a promise. But if RurALCAP fails, we will have learned an expensive lesson - and there will be a lot of egg on OEO's face."

Another condition requires RurALCAP to turn a \$6,000 grant over to the incorporated Seward Community Action Program for a youth program. OEO officials said extra money may be available for the Seward program this summer.

The board also moved to meet RurALCAP's original goal of spinning off 10



Larry Brayton: "We can't live with those conditions."

regional development corporations by 1970. They said plans for helping the corporations take over their own fiscal management should also be worked out this year.

Surplus Equipment Reaches Alaska

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lages expected to receive the equipment and from villages already possessing such equipment, will be in Seward May 12-23 for initial training on the equipment. They will attend another session Oct. 6 - Dec. 12 in Seward for a more detailed mechanic's course.

The training session is being funded by a \$204,000 grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. RurALCAP arranged for the training in connection with its acquisition project.

The equipment will stay in Seward for the initial training period. It is scheduled to be shipped to the villages May 24 via the Air Force Operation Cool Barge, a logistic supply barge for DEW line and White Alice stations. The transportation is being provided free.

Work on the surplus acquisition program began last summer and the equipment was originally expected to arrive in Alaska in October of 1968. But complications and redtape in getting written authorizations from the many federal agencies involved held up the program for more than six months.

The program was funded by a \$46,000 congressional grant to the Office of Economic Opportunity and in turn to RurALCAP. The grant paid transportation costs for getting the equipment to Alaska. Top-level agencies involved in the program, however, included the U.S. Office of Education, the U.S. Labor Department, OEO and the Agency for International Development, who had possession of the surplus equipment.

Earlier this year, RurALCAP also obtained equipment under this program from military sites on the western coast of the United States. Included in that acquisition were five refrigeration units, some armored cable, two jeeps and 26

generators which have been given to the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative for electrifying villages.

Five 65-foot Army T-boats, now on their way to Alaska, were also obtained from the west coast under this same program. The boats were acquired and outfitted by the Community Enterprise Development Corp., a delegate agency of RurALCAP, for use as tenders in fishery cooperative operations. All military surplus equipment attained through the program is considered on loan to the villages.

Villages slated to receive caterpillars are: Alakanuk, Elim, Unalakleet, Copper Center, Kwethluk, Tuluksak, Kotlik, Hooper Bay, Kake, Kasigluk, Quinhagak, Kipnuk, Larson Bay, Kivalina, Buckland, Kwigillingok, Tununak, and Kalskag. Kavalina is also slated to receive the reefer van.

Rumsfeld Hearing Set

OEO director designate Donald Rumsfeld will appear for confirmation hearing before the Senate, Labor and Public Welfare Committee on May 13.

Following the committee hearings, a vote by the full Senate is needed before Representative Rumsfeld is confirmed.

Rumsfeld, Republican representative from Illinois, was named two weeks ago by President Nixon to succeed OEO Acting Director Bertrand Harding.

Upon confirmation of his appointment Rumsfeld must give up his Congressional Commission.

RurALCAP's ACTION REPORTS welcomes news items and reports on Community problems, special projects and progress in all parts of rural Alaska where the war against poverty is being waged. Community workers are urged to send reports on any items of interest to this paper at the address listed below.

Story Behind The Kuskokwim Battle

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Japanese (plus one break-away canned salmon operator.)

2. Establish genuine fishermen's co-operatives to compete with (or to replace, if necessary) the established industry. Since this requires funds far beyond the present abilities of fishermen, there has been slow progress in this direction.

3. Work for the establishment of modern processing facilities in fishing towns to compete with canneries, especially public cold storages. These facilities would have to be financed by such public funds as the U.S. Economic Development Administration or the Small Business Administration.

Three such facilities have been applied for and are moving forward, exclusive of the one secured for the Kuskokwim Fishermen's Cooperative at Bethel. The three would be located at Dillingham in Bristol Bay, at Cordova and in Yakutat.

It is understandable, then, that Alaska's fishermen generally are closely following the latest Kuskokwim River flap.

If the Kuskokwim co-op and its program can be scuttled, they too can founder. If it succeeds, then they have a precedent to help their cause.

And, conversely, the masters in the established canned salmon industry of Alaska are aware that a successful Native-Japanese venture on the Kuskokwim can spell trouble for them . . .

If the Kuskokwim Native fishermen can be advanced toward their goal of a genuine co-operative operation, and a freezer of their own, by interim Japanese competition this year (especially after last season's ruckus) then the same formula can be worked out for Bristol Bay, or for Cook Inlet, or Cordova, or anywhere else.

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