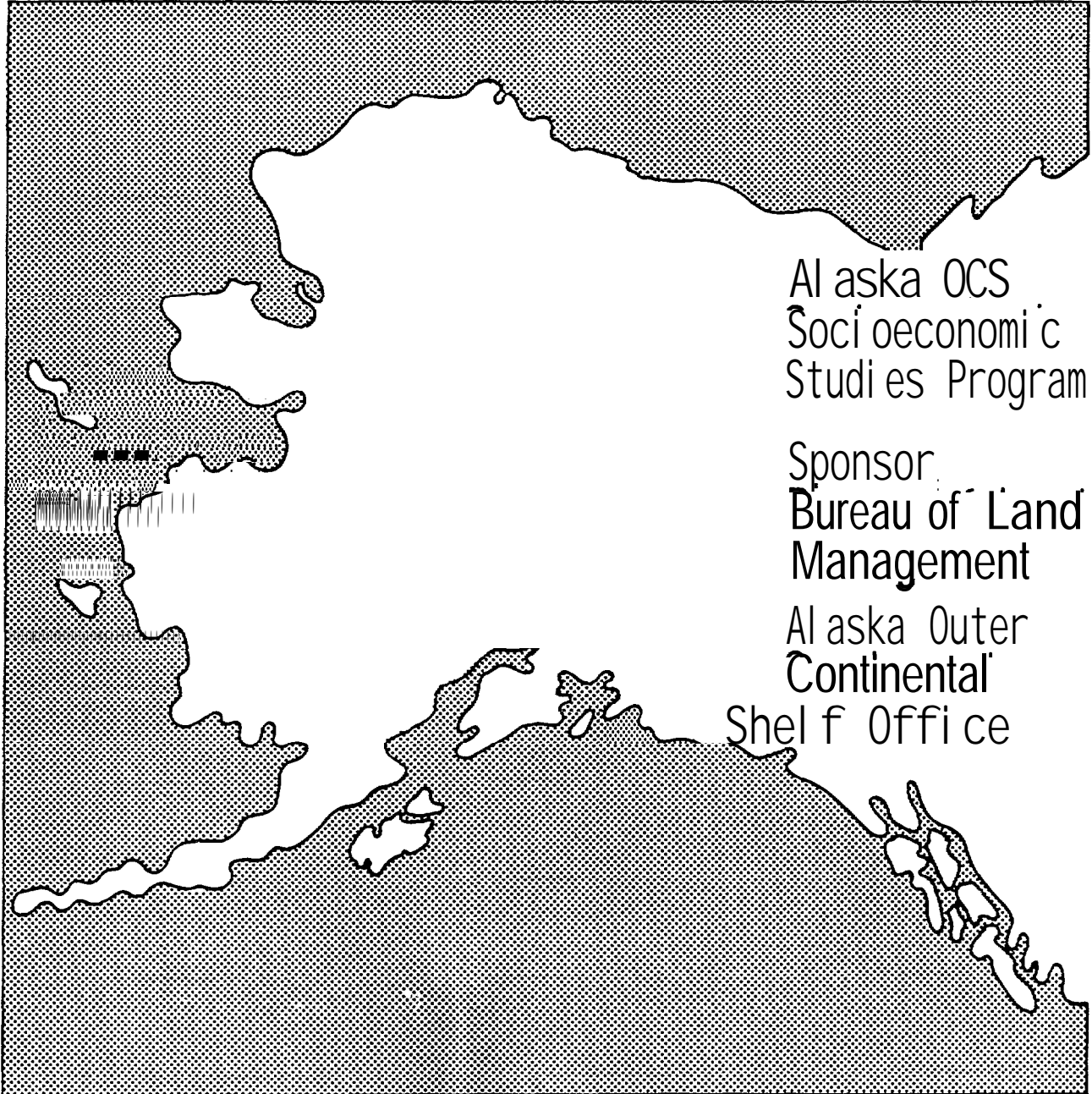


TECHNICAL REPORT  
NUMBER 70



NAVARIN BASIN SOCIOCULTURAL  
SYSTEMS BASELINE ANALYSIS

The United States Department of the Interior was designated by the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lands Act of 1953 to carry out the majority of the Act's provisions for administering the mineral leasing and development of offshore areas of the United States under federal jurisdiction. Within the Department, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has the responsibility to meet requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as well as other legislation and regulations dealing with the effects of offshore development. In Alaska, unique cultural differences and climatic conditions create a need for developing additional socioeconomic and environmental information to improve OCS decision making at all governmental levels. In fulfillment of its federal responsibilities and with an awareness of these additional information needs, the BLM has initiated several investigative programs, one of which is the Alaska OCS Socioeconomic Studies Program (SESP).

The Alaska OCS Socioeconomic Studies Program is a multi-year research effort which attempts to predict and evaluate the effects of Alaska OCS Petroleum Development upon the physical, social, and economic environments within the state. The overall methodology is divided into three broad research components. The first component identifies an alternative set of assumptions regarding the location, the nature, and the timing of future petroleum events and related activities. In this component, the program takes into account the particular needs of the petroleum industry and projects the human, technological, economic, and environmental offshore and onshore development requirements of the regional petroleum industry.

The second component focuses on data gathering that identifies those quantifiable and qualifiable facts by which OCS-induced changes can be assessed. The critical community and regional components are identified and evaluated. Current endogenous and exogenous sources of change and functional organization among different sectors of community and regional life are analyzed. Susceptible community relationships, values, activities, and processes also are included.

The third research component focuses on an evaluation of the changes that could occur due to the potential oil and gas development. Impact evaluation concentrates on an analysis of the impacts at the statewide, regional, and local level.

In general, program products are sequentially arranged in accordance with BLM's proposed OCS lease sale schedule, so that information is timely to decisionmaking. Reports are available through the National Technical Information Service, and the BLM has a limited number of copies available through the Alaska OCS Office. Inquiries for information should be directed to: Program Coordinator (COAR), Socioeconomic Studies Program, Alaska OCS Office, P. O. Box 1159, Anchorage, Alaska 99510.

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 70

Contract No. AA851-CT0-24

**Alaska OCS** Socioeconomic Studies Program

NAVARIN BASIN SOCIOCULTURAL SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

Prepared by

ANN FIENUP-RIORDAN

Prepared for

Bureau of Land Management

Outer Continental Shelf Office

January 1982

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Alaska OCS Socioeconomic Studies Program  
Navarin Basin Sociocultural Systems Analysis

Prepared by  
Ann Fienup-Riordan  
Contract No.: AA851-CT0-24

January 31, 1982

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PART I: . HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND  
CONTEMPORARY SITUATION

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Context of Study

#### STUDY PARAMETERS

The following document attempts to **bring** together baseline information on the **sociocultural** systems of the onshore communities contiguous to the Navarin Basin lease **sale** area, especially such information as is pertinent to the evaluation of the effects of projected Outer Continental **Shelf** (OCS) development in the Navarin **Basin**. The goal is first to , identify those systems of human activity potentially affected by OCS development, to specify the current trends within those systems, and finally to specify the susceptibility for change within those identifiable trends. Attention will be given to the **sociocultural** systems of the coastal communities adjacent to the **Navarin** Basin, as **well** as to the riverine and tundra communities surrounding Bethel, the regional center for the study area. The **sociocultural** systems of Bethel will **also be** described in detail, as **well** as the interrelation between Bethel **sociocultural** systems and those of the surrounding villages.

The study area (i.e., the area assumed to be potentially affected **by** exploration and development in the Navarin Basin) includes the **village** of Scammon Bay and all of the coastal communities running south **up** to and including the **village** of **Quinhagak** at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. The community of Mekoryuk on Nunivak **Island** has also been included.

Entering the mouth of the Kuskokwim, all of the currently occupied **riverine** villages have been included as far upriver as Akiak, as well as the tundra villages of Nunapitchuk, Atmautluak, and **Kasigluak** (see Figure 1). The villages of the Yukon delta and the lower Yukon River covered in the Bering Norton Petroleum Development Scenarios **Sociocultural** Systems Analysis (**Elianna**, 1980) will only be dealt with insofar as they relate directly to **the** study area as a whole.

The present study was authorized in response to Proposed Sale #83 scheduled to take place in December of 1984. The study was undertaken for the Socioeconomic Studies Program (**SESP**) of the Alaska Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Office of the Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior. It is hoped that this document will provide a **useful** synthesis of existing information pertinent to the **sociocultural** systems of the study area and will prove helpful to those concerned with the potential impacts of future OCS exploration and development on the **sociocultural** systems of the study area.

#### RELATION OF THE STUDY TO THE ALASKA OCS PROGRAM

The present document is the sixth **sociocultural** baseline study to be prepared relevant to **sociocultural** systems potentially affected by OCS lease sales in Alaska. The **sociocultural** systems of the communities immediately north of **Scammon** Bay have already been considered in detail in Technical Report Number 51, Volume 1 (**Elianna**, 1980) and the **sociocultural** systems of the communities immediately south of **Quinhagak** in

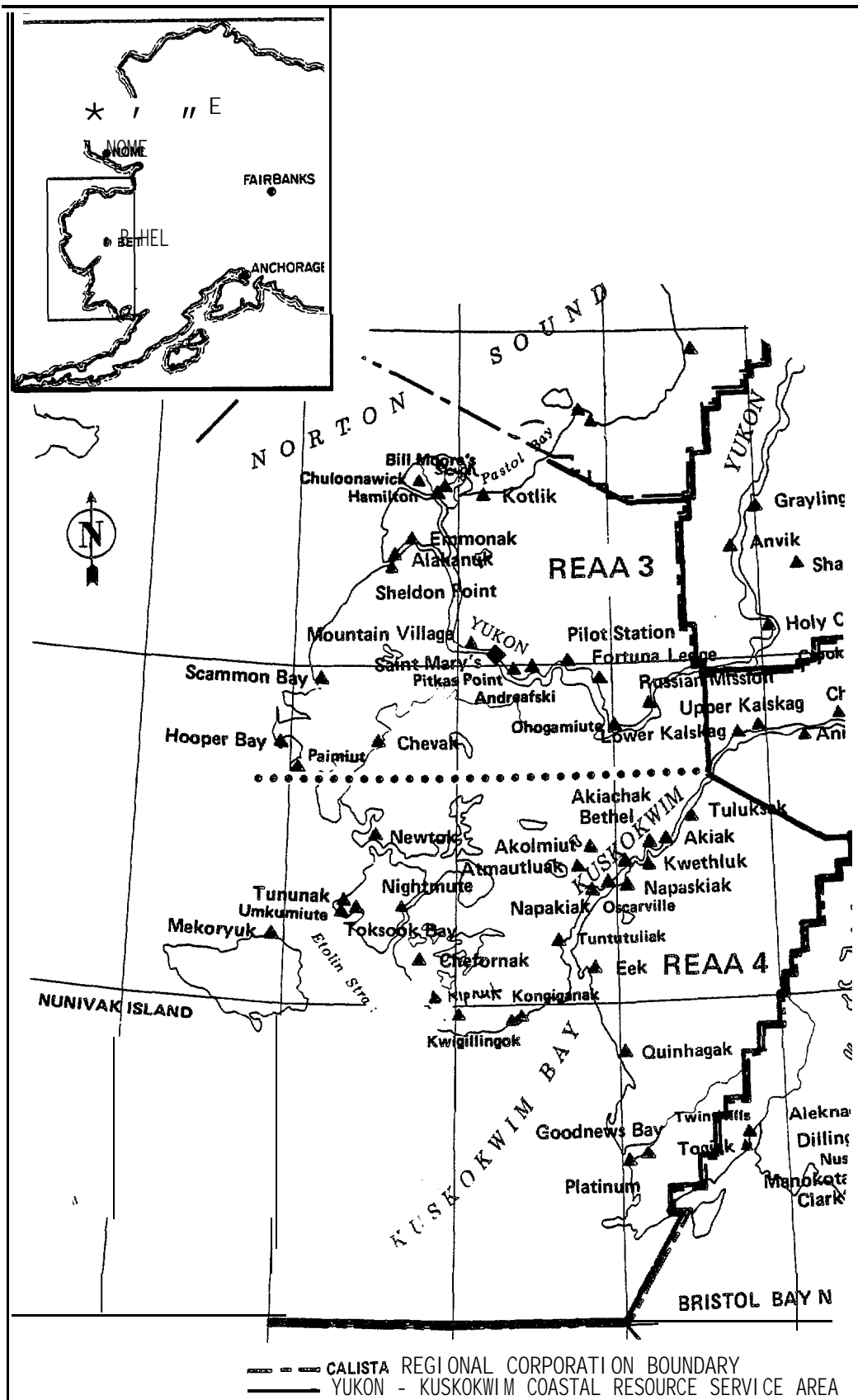


FIGURE 1. STUDY AREA (FROM YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA COASTAL RESOURCE SERVICE AREA PROPOSED WORK PLAN, DARBYSHIRE AND ASSOCIATES, 1980).

the North Al euti an Shelf Baseline **Sociocultural** Systems Analysis (Payne, 1981).

This particular study is one of a number of baseline documents that have been or are in the process of being prepared specifically to deal with the area potentially affected by the Navarin Basin OCS lease sale. These baseline studies include a **socioeconomic study** (concerned chiefly with the economic systems of the regional center, Bethel), as well as a number of physical, biological, and environmental studies.

Among the baseline studies prepared in relation to the **Navarin** Basin lease sale area, the socioeconomic and **sociocultural** studies are the only ones contracted through **SESP**. The **sociocultural** study, as distinct from the socioeconomic study, will focus on the Native village communities, as opposed to the non-Native economic systems of Bethel. More importantly, however, the present **sociocultural** baseline study, as distinct from the socioeconomic baseline study, will concentrate on the unquantifiable aspects of the regional economic systems, both Native and non-Native, and the interaction between them. It will include extensive consideration of the cultural value hierarchy of the affected population, which, as much as motivation for economic gain (itself a value, not a necessity) can be seen to determine the response of the residents of the study area to proposed development in their region.



It is also important to note that the present report, although by no means the last in the SESP series, has been able to take advantage of the refinements in research design and methods of implementation of research goals that have been made by previous SESP researchers. The author thus had foreknowledge of the kinds of issues and concerns that had been addressed, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of previously tested analytical frameworks. This background proved helpful, for although the present document is purportedly a description of socio-cultural systems, the impossibility of ethnography (description) without ethnology (theory) remains as true here as in any other work of social science.

#### STUDY DESIGN AND LIMITATIONS

In order to accomplish the study goal of identifying those systems of human activity potentially affected by OCS development and to specify the current trends within those systems in the study area, the analytical tools of cultural anthropology have been employed. Within cultural anthropology, a sociocultural system can be defined as a system of culturally constituted human activity. Here, the term "system" implies a degree of coherence or structure to the realm of activity designated. The phrase "culturally constituted," on the other hand, ensures that that coherence is neither arbitrarily nor externally applied to the activity of the subject population. On the contrary, the attempt is made to discover the Native value heirarchy, i.e., the system of beliefs, values, symbols, and meanings that governs human action.

According to the perspective provided by cultural anthropology, a **socio-**cultural system is further defined by the **synchronic** and **diachronic** structural relations that characterize that system. In other words, particular elements or features cannot be **seen** to characterize such a system, but rather the relations between elements over time (**diachronically**) and at any one **point** in time (**synchronically**). Thus subsistence activity cannot be viewed as economic activity out of the context of other **social and** exchange relations. Nor **will** current trends in subsistence relations be comprehensible without reference to past trends. Rather, the consideration of particular institutions (social, economic, political, cultural) at any one point in time or particular domains of human activity through time will be seen as expressions of a common ideological structure which connects and to some extent explains them. The **sociocultural** system will be seen to embody a relational world view, by which cultural paradigms **can** be seen to account for factual enigmas.

Also important to consider is the fact that different **sociocultural** systems will be simultaneously, yet often differentially, affected by changed circumstances. By speaking of different degrees of change, the assumption is not that changes can necessarily be quantified and measured such that change up to a certain degree is considered irrelevant while change past that point is critical. On the contrary, it implies the recognition of the basic question of what constitutes fundamental change in the significance of human activity and not merely a change in the formal character of that activity,

**In order to** understand both the underlying ideological connection between **sociocultural** systems, as **well** as how these systems have been and might continue to be impacted by changing circumstances, the author has relied not only on her **training** in the **field** of **cultural** anthropology, but also on her prior experience as a resident and researcher **in** the coastal communities under discussion here. From November of 1976 **until** February of **1978**, the author was fortunate enough to live first in the coastal community of **Toksook** Bay, then in **Chefornak**, and finally in **Bethel** for a short period. The first two experiences enabled her to attain a working knowledge of the **Yup'ik** language. That knowledge was gained through, and **in** turn enabled her to live in, **Yup'ik**-speaking households where she could fully participate in village life as a working member of a family and community.

The author subsequently spent from February of 1978 until March of 1980 alternately visiting 32 villages in the **Yukon-Kuskokwim delta** region (synonymous with the study area) as a family interviewer for the **Mental** Health Division of the **Alaska** Native Hospital and writing a **dissertation** for the Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, based on her field experience on Nelson Island. The job with the Native hospital, contracted through the **Yukon-Kuskokwim Health** Corporation, enabled her to **visit all** of the villages **along** the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** delta coastline, including **all** of those in the study **area**, and to increase her proficiency in **Yup'ik**. This past summer she was **able** to oversee the **final** coding and analysis of the cohort family data that she had collected, and has had access to that information for the **purpose** of the present study.

Two subsequent jobs, one for the State Arts Council, and the other as consultant for the Newark Museum Film Project, have **also** provided further experience in the coastal communities of the study area. Without these experiences, the author would certainly have been unable to conceive and develop the analysis that is presented here.

Finally, in the spring of 1978, the author received a small grant from the Smithsonian Institute Program in Urgent Anthropology, which gave her further opportunity for field experience in the study area, as well as funds to pursue historical research on the **missionization** of the coastal communities at the Oregon Province Archives, **Gonzaga** University, Spokane, Washington. This work, as well as a **limited** amount of primary research with Moravian archival material, was **invaluable** in carrying through the present **sociocultural** analysis, as it was critical that the historical context of the development and **interrelation** of the existing communities be made clear in order to provide an accurate and reliable analysis of the present situation.

Parenthetically, it is important to note that although this is designed as a regional study, with important consideration given to the regional center in Bethel where an interplay of Native and non-Native values is at work, the experience of the author has largely been with the observation and analysis of village **sociocultural** systems at the expense of the regional center. Conscious of this limitation, the author has attempted to correct the lopsided nature of her own experience by devoting a proportionately larger amount of her time and effort while

fulfilling the present contract to developing her understanding of the region as a whole.

The research undertaken specifically for the purposes of this study fell into two general categories, a literature review and field research. The literature review consisted of a thorough and comprehensive consideration of all of the secondary and some of the primary sources available on the sociocultural systems of the study area. Time for extensive primary research was not available, although a large group of archival documents that had already been collected by the author were given careful consideration.

Because of the broader audience that the author hopes to reach, some information found in the literature, but not immediately relevant to the issues of central concern here, has been included in the present document in the form of notes and appendices. Also, an extensive bibliography has been provided as a result of the literature search that the present study involved. Finally, shortcomings in the existing literature have been pointed out wherever possible, in an attempt to clarify the present situation and to facilitate future attempts to plan for the study area.

Minimal field research was also undertaken in order to gain information for purposes of the present study. This consisted of brief visits paid to all of the coastal communities under direct consideration here, as well as a number of inland communities, including the regional center.

Time was spent in each community talking to village elders and officials, gathering information on village facilities and subsistence utilization patterns, as well as seeking villagers' opinions on issues such as subsistence rights and economic development. No formal questionnaire was utilized, but as many of the same issues were found to be relevant in the different communities, patterns began to emerge in the kind and quality of information that the author was able to gather.

The study design did not allow for actual field work, e.g., long-term residence in a community or small group of communities where the methods of participant observation and informal interview serve to elicit information. However, the author had previously either visited or lived in all of the communities under consideration, and had contacts in these communities. These individuals helped to clarify problems that came up in the course of data acquisition while the author was in the village, as well as problems of data analysis that developed after she had left the **village**.

The original research design called for the formalization of this relationship and the hiring of consultants in each village to **help** gather statistical information and to locate information not readily available in published sources. In the end, just as the author had found when she lived on Nelson Island, although some statistical information was successfully put together, the most telling information was the product of friendships and informal conversations with the consultants, and not the specific questions that were put to them. Just as **Yup'ik** adults

require **their** children **to** watch carefully and to try things themselves in order to learn how they are done, so it was important that the author watched the villages, and watched how they changed from one visit to **the** next, rather than be forever asking how and why.

One further comment should **be** made on the study design as it relates to the contours of the **finished** product. One past response to the recognition of a broader audience by **SESP** contractors has been the simplification of analytical apparatus and the generalization **of** the baseline characteristics of a particular study area. While clarity and comprehensibility are also **goals** of the author, the present response to the recognition of the needs of a larger audience has been to try to include reference to as many diverse professional and individual evaluations of the **sociocultural** characteristics of the study area as possible, including those of anthropologists, historians, economists, missionaries, educators, planners, health care and social service workers, communications specialists, public officials, and residents of the villages and the regional center. **Also, rather** than stopping with the provision of general answers to questions we know, the author has tried to point out new and more specific **questions**, the answers to which we do not know.

Finally, **the** most glaring contradiction in the inception and carrying through of a baseline study which has the ultimate purpose of **providing** information for **future** impact assessment is the desire to, and in fact the necessity of, presenting the **sociocultural** system of the study

area **in** full detail (as no one part of the system can be fully **under-**stood without reference to the whole) and the equally compelling need to stress parts of the **sociocultural** system that will potentially be affected by OCS exploration and development. A study of this nature cannot be comprehensive. Rather, it must be specifically aimed at the analysis of significant issues which are relevant to future impact identification and assessment. To diverge from that which is perceived to be immediately relevant is considered wasteful, yet at the same time relationships within the **sociocultural** system can only be perceived as relevant after a full **sociocultural** analysis has been undertaken.

This conundrum is typical of much practical, problem-oriented research, and no simple solution will be given here. What I would like to suggest, however, is that the theoretical inclinations of the author and hence the present study design, have allowed room for the consideration of aspects of the **sociocultural** system of the study area, including the traditional ritual distributions, that continue to bridge the gap between the social, economic, and religious activity in village life. Perhaps the most valuable contribution that the present document can make, to an understanding of the study area as **well** as to the field of **sociocultural** systems analysis in general, is this attempt to unify what has tended in past studies to be held apart through the **considera-**tion of cultural events in which the different realms of human activity are united (**cf.** Ortner, 1978).



## STUDY AREA

As was previously mentioned, **the study** area includes **all of** the coastal communities running **south** from **Scammon Bay** up **to** and including **the** village of **Quinhagak** at the mouth of the **Kuskokwim River**. However, **due** to the terms of the contract, the communities of the Yukon River and the Yukon delta, although included, have been reemphasized. In actual fact, detailed consideration has only been given to the coastal communities south of **the Yukon delta**.

The **25** communities comprising the area of primary concern **fall** roughly into eight village groups, and the eight communities of secondary **importance** fall roughly into two village groups (**Table I**). Although common cultural features unify each of these nine smaller groups, three distinct ecological adaptations are represented: coastal, **riverine**, and tundra-lake.

TABLE I  
VILLAGE GROUPS

<u>Villages of Primary Interest</u>	<u>Cultural Groupings</u>	<u>Population</u>
<b>Quinhagak</b> Eek <b>Tuntutuliak</b>	Lower Kuskokwim	
<b>Kongiganak</b> <b>Kwigillingok</b> Kipnuk	Southern Coastal	
<b>Mekoryuk</b>	Nunivak Island	
Chefornak <b>Nightmute</b> Toksook Bay Tununak Newtok	<b>Nelson</b> Island	
<b>Chevak</b> Hooper Bay Scammon Bay	Northern Coastal	
Nunapi tchuk <b>Kasigluak</b> <b>Atmatluak</b>	Tundra	
Bethel <b>Napaskiak</b> Napakiak <b>Oscarville</b>	Middle Kuskokwim	
<b>Akiachak</b> Akiak <b>Kwethluk</b>	Upper Kuskokwim	
<u>Villages of Secondary Interest</u>	<u>Cultural Grouping</u>	<u>Population</u>
Sheldon's Point <b>Alakanuk</b> Emmonak Kotlik	Yukon Delta	
Mountain Village <b>Pitka's</b> Point Pilot Station St. Mary's	Yukon River	

The entire study area can be characterized by the fact that both **historically** and at the present time its human population has congregated on either lakeshore, riverbank or ocean edge. The traditional reliance on fish and sea mammals for a livelihood, the motivation for the traditional settlement patterns, has **also** continued into the present day. The majority of the communities in the study area occur where they do in order to take advantage **of** a wealth of seasonal subsistence resources. Most were traditional spring or winter camps that, because of their particularly advantageous locations, attracted a large settled population during the early **1900s** when the establishment of schools and mission stations began to **stabilize** a traditionally **highly** mobile population.

The land over which these traditionally migratory people ranged is **quite** uniform in physical characteristics. The entire coastline is low, treeless, marshy tundra save for a 1,000-foot volcanic rise in the topography on both Nelson and Nuni vak islands, as well as the **Asunak** Mountains just to the northeast of **Hooper** Bay. Over 40% of the earth's surface is covered by shallow show-and-sink **lakes** interconnected with innumerable slow-moving sloughs and streams. **It** is a water-saturated area, and what remains above water is often boggy and covered with shrub willow and alder, as well **as** numerous species of lichens, grasses and tundra mosses. The land is very fertile, and fibrous peat extends into the permafrost.

The entire Yukon-Kuskokwim delta is the result of the silting action and alluvial deposits of the two great rivers that form its boundaries and **supply** its livelihood. The 800-mile-long Kuskokwim system drains 50,000 square miles, flowing from the interior of Alaska and carrying immense amounts of sediment in its muddy ramble to the southeastern sector of the Bering Sea. Many areas both along the coastline and along the rivers are still susceptible to seasonal flooding. Whole communities have recently been relocated to higher ground both to avoid this flooding as well as to provide house sites for growing populations as the river and sea continue to eat away at many of the traditional village sites (e.g., the Bethel riverfront).

The climate of the study area is maritime and extreme. The annual range is between 4° and 54° F. Annual precipitation and snow measure 12 and 50 inches, respectively. The climate is affected primarily by the Bering Sea to the west and the **Kilbuck-Ahklu** mountain ranges to the east and **south**. These ranges, along with the Aleutians, tend to direct some storms northeastward into the Bering Sea and the coastal lowland country. The prevailing winds are northwest in the winter and southeast in the summer, and quite frequently blow to **70** miles per hour. For five months of the year, the land of ice and snow is more accurately the land of wind and rain. Windstorms are often so severe as to keep villagers homebound for days at a **time**.

Along the coast, shore ice begins to form in early December and starts to disappear in late April or early May. By the end of June, **the**

**Bering Sea is ice free.** Then **the** tundra, as well as the sea, comes alive. Within the **Eskimoan** biotic province, the growing season is **only 100 days long,** but in that time **the tundra** bears prodigiously, its offspring including numerous species of sedges and **grasses, low-**growing berry bushes, **edible plants,** mushrooms, lichens, and mosses, as **well** as scrub willow and alder (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:16**).

The **Yup'ik** Eskimo have **lived** on the coast of the Bering Sea for the **last 2,000 years (Nowak, 1970).** They probably came over the Bering Sea **land bridge** in one of the **last** of a number of migrations into the New World (Ray, **1975a**). The **Athabascans** were their predecessors on the continent. But while these earlier peoples settled in the interior, the Eskimo spread along the coast, the **Inuit** to the north and the **Yup'ik** to "the **south.** There they developed a successful **adaptation** to sea **mammal** hunting and fishing and were able to take **advantage** of the relative abundance available **along** the coast (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:22**). It is only in the **last** several hundred years that **the Yup'ik** have moved away from the coast. and **up** the Kuskokwim River valley (**Oswalt, 1962**).

Since that time, trade relations have been maintained between **the** coastal groups of the **Yukon-Kuskokwim delta** and the tundra and **river-**ine peoples of the interior. Sea **mammal** products were **traditionally** exchanged for the **animal** skins and dried fish not available **on** the coast. **As will** be shown in the course of this report, such connections between groups are **still** in effect, with the relatively new

regional center of Bethel often providing the meeting ground for inland and coastal populations.

Linguistically, the residents of the study area are classified with the entire body of central **Yup'ik** speakers inhabiting the lower reaches of the Yukon, **Kuskokwim** and **Nushagak** rivers and the adjacent coastline and tundra, as opposed to the speakers of Inupiat (the language of the **Inuit**) residing along the coast to the north of **Unalakleet**, which is a mixed town. Although the Native population of the study area is relatively homogeneous linguistically as well as culturally, vocabulary differences do distinguish the different village groups. **Yup'ik** is **still** the first language of the delta and is spoken in most homes. Children living in the coastal communities to the south of the Yukon delta usually only acquire English as a second language when they enter school (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:22**).

All of the villages in the study area except Hooper **Bay/Chevak/Scammon** Bay are joined in the Bethel Census District, which was first distinguished in 1939. The latter are in the **Wade-hampton** Census Division. All belong to the Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**), a delta-wide administrative organization centered in Bethel, the trade and administrative center for the region. Formed in **1964**, AVCP serves as an advisory board and, especially prior to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (**ANCSA**), a dispensing **agent** for government monies. Today, in the capacity of nonprofit corporation, it continues to represent all of the 57 villages now included in the **Calista** Region,

**set up under ANCSA. Calista** (lit. "the worker") has the second **largest** population (approximately 16,500) of the **13** regional **corporations set up under ANCSA**, and that population is among the most **subsistence-oriented** in the state. Within **the AVCP** region (synonymous with **Calista**), the coastal area is the richest **in terms of** available fish and game, and the traditional subsistence **life-style, like** the language, continues with striking vitality,

Although no case can be made for these communities as a time capsule retaining the traditional **Yup'ik** lifestyle uncontaminated **by** contact with the larger world, relatively **late** contact and geographical isolation, combined with the **lack** of commercially **exploitable** resources (**e.g.**, whales, **gold**, fish, and **fur**), but an abundance of subsistence resources, have allowed the coastal residents a **great** deal of leeway in their plunge into the twentieth century, and they have retained a subsistence ideology and lifestyle that can **be** seen to act as a filtering device **for** their present experience of the outside world (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:24).

### Theoretical Orientation

As set **forth** briefly above, this particular technical report involves the application of the methodological and analytical **tools of** cultural anthropology to the **sociocultural** systems of the study area in order to accomplish the study goal of identifying the systems of human activity potentially affected by **OCS** exploration and development, and the current trends within these systems in the study area. As **SESP** is a multidisciplinary undertaking, this baseline report, written from a perspective of cultural anthropology, represents **only** one of several

different perspectives that are being brought to bear on the study area. Also, as there are differences of opinion within the field of cultural anthropology itself, this report represents only one of a number of anthropological perspectives that could have been applied to the material at hand. Thus, it behooves us to take a closer look at the anthropological perspective as compared **to** the perspectives that other disciplines might bring to the social, political, cultural and economic activity of the **population** of the study area, as well as the particular brand of cultural **anthropology** that underlies this study.

Cultural anthropology can be succinctly defined as the study of human culture, with human culture understood as the system of symbols and meanings that underlie human activity and understanding. As defined by Dolgin et al. (1977:3), cultural anthropology is "the science of the basic terms with which we view ourselves as people and as members of society, and of how these terms are used by people to build for themselves a mode of life." In other words, cultural anthropology makes the assumption that people act based on beliefs about themselves and about how their world is put together. These beliefs are ordered in relation to one another. Their coherence is understood to be neither arbitrarily nor externally applied, but representative of a Native value hierarchy. Finally, an understanding of the internal systematic relationship between beliefs, and between **belief** and action (the systems of culturally constituted human activity as laid out above) is what **sociocultural** systems analysis is **all** about.



The question then **arises** as to how one goes about exploring and explaining these **sociocultural** systems. Anthropologists are not the **only** ones who seek to learn the intricacies **of** human ideology and practice. As **a child**, each human being attempts to better understand the cultural framework within **which** he lives and breathes. However, the difference between the intent and methodology of the child and the anthropologist is pronounced, although in practicing their trade, the latter is often treated as the former (e. g., **Briggs**, 1970). Again according to **Dolgin et al. (1977:4)**:

The difference **is** that the engine of the **child's** effort is **largely unself-conscious** and natural, shaped by the developmental process and by the child's drives and needs as a whole person, while that of the **anthropologist** is a feature of the anthropologist's own culture: the need to understand belief and meaning, and the theory which guides that effort. **Thus**, while children **concretize** what they learn as their own orientations to action **in the world**, anthropologists **abstract** a general pattern from what they learn; they abstract a system which more or less comprehends the lives of the foreign other, and thereby provides more grist for the comparative mill.

#### THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL CATEGORY

One central feature of **the SESP** endeavor, and **in fact** one of the key reasons for its employment of cultural anthropologists, is the need of SESP to identify specific variables of the **sociocultural** systems of the study area and then to evaluate them as to their degree of susceptibility to change. This endeavor makes two key assumptions, both of

which must be kept in mind in the evaluation of the following baseline description and analysis. The first assumption is that such variables of **sociocultural** systems are identifiable, and the second that the history of regional development can give us some idea of what may happen in the future.

In addressing the first assumption, a central problem in anthropological description and analysis emerges: the problem of the designation of distinct aspects of the cultural whole. All too often constraints and boundaries are placed on the activities of a people which are arbitrary and external in relation to the value hierarchy of that particular group. As there is no **ethnography** without ethnology, or in layman's terms no description without an underlying theory, the division of human activity into social, economic and political components in an apparently objective manner often makes highly arbitrary distinctions completely external to the cultural configurations being described.

Thus it is critical in **sociocultural** systems description and analysis that categories true to the Native point of view be sought. Also as categories of persons, objects and activities begin to emerge, it is the relations of these categories over time and at any one point in time that must be seen to characterize the **sociocultural** system. In other words, the exchange of goods and services that characterizes the "spring" distribution of **seal** meat on the one hand and the gift of seal meat to a close relative on the other cannot be seen as representative

of two distinct domains of **activity, e.g.**, economic and social. Rather, the consideration of social, economic and **political** activities at any **one** point in time as **well as** the consideration of any **particular** kind of human activity through **time will** be seen as expressions of a common ideological structure **which** simultaneously connects and to some extent explains them. Thus the analysis of **sociocultural** systems involves a relational **world** view, by which cultural paradigms can be seen **to** "cook" the data, **i.e.**, to account for and **help** to explain the apparent vagaries and inconsistencies of events perceived as "**raw**" (antisocial and/or meaningless ) **by** the outsider.

This approach is offered as an alternative to the reification of western analytical categories prevalent in some of the earlier **socio-**cultural reports. Their reductionism is dangerously partial, and a more holistic approach is here proposed as an effective alternative in the analysis of the issues relevant **to** impact identification and assessment. Relying on anthropology at its most simplistic is both dangerous and misleading. Although the goal is an understanding **by** non-Natives of the **sociocultural** systems of the **Navarin** Basin as they might come to be affected by future **OCS** development, an accurate and **useful** baseline must reflect the indigenous **value** hierarchy, rather than the external analytical constructs of the investigator and her audience.

For instance, in evaluating the economic **value** of subsistence, outside investigators have isolated and latched onto the nutritional **value** as

the focus of debate (i.e., how can villages afford a substitute with comparable food value). Native organizations, including **Nunam Kitlutsisti**, have responded in kind, separating the cultural, nutritional, and economic value of fish and game. The issue has been greatly confused. If, on the other hand, an original investigation into the value of subsistence had concentrated on the structural significance of the distribution of subsistence products, in their **place** in the definition of kinship and social relations in general, and the logical replication on the material plane of the value hierarchy evident on the **social** plane, no such confusion would have developed.

Finally, although the details of the traditional ideological structure are not contained in this baseline study, reference to the larger **sociocultural** structure has been made in order to allow for present comprehension and future predictions. As the author had already developed a structural account for the Nelson Island Eskimo (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1980a; see also Appendix II: paper prepared for presentation at the 1980 Alaskan Anthropological Association meetings) and has since confirmed the general applicability of this account for the coastal **Yup'ik** living to the north and the south of **Nelson** Island, this basic structure is set out as simultaneously the foundation of **sociocultural** activity and the starting point from which future impact analysis must proceed. Without this kind of overview, the future impact analyst would be lost in a mass of meaningless facts and conjectures. If impact is never totally predictable, at **least** we know that it is also not totally random, as the following discussion **will** make **clear**.

## THE CONCEPT OF STRUCTURED CHANGE

As has been indicated, it **is** impossible to talk about **the** ability or inability of a **social** system to **change unless** the system itself is **well** understood. Ideology often dictates practice, rather than vice versa, and the Native attitude toward anticipated intrusions and economic development is **critical** in gauging the potential response to OCS development. For instance, in describing the baseline characteristics of Bethel and the surrounding **Yup'ik** Eskimo communities, it would be important to note the place of the individual in the **Yup'ik** cultural hierarchy and their related desire not to stand **out**. Statistics on subsistence takes gathered by Fish and Game unwittingly reflect this **value**. Another more important insight that an understanding of the traditional subsistence ideology can provide is the incompatibility of the western concept of species extinction with the traditional **Yup'ik** conception of the cycling of **souls**, both animal and human (see Appendix II). Recently imposed bag limits on species such as geese and musk ox are antithetical to a **still** vital **world** view by which proper care of an **animal** carcass results in the **annual** rebirth of the animal **killed**.

The central thesis of the baseline study is the need for a structural account of the **world** view of the subject population before change **adequately** can be dealt **with**. The question remains: how can impact statements build on such a structural account? The answer **is** that impact statements cannot **build** on the **world** view **or** **Native** value

hierarchy alone. The contact history and **diachronic** account of past impact situations are also important in gauging future response to development. Thus, **diachronic** development and **synchronic** structure are the two chief factors in understanding change as a structured process.

An example from a recent instance of economic development on Nelson Island may serve to clarify the concept of change as a structured process (Fienup-Riordan, 1982). There, in 1972, a new pottery workshop was constructed in the community of **Toksook** Bay in an effort to provide cash employment for the inhabitants, with funding originally coming from Community Enterprise Development Corporation (**CEDC**) and the Catholic Church. But the pottery failed as an economic enterprise because of the conflict between the culturally meaningless activity of potting and the meaningful activity of-hunting. The pottery workshop itself, however, was used extensively by the older men of the **community** as a place in which to meet, talk and fix tools, precisely those activities that they had traditionally performed in the men's house. Thus the failure to actualize development involved more than an incapacity. Rather than lack of community coherence and the inability of the group to cope with change, it indicated the continued vitality of the traditional values. This example of structured change is on a small scale, but the same technique of giving careful consideration to the past before offering an explanation or prediction of development in the future is applicable in the consideration of **Navarin** Basin baseline data as well.

## II. PRE-CONTACT HISTORY

### Geographical Constraints

The aboriginal **Yup'ik** residents **of** the study area traditionally wandered over the vast, **flat**, triangular expanse of the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** delta, following closely the seasonal movements of fish and game. Describing the delta **to** his contemporaries, the Jesuit missionary Paul **Muset** wrote in **1891**, "Everywhere nothing is to be seen" (**1891:362**). However, this rather negative description of the limitless view that **the** study area provides dismisses the marvelous expansiveness of the geography of the region, as **well** as the incredible wealth and variety of the **animal** and plant **life** that inhabit it. In actual fact, the fan-shaped delta stretching from Norton Sound south to Kuskokwim Bay and **inland 200 miles** to the **Kuskokwim** Mountains, is up to **50%** wetlands. This rich marsh area provides the summer home for half a million ducks, geese and swans. Eighty percent of the world's emperor geese nest on the delta. **All** five species of salmon are found in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, with king and chum salmon the most abundant (**Alaska Geographic, 1979**). **Also**, the water circulation directly off the **delta** in the Bering Sea is northward, and the warm ocean currents coming **up** from the south provide a rich variety of plankton which in turn **sup-**ports a wealth of marine **life**. Yet with **all** of this surface water and rich aquatic life, the **800-mile-long Kuskokwim** River drains a semi-arid region, where **annual** precipitation averages **12** inches; near the coast annual precipitation is somewhat higher, running **to** 20 inches, including **50** inches **of** snowfall.

At Bethel, the silt-laden river waters become confined to a manageable channel broken by both large and small islands. The plant cover too is more abundant. Here the mosses are bigger, the grasses grow taller, and the willows are no longer dwarfed but form thickets in sheltered gullies or along the water's edge (**Oswalt, 1963 b:4**). **Farther** upriver, birch trees, and spruce become apparent, but still the land is flat and the waters of the river flow sluggishly toward the sea, whose presence is indicated only by the river **tides**. The lower reaches of the river, where it becomes confined to a mile-wide channel, are ideal salmon fishing grounds. Seal are **still** sometimes sighted, as well as an occasional **beluga** coming after smelt and salmon.

#### Territorial and Linguistic Boundaries

Who were the aboriginal occupants of this rich, wet-dry plain, and from where did they come and **why?**<sup>1</sup> Today, conservative estimates hold that between 20,000 and 15,000 B.C. the ancestors of the North American Indian crossed over the Bering Sea land bridge, eventually moving down into the Great Plains. These first Americans were followed by the descendants of northeastern Siberian hunters, the ancestors of the North American Eskimo. They came across the Bering land bridge during periods of heavy glaciation when water was locked in glaciers and sea level had dropped as much as 150 feet, opening a corridor several hundred miles wide between the old world and the new. They came following the woolly mammoth and **other large** land mammals, but by **1500** B.C. evidence suggests that the aboriginal Eskimo of **Nunivak**



Island and the adjacent coastline had made the transition to the maritime/small sea mammal hunting and gathering adaptation (Nowak, 1970; Oswalt, 1952, 1955).

Although archaeologists have done relatively little excavation along the Kuskokwim, the evidence so far gathered indicates that the Yup'ik have not always occupied the Kuskokwim valley. Rather, they came up the river from the Kuskokwim Bay within the Christian era (Collins, 1954; Giddings, 1960; Oswalt, 1963b). In all likelihood, they first lived along the coast at favorable sea mammal hunting sites where they established semi permanent settlements. Then, in times of scarcity, growing population pressure, and/or changes in fish and game availability, aboriginal Yup'ik gradually moved down the coast and up the Kuskokwim. By 1900 Eskimo camps and villages extended from the sea to the vicinity of Sleetmiut (Oswalt, 1963b:6; also, for a discussion of the historic boundary problem, see Oswalt, 1962-63). Further upriver toward Kalskag, the Yup'ik made their first contacts with the Ingalik, and by earliest recorded history (1842) these two were living in adjacent villages and sometimes even in the same community (Oswalt, 1963b:5). Oswalt's mapping of aboriginal Alaskan Eskimo tribes (Oswalt, 1967:7) gives some idea of the territorial boundaries and spread of the aboriginal population of the study area.<sup>2</sup> Oswalt designates five "tribes" that fall within the parameters of this study. These are the Ikogmiut/ Kwigpagmiut (people of the Yukon delta), Magemiut (Hooper Bay/Chevak), the Kaiiligamiut (the Qaluyarmiut, or

contemporary Nelson Islanders), the **Nunwagamiut** (**Nunivagimiut** or **Nunivak** Islanders) and the **Kuskowagamiut** (including all of the Eskimo residents of the **Kuskokwim River basin**).<sup>3</sup>

The designation of these groups as separate tribes must be taken with a grain of salt, as the groupings do not imply rigid social and political factions as much as loose confederations corresponding to territorial and linguistic groupings. The **Kaialigamiut** (people of the **dipnet**; **Qalayaarmiut** in the new orthography (Reed, 1977)) "tribe" were the people resident in and around **Nelson** Island. They traveled, traded and married all over the delta region. Yet certain vocabulary differences distinguish their **Yup'ik** from that of their neighbors as well as a certain ethnic identity constructed around subsistence, social and ideological differences (i.e., "we can't live on salmon like those river Eskimos. We need herring to be strong.")

**Aboriginally** some resource inequities may have encouraged intergroup alliances to provide balanced resource availability. But these same inequities also sparked irregular offensive and defensive warfare between the different groups. The mythology is replete with **semi-historical** accounts of battles fought between groups within the study area (i.e., Nelson Islanders vs. residents of the Yukon **delta**) as well as between the residents of a particular group within the study area and either North Alaskan Eskimo or Interior Indian groups (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1980a; **Lantis**, 1946; Bethel Regional High School. Students, 1974-79). The aboriginal **Yup'ik** were far from peaceful. The

**sociopolitical** dimensions of these traditional relationships of **hostility** and **alliance are still** visible, for whereas contemporary conditions have decreased traditional economic interdependence and the rationale behind overt regional **hostility**, the **social** and political aspects of these traditional alliances have been reestablished along the lines of the new village and regional corporate activity.

There were about **10,000 Yup'ik** (lit. "real people" or "genuine Eskimo") resident in the coastal region when outsiders first arrived. Following an initial population decline of better than **half** the original population due primarily to the effects of epidemic disease, the population of the entire delta region now numbers approximately 16,500. Always a rich area, the delta region presently supports the densest Native population in the state, and **Central Yup'ik**, the language of the study area, remains the most widely spoken Alaskan Native language and the one most **likely** to survive into the 21st century (**Krauss, 1980:35**).

Prior to Euro-American contact, the **Yup'ik-Inupiaq** linguistic boundary had gradually been shifting southward along the coast **of** Norton Sound, an area which does not form a geographical boundary, but is simply where **Proto-Yup'ik** and **Proto-Inupiaq** have finally met, having eliminated all intermediate dialects (**Krauss, 1980:7**). Further, according to **Krauss**:

Yup'ik probably spread from southwestern **Alaska** across the **Alaska** Peninsula **into** the Kodiak and **Chugach** regions in **fairly** recent

times, since although there would be rather low mutual intelligibility at the Alaskan **Yup'ik** extremes of **Chugach** and Norton Sound, there is a fair amount at the border near Bristol Bay.

The Central **Yup'ik** spoken in the study area and the **Sugpiaq** (or **Alutiaq**) spoken in the Bristol Bay region, have been designated two separate languages. However, these two languages are closer together than Alaskan and Siberian **Yup'ik**, which are certainly different languages with very little mutual intelligibility. **Krauss** suggests that Alaskan and Siberian **Yup'ik** were at one time connected by a continuous chain of **Yup'ik** dialects along the Seward Peninsula and across Bering Strait, and of course along the coasts of **Chukotka** and thence to **St. Lawrence Island**. However, in relatively recent times, these dialects were eliminated by **Inupiaq** expansion (**Krauss, 1980:9** in **Fienup-Riordan, 1982**).

Within the study area, several different dialects of Central **Yup'ik** are still spoken, corresponding to different geographic regions of the study area. However, all of these dialects are mutually intelligible:

General dialect variation is on the order of the variation of **pre-radio** American English dialects. The two more disparate dialects, **Hooper Bay-Chevak** and **Nunivak Island**, are to other **Yup'ik** dialects as a regional British dialect such as that of Cornwall (e.g., **Judd Painter** in the PBS series **Poldark**), is to the English we speak in **America** (**Hensel et al., 1980:i**).

## Subsistence Base

As has been mentioned in the introductory chapter, three distinct **ecological** zones are represented in **the** study area: coastal, **riverine** and tundra/lake. **Aboriginally, as** today, the human population of the study area has congregated on either lakeshore, riverbank or ocean edge, depending on the time of the year and fluctuations in available fish and **game**. All three of these zones **will be** briefly presented. **It must be** kept in mind, however, that each involved, and continues to involve, the other both indirectly (**e.g.**, the seasonal movement between lakeshore and riverbank in the **summer** by the residents of the tundra villages) and directly (**e.g.**, the trade between **riverine** and coastal peoples, the former supplying squirrel skins and dried salmon in exchange for dried herring and **seal oil**).

Although three ecological zones are represented in the study area, **only** two aboriginal and contemporary subsistence configurations can be identified. These are the coastal adaptation, and the **riverine-tundra/lake** adaptation. The **riverine** and tundra/lake ecological zones are dealt with in terms of a **single** aboriginal subsistence adaptation because subsistence pursuits and necessary technological **skills** were evidently quite uniform **along** the lower and central **Kuskokwim** and the adjacent tundra. Although there were some exceptions, most **riverine** communities relocated to the tundra for spring and **fall** camp, **and** most tundra communities moved to river fish camps in the summer.

## THE COASTAL ADAPTATION

On the coast, in the past as in the present, to discuss hunting was to begin to define man. In **Yup'ik**, the word **angun** (man) comes from the root **angu-** (to catch after chasing) and means, literally, a device for chasing. This device, man, **aboriginally** pursued and continues to pursue today three varieties of seal, as well as walrus, white whale (**beluga**), and an occasional sea lion. Seals are hunted year-round, although they are most abundant in the early spring and fall, the spotted seal coming from the north and an occasional fur seal and sea lion from the south. **Walrus follow** the seals in the spring. Whales are few and unpredictable. Again, the coastal marine environment benefits from warm ocean currents, and consequently there is an abundance of food to support marine, and thence, human life.

Land mammals pursued included white and red fox, rabbit, mink, and muskrat. Wolf and caribou have been absent from the area for the **last** 40 years, and moose were never present. Brown bear are rarely sighted, and rarer still are polar bear, although **these**, too, were sometimes seen in the early **1900s**. The most commonly taken **land** mammal was the fox, which was trapped in the winter. Traps for mink, muskrat, and land otter were also set in the **fall** around ponds and small streams,

Besides land and sea mammals, game birds were **also** hunted, and **at** various points of the year comprised an essential part of the

traditional subsistence **diet**. Eider ducks and ptarmigan **are** native **to the coast**, and geese and ducks, cranes and an occasional swan were **hunted** as **they** migrated **north to their** nesting grounds on **St. Lawrence Island** and Siberia in the spring, and again **as** they stopped **to** rest in the rich marshland surrounding **Nelson Island** (designated the Clarence Rhode National **Wildlife** Range in 1960)<sup>5</sup> on their way south **from late August until** late October. . After spring sealing and bird hunting, fishing began in earnest, the species taken including herring, smelt, flounder, whi tefish, red and king salmon, and an occasional halibut. These fish, especially the herring, were dried and, along with the **seal** oil **put** by in the spring, accounted for **the** major portion of the winter's food supply.

Between the time when the women finished butchering and caching the spring **seals** and when they commenced putting up the herring **run**, they engaged in intensive gathering, including egg hunting, gathering roots and greens from both tundra and pond (including **willow** leaves, **fire-**weed, marsh marigold, **wild** spinach and dandelions), gathering the berries left on the bushes from the year before, digging for shellfish in the tidal flats in front of the village, and picking grass for herring processing. This gathering was much more important on the west coast **of Alaska** than in the Arctic, traditionally constituting nearly **half** the diet. The **only** gathering activities that the men participated in were those requiring ocean **travel to** arrive at the site (**true** for collecting driftwood, gathering herring eggs, and sometimes for bird egg hunting and berry gathering). The majority of the gathering,

however, requiring no equipment other than an issran (woven grass pack basket), occurred on the tundra near the village or campsite, and was considered in the domain of women and children.

Throughout the summer, the men continued fishing. The major salmon runs were not over **until** early August. At this time the berry gathering began in earnest. By the first part of September, seal hunting resumed and as the weather got colder, **blackfish** traps were set in anticipation of freeze-up. Although the rivers might freeze by the end of October, seal hunting continued as long as the bay remained open, and might in fact continue **all** winter. Other fish taken during the fall included whitefish, tomcod, smooth flounder, needlefish and, late in December, **burbot** (**loche** fish).

#### THE RIVERINE-TUNDRA/LAKE ADAPTATION

The subarctic tundra of the middle and **lower** Kuskokwim offers **little** to sustain a sedentary population. Few birds are resident in the winter, and the only large land mammals are the muskrat, land otter and mink which, as **Oswalt** points out, are more of the water than **the** land and rarely move across the country. Several varieties of **small** rodents make the tundra their home, but other than these tiny inhabitants the transient caribou were **the tundra's** only occupants, and then only infrequently even in prehistoric times.



The rivers and lakes, however, were a different story altogether. Salmon fishing is a more reliable way of life than the coastal sea mammal hunting adaptation, and the Kuskokwim abounded in salmon. First came the king, then the dog or chum salmon, followed by red and pink and silver salmon. Smelt ran in the river during the early spring, and cod could be hooked through the ice in the early winter. As important, whitefish and blackfish could be taken in the tundra lakes in the spring and early fall when the river was less productive, and in fact the annual alternation between summer riverine fishing and spring and fall exploitation of the tundra lakes provided the foundation for the subsistence cycle of the aboriginal Kuskowagamiut including the residents of both the middle and lower Kuskokwim. Oswalt (1963b:117-128) provides a detailed account of this fluctuation.

#### Traditional Population Mobility and Settlement Patterns

Obviously, from what has been said above, it can be seen that, in the pursuit of game, the coastal and riverine Yup'ik were a people accustomed to movement. Not only were they at different places at different times of the year, but they lived in different groupings. Migrations of fish and fowl and sea mammals dictated a four-fold movement, setting limits in some instances, but never requiring the specific encampments that were realized. Resources were harvested as they became available, and mobility within a clearly circumscribed area was traditionally important to obtain the highest yield per unit of labor. Thus,

From their winter villages, the coastal Yup'ik traditionally moved to spring seal camp (upnerkelug) populated with from several to several dozen families, and later in the summer to a single family summer fish camp (neqlilleq). In the fall, after berry picking, the women might return to the winter camp (uqsuilleg) before their husbands, who would go either by themselves or with a partner for fall trapping. The minimal units were ecologically required, but the larger ones went beyond biological necessity (Fienup-Riordan, .1980a: 53).

In Father Paul Deschout's April 1937 census of Nelson Island and vicinity from Keyalevik (near present-day Newtok) to Tsisin (between present-day Chefornek and Kipnuk), he refers to what were recognized as stable communities (e.g., Tununak and Nightmute) from the 1950s onward as "districts," including a plethora of small camps and villages.<sup>6</sup> Even today, families do not join together for their spring berry gathering, fall fishing and bird hunting, and spring egg gathering but range over the entire coastal region, each family traveling to its customary and well-known site.<sup>7</sup>

Also worth noting here is a factor that will be detailed further along in the sections of this report dealing with the new mobility of the Yup'ik. As it turns out, for all their apparent immobility, the new villages are still capable of relocation (e.g., residents of Nightmute founding the new community of Toksook Bay in 1964 and residents of Kwigillingok moving to Kongiganak in 1969). Not only that, but the solidification of village populations that has been steadily progressing for the last decade has suffered a substantial setback due to the rising cost of fuel. As a response to the high cost of moving out

from a **single location**, many families are reinstating the seasonal relocations that **had** been pronounced "dead" but a few years before. **The** most cogent example of this that comes to mind is the desertion, between **1976** and **1978**, of the once bustling **Nelson Island** spring fish camp of **Umpkimute**. During these years only a very few **Nightmute** families continued to make the annual move from the banks of the river across the spring ice to the far side of the bay for sealing and early summer herring fishing. Now, within the last two years, **Umpkimute** has been repopulated during the busy spring and summer months by families unwilling **or** unable to afford the expense **of** daily snowmobile and skiff rides between the winter camp of **Nightmute** and the bay.

The riverine **Yup'ik** were traditionally, and continue to be, as mobile as their coastal neighbors. **Aboriginally** they moved onto the tundra for spring camp, where they lived in **small** single-family dwellings **built** with four **walls** of rectangular strips of cut sod standing about six feet above the ground. After the ice went out (a phenomenon which they never witnessed traditionally) they moved back to the river for summer fish camp, returning to scattered **fall** hunting and fishing camps on the tundra during the early autumn.

Like the coastal **Yup'ik**, however, the **riverine** Eskimo also **recongregated** during the winter **in** larger configurations of the traditional semi-subterranean sod dwellings. And it was in these larger encampments, including the spring seal camp for the coastal **Yup'ik**, that **ritual** activity flourished. There was some variation here as **well**, as

for the people of the lower river winter was a time of enforced leisure, while in the central section of the river, as on the coast, leisure was mingled with **work**. In any event, the traditional **ritual** calendar reflected this seasonal variation, and late fall and early winter were laced with elaborate feasts and ceremonies, including the traditional Bladder Feast, Men and Women's Asking Festival and the annual Feast for the Dead. .

Yet this winter emphasis on ritual activity was by no means just a reflection of seasonal variation. More was going on traditionally, as it is today, than the celebration of seasonal plenitude or distribution in the face of scarcity. To understand the multiple meanings of the ritual cycle, one must understand what it originally signified, and how it has been retained, and in some cases transformed, both in conjunction with and in opposition to the new subsistence cycle.

#### Traditional Social Structure and Value Hierarchy

Although a detailed **sociocultural** account of the study area will not be given until Part II, it is important at this point to put what is known of the traditional social structure and ceremonial cycle of the aboriginal residents of the study area in the context of traditional Eskimo **sociocultural** configurations in general.

The outstanding feature of the **Yup'ik sociocultural** system was the **de-**gree of complexity that they had developed prior to historic contact.

The proliferation of **social** and ceremonial features in part reflects **the** bounty of the physical environment of the aboriginal population. The Central **Yup'ik** shared an arctic environment along with their northern **Inuit** neighbors, Yet the sea ice of the Bering Sea coast is not so **solid nor** the adjacent tundra so barren arid severe. **Large** summer herring and salmon runs and the possibility of hunting for **small** sea mammals from early in the spring until late into the fall provided a rich subsistence base which **could** support a relatively dense population capable of maintaining themselves by concentrating on peak seasonal resource availability. This correlation is substantiated by the fact that the further south the ethnographer moves, the more complex are the **sociocultural** systems that are encountered.

The best **single** source of ethnographic information on the aboriginal **Yup'ik**, including a **larger** collection of myths and ceremonial descriptions, is the work of **E. W. Nelson** (1899).<sup>8</sup>

The general picture that is presented by Nelson is in sharp contrast to the picture of the typical Eskimo popularized during the **early 1900s** and **still**, to some extent, adhered to as a valid generalization about these ever-intriguing eaters of raw **flesh**. Far from the **igloo-dwelling nuclear family** consisting of parents and unmarried children and devoid of aging grandparents (who were purportedly **left** to perish as soon as their usefulness had spent itself), the western **Yup'ik** **lived** in relatively **large** winter communities. These consisted **of** one to several qasgiq or men's houses (often referred **to** as **Kashim**,

Kasgee, or **casine** in the literature) surrounded by a number of [e]ne in which the women and children lived and worked. A girl resided with her mother until she was married and then moved to **the [e]ne** of her mother-in-law. Or she might stay in her original home while her husband came to join his new father-in-law in the qasgiq in which the elder man lived. The qasgiq was in fact as **much** an institution as a physical place of residence. Within it two to twenty men resided. Although they would visit their families on occasion, it was in the qasgiq that they took their meals, slept, worked, told stories, gossiped, took sweat baths, and made and repaired tools and equipment. Women only entered to bring food to their male **relatives** or to join them on the numerous ritual and ceremonial occasions when together they danced in gifts for a distribution.

Boys left their mothers and came to live in the qasgiq when they were five years old. There they would wait upon their elders, spending hours listening to their parables, anecdotes, hunting stories, and advice. An education was not acquired through recitation and inquisition. Rather, the boys and young men quietly watched and listened before attempting to take part in the tasks of **adult life**. For the young women it was the same. They understood the advantages of participant observation well before social scientists put such a fancy label on this simple and effective device.

As children grew to adulthood in the confines of this traditional social separation between the sexes, they were ritually born again as

productive (and potentially marriageable and reproductive) adults when they began to take their place **in** the subsistence activities of the community. For the boys, this meant the taking of their **first** seal of each species, and for the **girls it** meant **their** first gathering exploits (first eggs, first berries, **etc.**). **With** the accomplishment of **their** "firsts," **gifts** were given by their parents and an elaborate chain of exchanges, both spiritual **and material**, was set in motion. Suffice it to say here that interesting and important parallels existed at **all** points between the transformation of raw, young humans into socially **useful** and potentially productive and reproductive adults, and the transformation of the sea mammals and other kinds of fish and game **exploited** by the **Yup'ik** from living beasts to dead carcasses, the souls of which were also **felt** to be born again as new **living** animals with new reproductive and productive capacity. Although this may seem a complex description of the relationship between human and **animal** society, simple terms like totemism and animism do not at **all** capture the significance of the powerful, reproductive character of the **sociocultural** system of the aboriginal **Yup'ik**. For the **Yup'ik** no **animal** or human ever **finally** passed away. With proper care every animal and human soul **would** be born again. **The** specifics of their ceremonial and **social** life were founded on that one simple presupposition.

In many respects the Eskimo of the central Bering **Sea** coast and **Kuskokwim** River basin represent **a** transition **between** the northwestern **Inuit** and the Pacific Eskimo, **Oswalt (1979:252)** notes this **correlation** through a **list** of shared, features of both **social** and material culture joining the different aboriginal populations:

The emphasis on open-water sea mammal hunting from kayaks along the Bering Sea coast, the importance of Kashims [the traditional men's house] throughout the year, the popularity of hot baths, and the wearing of ornaments in the nasal septum were among the southern affinities. Yet they [the western Eskimo] were far from carbon copies of a people like the **Koniag** [the aboriginal Eskimo inhabitants of Kodiak]. Among the central Bering Sea Eskimo transvestites did not exist, they did not hunt great whales with poisoned spear points, nor did they **have** a rigid class system. . . . Conversely, large cooperative hunts by **kayakers** driving **beluga** into shallows recall the Mackenzie **Eskimo** pattern, and the importance placed on netting seals is a reminder of the Barrow Eskimo. **What** seems to most distinguish the Bering Sea Eskimo from their northern relatives is the well-developed ceremonial life.

This emphasis on individual culture traits is somewhat misleading. It emphasizes differences whereas cross-cultural similarity throughout the arctic is perhaps more striking. As we will see, the cosmological system that underlies the world view of the traditional and contemporary **Yup'ik** has a much broader applicability than to the residents of the study area.

Yet it is indeed ironic that the Eskimos of the Bering Sea coast, **al-**though they **lacked** the grand opportunity for **celebration** and display entailed in the hunting, killing, and butchering of the bowhead whale, made an even more elaborate event out of the return of the souls of the seals to the sea in their annual Bladder **Feast**. It is equally intriguing to note that the traditional political savvy of the North Alaskan Eskimo, evident in the structure of their whaling crews and captaincies, and the more diffuse ceremonial emphasis of the aboriginal



Yup'ik are, for a number of reasons, reflected in **their** present regional strengths **and** weaknesses (e.g., the political acuity of the **North Slope** Borough vs. the linguistic and cultural vitality of the Western **Yup'ik**).

## Endnotes

**1** The most complete version of the western Alaskan Eskimo creation myth is recorded in **E. W. Nelson's The Eskimo About Bering Strait** (1899: 452-62). For the mythical origin of Nelson Island see **Kaluyak: The Trip of the Swan** in Fienup-Riordan, **1980a:430**. Finally, for the versions of the origin of the **Nunivagamiut** in the mythical marriage of a coastal woman and a dog, see Lantis (1946); Nelson (1899); **Fienup-Riordan** (1980a).

**2** In his 1967 mapping, Oswalt designates the people of the Yukon delta as **Ikogmiut**, following Dan (1877:17). Dan, however, gives **Ikogmiut** as the designation of a single village. In his 1980 mapping **Oswalt** corrects this designation to **Kwipagmiut (kwipagmiut lit. people of the kwipag or big river, i.e., Yukon) following Zagoskin (Chernenko, 1967:209).**

**3** In the designation of five tribes, Oswalt is drawing his information largely from Zagoskin (Chernenko, 1956), which includes virtually **all** of the known ethnographic information for the Kuskokwim **riverine** and coastal Eskimos and Indians published for the period of Russian occupancy, and describes the territorial spread and linguistic boundaries of aboriginal populations of the study area. Most of **Zagoskin's** material deals with the area around St. **Michaels** and the Yukon River, but **Zagoskin** did travel down the coast to the Kuskokwim River and made detailed observations (Chernenko, 1956:210).

**4** **This entire** section is loosely adapted from Fienup-Riordan (1980a).

**5** The Clarence Rhode National Wildlife Range covers 24,000 square miles of the delta and is the summer home of one-half million ducks, geese and swans, and produces an average fall flight of 2.3 million ducks, including pintails, mallards, northern shovelers, green **willow teal**, whistling swans, old squaw, eider ducks and greater **scaup**. This range provides the nesting ground for 50% of all the world's **brant**, 80% of all the cackling and emperor geese and all the white-fronted geese that migrate along the Pacific flyway (Alaska Geographic, 1978).

**6** The following is a summary of **Robaut's** "Census of the Eskimo of the Bering Sea Coast, June to September, 1891" (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:82).

	<u>Populati on</u>
Eskimok ( <b>Naparearmiut</b> ) 2 casines	170
Kipneak	100
Kaealegamiut 2 casines	190
Waklekagamiut (Yukon mouth) and Morongagamiut	55
Agaiokshagamiut	60

Chaleitmiut	200
Tsintsinngamiut	85
Kekartagamiut	45
Chupurunaramiut	70
Kaleosagamiut (Cape Vancouver)	25
Kanneagamiut	50
Kasunok (and Nunatkoromeut - Summer resort of Kasunok)	195
Tukaramentak (Tununa)	115
Alaranaramiut (Yukon)	70
Kaleosagamiut (Yukon)	20
Kiakteramiut (Yukon)	5
Akerklagamiut (Yukon)	50
Nilislaramiut (Yukon)	70
Tsoshagamiut	30

Tosi (1889:342) continues:

Here is a list of the villages from Cape Vancouver to Kuskokwim Bay . . . 16 villages in all from Cape Vancouver to the Kuskowkim, all near the coast. Some others on the lakes, but they are not very large, and from these all the Indians go down to the coast in the spring for sealing.

<sup>7</sup> Oswalt (1967) calls this the central based wandering pattern of resource utilization because the Yup'ik spent part of each year wandering and the rest in a settlement to which they might or might not return in subsequent years. Also, as they relied on multiple food sources available at different times and in different places, the Yukon-Kuskokwim area residents tended to be more nomadic over shorter distances than the residents of Bering Strait.

<sup>8</sup> In the winter of 1878-9, Nelson traveled from St. Michael south along the coast to the Kuskokwim River, ascending it as far as Kingugumut. In spite of its limitations, the published account of this journey is the best ethnohistorical account available for the study area, as during his trip Nelson mapped a still partially unknown region, as well as collected a wealth of ethnographic information and artifacts. Where Zagoskin made note of a cultural configuration, e.g., the Bladder Feast, Nelson recorded the particulars. Later missionaries, especially John Kilbuck and Father Barnum, also recorded a great deal of useful ethnographic information, but much of this is either scattered within more didactic texts or not published at all and only available through mission archives.

## 111. PERIOD OF HISTORICAL CONTACT

### The Russian Period

The historical period, during which the impact of direct Euro-American contact was first **felt** by the indigenous **Yup'ik** of the study area, can be divided into the Russian period, 1741-1867, and the American period, 1867 to statehood. Within this time frame, the Russian period, lasting roughly 120 years, can in turn be divided into three 40-year periods: 1745 to 1785, 1785 to 1825, and 1825 to **1865**.

The first phase of the Russian period affected only the **Aleuts** profoundly. According to **Krauss (1980:11)**, this period was marked by "the conquest of the Aleutians by Russian fur hunters under very little government control, who came as near as they could to exterminating both the **Aleuts** and the sea otter." It was also during this period that large sectors of the Bering Sea coast were mapped, but by the English explorer James Cook, rather than by the Russians. In **1778**, Cook discovered and named Bristol Bay and then sailed northward around Cape Newenham into **Kuskokwim** Bay. The bay proved too shallow, however. Cook accurately determined that it was not the hoped for waterway to the east, and so set sail northward, making further discoveries in the Bering Strait region (**Beaglehole, 1967; Oswalt, 1963b:7**).

During the second phase of the Russian period (**1785 to 1825**), the Russian American Company was organized and continued in the exploration

of the lucrative north Pacific Ocean sea otter trade (Okun, 1951). Government controls were strengthened, at the same time that both Aleuts and Pacific Gulf Yup'ik were employed along the entire Pacific rim, from the Kuriles to northern California, in the ever-expanding search for sea otter.

During this time, "the treatment of the native people improved from outright atrocity and massacre to mere enslavement and exploitation (Krauss, 1980:12)."<sup>1</sup> The major portion of Alaska remained little known and the Central Yup'ik-speaking residents of the study area were still not severely affected. Only after it became apparent to the government personnel and officials of the Russian American Company that the Pacific Ocean was not going to become one huge "Russian lake" was serious attention turned to the region north of the Alaskan Peninsula (Oswalt, 1963b:7).

The impact of the last period of Russian influence has been variously appraised. Selkregg (1974:225) rather casually dismisses the importance of this period in setting the stage for what was to come. In the same vein, Collier (1973) downplays Russian impact by noting that there was a great deal less difference between the conditions in Alaska and Russia in the early 19th century than between Alaska and the eastern seaboard of the United States a century later.

Yet, however meager the impact of the Russian period may appear in comparison with that of succeeding contact periods, it cannot be dismissed

without brief consideration of (1) the effects of introduced disease, (2) the consequences of early exploration, (3) the effects on the Native population of the establishment of permanent Russian trading centers, and (4) the impact of the early Russian Orthodox missionaries, in introducing the concept of Christianity if not in effectively converting the aboriginal population.

#### THE IMPACT OF EPIDEMIC DISEASES

In their trading and exploratory expeditions, the Russians everywhere met an **"epidemiologically** virgin population admirably **suited** to its habitat but immunologically defenseless against the virulent disease organisms long endemic in European populations" (Mason, 1975:67). In one smallpox epidemic alone, which spread from the Sitka area over much of western Alaska in 1838-39, approximately half of the Kuskokwim population **perished. Whole** communities were wiped out (Oswalt, 1962, citing **Zagoskin**). Illarion (1863:378) also noted that blame for the smallpox epidemic of 1861 on the Kuskokwim delta was laid at the feet of the Russian priests. The effect was continued resistance on the part of the Native inhabitants of the delta region to the work of the Russian Orthodox.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the epidemics of the 19th century produced not only a sharp population decline, but also a hostile, or at best neutral rather than positive, response to the newcomers on the part of the indigenous residents. This guarded neutrality, along with the fact that relatively few Russians actually came to live and work in the study area during the Russian period, combined to create the character of the initial

contact situation. Although equally impacted in terms of **health** and **well-being**, unlike many of their southern neighbors, the **Yup'ik** were never a subject population, and the Russians were forced, for their own benefit and safety, to **deal** with the Native population on their own **terms**.

#### EARLY EXPLORATION

During the last of the three Russian periods, exploration was undertaken that was seminal in mapping and charting the interior of southwestern Alaska, and so opening it up to the fur trade. According to Van Stone (**Zagoskin, 1967:xi**):

There is every indication that **the** Russian American Company may have turned its attention to the north because it was thwarted in attempts to get a foothold in California and the Hawaiian Islands. Furthermore, even in **Baranov's** time it was realized that the supply of fur-bearing animals in the Aleutian Islands and littoral southeastern Alaska was **beginning** to diminish and that soon **it would be necessary** to **locate** new regions into which to expand the quest for **furs**.

Finally, there was not only British and American trading to the south, but **also** direct competition from aboriginal **traders**. Under this **impetus**, **Alexandrovski** Redoubt (Fort Alexander) was opened at the mouth of the **Nushagak** River in **1818**. Although at **this** time there was **still** minimal direct contact with the study area,<sup>3</sup> this post provided the staging area for a number **of** exploratory expeditions, **including** the interior explorations of **Vasilev, Lukin, and Kolmakov**, as **well** as the

coastal investigations of Yetolin and **Khromchenko**. Fort St. Michael, a fortified trading post manned by **creoles** hired by the Russian **Americans**, was founded in 1833 at the mouth of the Yukon and from there the Yukon explorations of **Glazunov** and **Malakhov** were carried out (**Zagoskin, 1967:xii**).<sup>4</sup>

The 1842-44 exploratory reconnaissance of Lieutenant Zagoskin marks the pinnacle of Russian achievement during this period. Combining the itineraries of all of his predecessors, **Zagoskin** penetrated the lower Yukon and upper **Kuskokwim**. His description of the Kuskokwim people is **still** the major ethnographic source for the central river sections of the study area (**Oswalt, 1963:13**).

#### EARLY TRADE

In the context of a vigorous and extensive **pre-Russian** trading system,<sup>5</sup> one of the major purposes of **Zagoskin's** explorations and those of his predecessors was to locate favorable sites for new trading posts and generally to further the interests of the Russian American Company by preventing Alaska furs from passing into the hands of aboriginal Asiatic traders (**Oswalt, 1963 b:12**). In the journals Zagoskin kept, he emphasized the extent to which all Eskimos of west-central Alaska were involved in the Alaska Siberia trade that brought Russian trade goods as **well** as products of Native manufacture from Siberia and trading posts on the **Kolyma** River.



After the **Nushagak** trading center of **Alexandrov** Redoubt had been built, more foreign goods entered the Kuskokwim from the south. This trade route continued **until** the establishment of **Kolmakovski** Redoubt in **1832** at the mouth of the **Holitna** River **as** the first trading post **on** the **Kuskokwim**. The site was chosen because this was an aboriginal trading center (**Oswalt, 1963 b:104**).

Subsequently, "the proceeds in furs surpassed **all** expectations. . . . It became necessary to **think** of fitting out permanent trading posts or **artels** (cooperatives) in which there **would** be available **all** through the year an adequate **supply** of **all** the articles required by the native populace" (**Zagoskin, 1967:82**).

During the decades following **Zagoskin's** explorations, **Kolmakovski** Redoubt was made subordinate **to St. Michael**, and resident traders were sent to systematize trade relations with the **local** people,<sup>6</sup> as well as to organize trapping parties from among the **local** populace (**Oswalt, 1963b:105**). The initial attempts at obtaining furs were **fairly** successful with **2,395** beaver **pelts** taken **in 1847**. Also, beginning in **1856**, arctic fox were traded at the post, a **clear** indication that trade had begun with the inhabitants of the lower Kuskokwim and coastal regions of the study area, as arctic fox do not range far from the coast (**Oswalt, 1963 b:106**).<sup>7</sup>

After **Zagoskin**, published accounts of this early period **of** direct contact are few **and** far between, making **it** difficult to assess Russian impact.<sup>8</sup> We do know, however, that the Russians were **never** numerous

and had no military force to back up their authority. Thus they could neither oppress nor exploit the people with whom they came into **con-**tact as they had the **Aleuts** and the **Yup'ik** of southwestern Alaska.<sup>9</sup> **Also**, the goods that were in demand were the same as those the people were already accustomed to obtaining. Trapping may have been somewhat more intensive under the impetus of more accessible trade goods. But although seasonal residence patterns were affected, with people spending more time tending their trap lines, there was no major attempt at relocating the population as occurred further south (**Oswalt, 1963b:106**). St. Michael traders, for instance, overtly encouraged Eskimo resettlement and the intensification of their dependence on trade goods (**Oswalt, 1979**).

Thus, although firearms were introduced during the Russian period, a trading economy based on "currency" in the form of beaver pelts along with minimal trapping for trade goods instead of food were established well before the Russians arrived, and the subsistence base of fish and sea mammals remained viable well beyond the Russian period.

Not **only** was there not a marked deterioration of the Native economic base due to overhunting or an increased reliance on imported goods in the study area, but the Native political and social systems likewise remained intact:

The Russians appointed "chiefs," but since the outstanding hunter usually received the title, this action did not drastically alter the existing **social** and political system **with-**in a village. Neither did the Russians

come as colonizers or settlers (Oswalt, 1963b:106).

Finally, Zagoskin points out (1967:118) that the priest administrator at, Kolmakovski Redoubt was referred to as "ta-ta" (fr. aata, lit. father). During this period, then, benevolent paternalism probably characterized the attitude of the Russians toward the Natives of the study area while equally benign exploitation characterized the Native attitude toward the intruders.

#### MISSIONARY ACTIVITY DURING THE RUSSIAN PERIOD

Not only did the founding of Alexandrov Redoubt on the Nushagak provide a staging area for trade and exploration in the study area during the last period of Russian contact, but also for the work of the Russian Orthodox missionaries.<sup>10</sup> Alexander Kolmakov, the aforementioned "ta-ta" after whom the Nushagak trading post was named, was the most active missionary as well as administrator and trader in the vicinity of the study area. Further comments by Zagoskin on the infrequent baptism of Natives that he met during his travels, and their limited comprehension of Russian Orthodoxy, confirm the irregularity of priestly visits from Alexandrov to the Kuskokwim station, let alone the Bering Sea coast.

Oswalt discusses the major innovations coincident with early missionary activity on the Kuskokwim, including the introduction of full-time religious practitioners, churches, a rigid calendar of ceremonial activities and a moral code (Oswalt, 1963 b:15).

Oswalt concludes that it is doubtful as to whether the Russian Christ ever made its full impact. Few missionaries ministered to the study **area**, and none on a regular basis. Not only were the priests few, but their demands were fewer, and by and large formal, i.e., that the convert cross himself and wear a crucifix. Yet, although often in name only, converts were relatively abundant in the Kuskokwim valley,<sup>11</sup> **if** not on the coast.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the official policy of Russian Orthodoxy during this period was as **enlightened**<sup>13</sup> as the early Russian policy perpetrated on the **Aleuts** had been benighted, and their faith, in all probability, more easily tolerated and assimilated by the Natives of the delta region than anything the subsequent American period would engender.

### The American Period

#### EARLY MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

During the first 20 years of the American period, 1867-1887, the transfer of the study area from Russian to American hands had little impact on the resident population. The American administration did little more than begin to explore the vast territory, and even so our earliest detailed reports on the area do not come until the publication of Petroff's census report of 1884 and Nelson's ethnological reconnaissance of 1878.

For many of **the** Native peoples of **the** new territory, **this** quiet situation was **to** change **drastically during** the second 20 years of **the** American period, **1887 to 1910**. **While** the Russians had been relatively few **in** number, **during this period** many thousands of outsiders came to **Alaska in** search **of gold**, bringing **with** them disease, **alcohol**, and **severe social** and economic disruption. The intense exploration for **gold** affected the entire Seward Peninsula and much of the interior. Commercial whaling, which had started somewhat earlier, also began to dramatically affect the **Inupiaq** north coast. **Also**, to the south of the study area, the new **salmon** canning industry began to impact the entire **Pacific** Coast and Bristol Bay area.

Yet within the study area, none of these intrusions were **felt dramatically**. Although **coal** deposits laced the coastal area, there was no **gold** to lure the adventurous. **Also**, because of **shallow** seas and the **lack** of suitable anchorages, the American whalers did not ply **the** coastal waters. The **salmon** industry **would** develop, primarily **along** **the** Yukon River, but not **until** the **early 1900s**.

**So**, in the end, it was left to the missionary to make the first direct sustained contacts with the population of the study **area**, and the **extent** of their impact must never be underestimated. **Their** intentions were in sharp contrast to those **of** their Russian predecessors, who came **primarily** to trade. Although the Russians had hoped **eventually to** **settle the Kuskokwim valley** and convert **its** aboriginal **population**, that **goal** had by **no** means been reached **by** the time **Alaska** became a U.S.

territory. Also, throughout the Russian and well into the American period, the Natives had retained access to their lands and a fundamental autonomy and freedom from external controls. Traditional mechanisms of social control were left intact, although often inadvertently, the newcomers failing to perceive their existence. Although laws existed prohibiting the sale of guns and alcohol to the Natives, these were neither enforceable nor enforced.<sup>14</sup> Only the passage of the First Organic Act in 1884 set the stage for what was to come. It put forth the framework of an overtly **assimilationist** government policy, providing for formal education of Alaska Natives that would eventually pit the internally perceived power hierarchy and control mechanisms of the Native population against an externally applied one. The circle was closing in. Whereas during the Russian and early American periods, the **Yup'ik** had been able to absorb new goods and ideas as they deemed them useful, and ultimately to assimilate the newcomers, who were forced to adopt Native technology in order to survive in the north, the day was dawning when they would be pressed to conform to standards not of their own making.

The turning point in **Yup'ik sociocultural** integrity is marked by the appointment of Sheldon Jackson as U.S. Commissioner of Education in **1885**. Generalizing from his own predispositions and his experiences in southeastern Alaska, Jackson presented the aboriginal population of the entire territory as in dire straits, their traditional culture in shambles, their economy destroyed, diseases rampant and alcohol everywhere a pernicious influence. To combat this moral degeneration, which

he attributed partly to unwholesome white influences, and partly to the inherent defects in Native culture, he set out **singlehandedly** to **convince** various organized Christian churches **of their moral obligation** to send missionaries among the Eskimo. According to **Krauss**:

Jackson epitomized the Victorian era American educational and social philosophy, that of **the "melting pot"** wherein **all** the diverse nationalities contributing to American society were **to** assimilate to the Anglo-Saxon Protestant American **ideal**. . . . **To** complete **the** "Winning of the West" and the white **man's** "Manifest Destiny," the American **Indian** was to be converted to the white man's religion, assimilated to his **culture**, and forced to abandon his **native** language (1980:18).

Interestingly, **in** his discussion **of** the fate **of** Alaskan' Native Languages, from which the above quote is taken, **Krauss** points out that the Russian, **Moravian** and Catholic missionaries that did the **ground-**breaking work in the study area were exceptional among Alaskan missionaries in the efforts they made to understand and be understood in terms of the traditional **Yup'ik** value system. And although, as we will see, they too were soon swept along in the rush to have the Natives convert and conform, they continued to rank low on the **scale** of intolerance Jackson set to judge the works of his disciples. **The** present **Yup'ik cultural** viability of the study area has its roots in this unique conversion experience, which **will** therefore be given in some detail.

The history of **early** missionary activity in the study area is divided between the work of the Catholics and the **Moravians**. The Jesuit Roman Catholics first arrived on **Nelson Island** in **1888** and eventually

controlled the **entire** Yukon delta and **the** coastal area as far south as Chefornek, just below Nelson Island. The **Moravians** settled in Bethel in 1885, from which station they ministered to the middle and lower **Kuskokwim** River communities and on up the Bering Sea coast as far north as **Kipnuk**.<sup>15</sup>

Both were of course preceded by the Russian Orthodox. In the Catholic area this caused few problems, as the Russians had never been well established along the coast.<sup>16</sup> The **Moravians** originally chose Bethel in an attempt to avoid association with the older Russian settlements on the Nushagak and upper **Kuskokwim**, and because, according to their original understanding, "Excepting for the priest at **Nushagak**, no denomination, Protestant, Roman Catholic nor Greek Catholic are working in this territory" (MS of April 1926, **Weinland** Collection, Huntington Library, in **Oswalt, 1963b:24**). Yet, both the **Moravians** and the Catholics had to **deal** with a Native population that in most instances had been at least nominally converted by the Russians.

The correspondence of the **early** Catholic priests was laced with acid remarks on the conduct of the Russian **priests**,<sup>17</sup> which criticisms were reiterated by the **Moravians** (**Weinland** Diary, 1884, August 17, in **Oswalt, 1963b:38**). The **Moravians** and Catholics were equally critical of each other. Yet the Native population often lumped **all** three conflicting brands of Christianity together as "children of thunder. . . everything they do is accompanied by noise" (**Napakiak** shaman cited in Morrow, 1978). They failed to respond to the stated differences of the two actively



ving sects, and, what was worse, especially for **the Moravians** along **the Kuskokwim**, Russian Orthodoxy became identified with aboriginal times in the minds **of** the people. It had a nostalgic flavor and served as a rallying point **for** conservatism, which added to its strength in some villages. **Also, the** laxity of the Russian Orthodox was in the end to their advantage when juxtaposed in the Native mind to the strict doctrinal adherence and attendance **at** services required of the faithful by the **Moravians**.

If the **Yup'ik** view of the missionaries was understandably somewhat **confused**, the missionary view of the **Yup'ik** was even more colored by expectation and presupposition. As the activities of the missionaries that affected the subject population were directly related to a number of these preconceptions, the missionary view of the Natives is important to understand.

The early Catholics as **well** as the **Moravians** tended to view the Natives **living** in the study area as simple, uncorrupted children of nature (**Treca, 1890:364; Robaut, 1890:364; Deschout, 1934-1940**), in striking opposition to the **less docile** and more worldly wise Yukon Eskimo who had had more contact with whites **and** hence the opportunity of being corrupted.

At the same time the stated goal of both the Catholics and the **Moravian** evangelists was **to** save the Natives from themselves. Ultimately, the only good Native was one reformed in **the** image of **a white** man. **Drebert,**

an early **Moravian** particularly sensitive to the strong points of his parishioners, nonetheless entitled a photograph of several coastal youngsters taken in the first decade of the 1900s, "Heathen Boys, or Poverty and Filth," juxtaposing it to a portrait of their "civilized" selves taken some years later.

Beyond this basic paradox, **which** had its roots in the western **ideological** opposition between **Roussau's** natural good and **Hobbes'** brutish **savage**, there was considerable diversity of opinion between the denominations, as well as among the missionaries of each single denomination, as to the state of the field and degree of respect due the Native population.

In 1888, three Jesuits laid claim to the delta coastline, settling in **Tununak** on Nelson Island and designating their parish a "virgin **field**" inhabited by a **docile** and pliable populace. They worked consciously toward learning the language (Barnum, 1901) and, although few in number, traveled extensively in order to learn the extent of their parish. They also attended Native feasts and ceremonies in order to learn their true character as well as to take advantage of the unusual numbers of people gathered for these events in an area exceedingly hard to minister to due to the migratory habits of the people.<sup>18</sup> Yet after an initial grace period, their evaluation of the population as **docile** and pliable was replaced by a concern at their indifference, if not outright hostility. Medicine men **still** had a strong hold on the area (**Treca**, 1891 :334). **Also**, like their Russian predecessors, the **early** Catholic priests were blamed for the epidemics that swept the coast in the 1800s and **early 1900s.**<sup>19</sup>

Both because **of** the remoteness and isolation of the area, as **well** as **the less** than warm welcome of the Natives, the Catholics soon retired from the coastal **villages** of the study **area**, moving **their** base of **operations first to Kanelik in 1892**, to **Akulurak**, located 200 **miles** farther north on the Yukon **delta**, in **1893**, and to **St. Michael** in **1898 (Rene, 1897:522)**. The entire **delta** coastline was left devoid of priests **until, in 1900** and again in **1906**, **epidemics** decimated the **whole** region (Fox, **1972:10**). Entire villages disappeared, the bulk of the elderly and more aggressive medicine men died, and when the Jesuits returned to **Akulurak** in **1905** they were somewhat better received.

Yet it was not **until 1928**, with the arrival of **Frs. Menenger and Fox** in I-looper **Bay** and **Kasunak (Old Chevak)**, that strong missionary influence was felt in the coastal communities with which we are primarily concerned. As we **shall** see, this is **very** recent, and considerably **later** than in the **Kuskokwim** area, where by the turn of **the** century the **Moravians** were **well** entrenched at both Bethel and **Quinhagak**. **Also**, by the late **1920s**, the **early** spirit of missionary tolerance had been almost totally extinguished.<sup>20</sup> Hardest hit was the mission station of I-looper Bay which **felt** the constant vigilance of a resident priest who considered the **local** Natives no better than "baptized pagans" (Fox, **1928**). The Nelson Island villagers, however, **along** with the other **villages** in the Bethel region not occupied by the **Moravians**, were **still** serviced **only** irregularly from the **Hooper** Bay mission and were relatively free from **religious** racism on a **daily basis**.

During this period, the priests faced the same problems of a disparate population, shortage of missionaries on the trail, Native resistance,<sup>21</sup> and denominational competition (this time Lutheran), and held to the same theory of itinerant priests and boarding schools as the answer to their problems. Native catechists were also employed and played an important role in the conversion of the coastal population (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:36**).

Then, in 1934, Father Paul **Deschout** came to live on Nelson Island, so relieving Fox of his responsibility for the southern half of the coastal mission. Older **Qaluyaarmiut** remember **Deschout** for preaching fire and damnation in perfect **Yup'ik**. He was one of the few later priests to truly master the Native language and to advocate its retention. In this respect, among others, he differed from his immediate predecessors stationed to the north, **Frs. Fox and Menager**, who never mastered the language and who opposed its use whenever possible. **Deschout's** attitude toward and respect for the Native language and life-style may in part explain the sympathetic devotion to the Catholic Church that exists on Nelson Island today, and the present cultural vitality and cohesiveness of these communities. Although to a large degree sharing the paternalistic attitude of his contemporaries, he was much more **willing** to accept and enjoy the "simplicity" that he felt went along with the Nelson Islanders' isolation on the mission fringe, and decried their gradual "corruption" (**Deschout, 1949; Fienup-Riordan, 1980a**).

In the opinion of the author, the missionary sympathy for the Yup'ik world view was directly related to the Yup'ik willingness to accept the missionaries':

Cash prizes given for correct answers in catechism class (Deschout, March 1939), and aspirin doled out during epidemics do not suffice to explain the acceptance of the missionaries' point of view, let alone the missionaries themselves. In fact, material inducements to attend religious instruction were often felt . . . to do more harm than good. Rather, in part due to the sympathy of the early native catechists and Father Deschout, the first longstanding resident priest on Nelson Island, Catholicism was not presented as a threat to the traditional way of life. Also, with emphasis on rebirth through Christ, and the life of the soul after death, Deschout was shrewd enough to play upon points of similarity between the positive, life renewing aspects of traditional native and Catholic ideology. At the same time, the fear of shamanistic extortion was being directly replaced with a fear in Hell (Deschout, 1938, letter to Father Fox). This is not to belie the tremendous difference between traditional and contemporary ideology, but to point out the structural basis for what they first responded to. Their respect for Catholicism went well beyond a respect for the ideology that accompanied a superior technology, and the new religion was by no means simply viewed as another survival technique [cf. Oswalt, 1963b:153]. In fact on Nelson Island Catholicism was in part accepted because of the respect the church showed for native attitudes and techniques. . . .

[W]hen Father Deschout arrived on Nelson Island, he actually encouraged a comeback of the traditional midwinter dancing [that Fox and Menager had done so much to discourage], feeling that it was harmless enough in the somewhat purged form in which it reappeared, and that it provided an important form of amusement for his "docile" converts [Deschout, 1938]. The dancing was in fact modified but Deschout was wrong to view it as merely

entertainment or as structurally indistinct from its predecessors. This will become apparent in the succeeding discussion. But credit where credit is due, his tolerance, although at times condescending, left open to the **Qaluyaarmiut** the possibility of retaining intact a concrete ritual embodiment of their traditional value hierarchy, which would have far more import than the indulgent Fathers intended. Ritual distribution and dance on Nelson Island today provide an important link with the past for a generation speeding headlong into the future. Not **all Yupiit** were as fortunate. (Fi enup-Ri ordan, 1980a:40-43).

The history of **Moravian** missionary activity and influence both parallels and differs from that of their Catholic competition. During the first years after settling at Bethel in 1885, the **Weinlands** and the **Kilbucks** (both missionaries were accompanied by their wives) poured their energy into establishing a small mission station, and learning the language and the general lay of **the land**, much like their Catholic contemporaries on Nelson Island. However, unlike the Catholics, they had chosen an advantageous site that had not previously been a Native community (as was **Tununak**) but which was a trading station of the Alaska Commercial Company located in a very populous, rich and thriving area. Although, like the Jesuits, their first years met with a blend of curiosity and indifference from the local Natives, with influence beyond the mission negligible and the station attracting only orphans, indigents and "tea Christians,"<sup>22</sup> their choice ultimately proved a shrewd one. **Although** remote and difficult of access relative to state-side missions, Bethel was a veritable hub of Native, and very soon Euroamerican, activity, compared to the settlements **on** the Bering Sea **coast** and the Yukon delta. **Moravian** missionaries, both men and women,

came and went **at** a steady rate, producing the first permanent **non-Native** population in the study **area**. By **1891** a mission station had been established at **Quinhagak** on the southern side of **Kuskokwim** Bay, and by **1915** another at **Kwigillingok** on the northern **side**. The tundra **villages** to the west of **Bethel** by and **large** remained staunch **in** their **traditionalism** **well** into **the 1900s**, much **like** the **Nelson Island vil-**  
**lages** in relation to the earlier Catholic mission stations at **Akulurak** and Hooper Bay. **Also**, by no means all of the **riverine** communities were **easily** converted. As has been mentioned, some turned to Russian Orthodoxy in self-defense, **while** others reacted quite violently to **mis-**  
**sionary** intrusion (**e.g.**, the insanity epidemic of 1890-5, affecting **Kwethluk** and the adjacent villages].

As it had been for their Catholic contemporaries, the acquisition of **the Native** language was first on the agenda for the **early Moravians**, for practical as **well** as ideological reasons. And, as had the Jesuits, they **willingly** attended the masked dances and feasts **held** in the **vicin-**  
**ity** of the **mission**.<sup>23</sup> Yet at a very **early** point in the relationship between missionary and Native, the **Moravians** came down strongly against these pagan rites. One of the most sensitive and sympathetic **of** the **early** missionaries, John **Kilbuck** (a Delaware Indian by birth and so experienced in being "the other"), was as set against the traditional practices as his less astute contemporaries, who obviously considered themselves "potential martyrs for the cause of Christianity" (**Oswalt, 1963b:29**). Perhaps because of his **full** comprehension **of** the **Yup'ik** language, **Kilbuck** understood **only** too **well** the coherent ideological

structure the traditional rites embodied, At any rate, from well before the turn of the century, the **Moravians** were engaged in open warfare with Native **sociocultural** systems. This war was waged on many fronts, both material and spiritual. Their weapons were many and **varied**, including mission schools, an orphanage opened near **Kwethluk** in 1926, a missionary doctor, freighting and **lightering** facilities, the reindeer industry well under way by **1915**, a **Kohler** lighting plant and mission sawmill wired for electricity by 1922, and the instigation of trade for the good of both the Natives and the economic survival of the mission station at Bethel. <sup>24</sup>

Not only were the **Moravians** more multi-faceted in their conversion techniques at an earlier date than the Catholics. More important, they were committed to the establishment of a religious community very different in its ultimate contours than the one the Catholics envisioned. The Moravians were committed to the establishment of an indigenous church, both self-governing and self-supporting. Thus, although they were more dogmatic in their suppression of Native cultural configurations, they were also of necessity more active in providing a **replacement**.<sup>25</sup> Lay brothers were employed from 1891, and an effective helper system was established to supplement missionary efforts. Like Father **Deschout**, **Kilbuck's** sympathetic understanding paid off as, having learned the language, he traveled widely to organize the **helper program**, and was well liked by the **Yup'ik** wherever he went. People were perhaps less impressed by his Christian behavior than with the fact that he, along with other **Moravians** such as Drebert, seemed to accept their values (Morrow, 1978).



The **result** was that **by 1900 there** were **Native** helpers, sometimes with their own assistants, at most of the **lower** river and some of the tundra settlements. The **Moravians** were much more willing to incorporate the Natives as the ministers, as **well** as the **ministered (e.g., Helper Neck, the Apostle of the Eskimos, who could present Christianity in a culturally acceptable manner)**. Whereas the paternalism of a **Father Deschout** at best left the **simple** children their toys, the active **evangelism** of the **Moravians** condemned traditional ritual as the playground of the devil, in no uncertain terms, but then proceeded to supply material and spiritual replacements for **the ritual** activities they denounced (e.g., reindeer fairs (**Schwalbe, 1951:150**), songfests, church conferences with public testimonial and helpers institutes). Altogether, the Protestant approach was more tangible **for the initiants**,<sup>26</sup> as the **Moravians** arrived armed with Protestant Christianity **as well** as Protestant **lay** values representing the good **life** of technology and material achievement, in short, CIVILIZATION. **While** the Russians had been ready to coexist with poverty, the **Moravians** were out to eradicate it.<sup>27</sup>

Yet although the traditional rituals were effectively suppressed by the turn of the century,<sup>28</sup> and the traditional dancing entirely eradicated, never to **return**, from the **yearly cycle** of **activities** for communities south of Nelson **Island**, it is inaccurate to assume, as **Oswalt** does, that "when the last kasgee **in** any community was neglected, then abandoned and **finally** torn apart for firewood, the **old way of life** lingered only in the memories of the people" (**Oswalt, 1963b:51**).<sup>29</sup>

Equally inaccurate is the assumption that because so few **Moravians** were so dramatically successful in such a short period of time, there must not have been any coherent traditional Native value system to begin **with.**<sup>30</sup> Although social life was significantly redirected (premarital sex and adultery denounced, marriage made into a formal contractual arrangement, divorce made difficult, and the traditional men's house abandoned), the **Yup'ik** retained their language, traditional standards of childbearing and adult behavioral norms, learning patterns, curing techniques, and subsistence patterns, as well as many of the components of their traditional subsistence ideology. As the succeeding presentation of the **sociocultural** systems of the **Yup'ik** Eskimo will show, such a coherent system did in fact exist, and, even in the apparently totally Christianized **riverine** communities, continues to shape the actions and reactions of the people.<sup>31</sup>

#### THE BEGINNING OF FORMAL EDUCATION

As during the Russian period, the first American schools were church schools, so that formal education and organized religion came hand in hand to the new territory in general and to the study area in particular. The first Commissioner of Education for Alaska (1885 to 1908) was the Presbyterian missionary Sheldon Jackson. Using funds made available for formal education in Alaska through the passage of the First Organic Act in 1884, Jackson set to work throughout the states recruiting missionary teachers in order to better educate, assimilate, Christianize and civilize (all synonymous) the Native populace. As mentioned, he

was instrumental **in** bringing the **Moravians** to Bethel where Weinland was appointed government teacher **in 1886**. Although there was a revision **of** policy in **1895** in an attempt to separate church and state and to discourage the missionary/teacher combination, the interrelationship of missionary activity and education was pronounced in the study area until **well** beyond Jackson's resignation in 1908.<sup>32</sup> The one notable exception was the population **of Nunivak** Island, which had been effectively converted by neither the **Moravians** nor the Catholics. Although a government **school** was located at Nash Harbor from 1920, the teachers did little to **missionize**. Nunivak was finally Christianized by a Native man representing the Covenant Church who married a **Nunivak** woman. They settled at Mekoryuk in **1937** and by **1939** all of the big ceremonies had stopped. This cultural distinction has served in recent years to cut them off even more strongly than they were traditionally from their mainland **Catholic Yup'ik** neighbors.

From the **late** 1800s, **along** with the traveling priest, the establishment **of** boarding schools was seen as of critical importance by both Catholics and **Moravians**, as a means of immediate religious salvation and as an effective corrective for what the missionaries believed to be the inherent defects of Native culture. The view that the only good Native was one reformed **in** the image of a white man (Van Stone, **1978**) was perpetrated by both missionary **and** government activity during this period. Commenting on language use as late as **1943**, Father Fox echoed this philosophy:

The writer believes in English whenever possible. . . . [S]uch countries as China, Japan, India, etc., they have a culture of their own. Our Eskimos have none.

Conversion was viewed as synonymous with cultural reformation and **reformation**, e.g., education of formless youth, the approved starting point. <sup>33</sup>

The establishment of schools was viewed as a means of isolating the young and bringing them under the influence of the Christian work ethic. By 1890 (Judge, **1890:357**) the Catholics had contracts for two such schools, one at **Kolmakosky** (near present-day Aniak) on the **Kuskokwim** and one at Holy Cross on the Yukon. <sup>34</sup>

Although the coastal communities were too far afield to “benefit” from these early mission schools, by 1890 the Catholics also had a small school with 11 students at Tununak (Judge, **1890:357**) with expectations for an increase the following year. The need for a school on Nelson Island was a constant refrain in the correspondence of the early **missionaries**. <sup>35</sup>

Although no school was established on the coast, when the boarding school finally did open at **Akuturak** on the Yukon, coastal youth were among the first to attend. <sup>36</sup> For those who attended and returned to their communities, the school was a powerful influence, as was its successor, St. Mary's, for **Yup'ik** high school students of the late 1960s and early 1970s. In fact, during the early 1960s, when talk of a **regional** government high school was just beginning, the graduates of this

early mission school were held up by government officials as shining examples of what could be accomplished in the "acculturation" of the Yup'ik Eskimo.

In setting up the first schools, the missionaries experienced Native resistance<sup>37</sup> as well as numerous problems in maintaining schools, including the seasonal movements of the Yupit, problems of getting food, providing heat, and learning the language. However, by the early 1900s schools were being built up and down the Kuskokwim. In 1913, the U.S. Bureau of Education built a federal school and sent a teacher to Bethel. Ten years later, the non-Native population in the city increased enough to get a "territorial school" for their children. The agency which preceded the Bureau of Indian Affairs built a day school for the Native children in 1927. Up until 1930, the Catholic priests had the coast much to themselves. At this point, however, exclusive church influence was challenged there too by increasing government intervention. In 1929, the first federal school was established in Tununak. After the federal schools were transferred from the Office of Education to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1931, schools were also established in Nightmute (1941) and Chefornak (1956). These replaced the mission grammar classes, and provided a pivot for enforced population concentration. However, prior to statehood only a small percentage of elementary school graduates was able to attend or put up with a year or more of high school either at the only boarding school in the region (St. Mary's) or at boarding schools outside the territory, let alone the region (e.g., Mt. Edgecumbe in Sitka). Today the majority of Natives over 40 have at most six years of elementary education.

Yet despite the statistically meager advances of formal education in the study area as compared to other areas of the state, there is no doubt that the mission as **well** as the government schools were remarkably successful in their stated goal of **sociocultural** reformation. The schools were perhaps the first and ultimately the most effective instruments of directed change utilized in the region. It was in the classroom that the anti-Native language policy of Sheldon Jackson and of the entire territorial period was most effectively perpetrated. From before 1910 until 1960, the public schools, as well as both **Moravian** and Catholic mission schools which had earlier used the Native languages in their teaching and services, completely forbade the use of **Yup'ik** in the classroom. Although this period of cultural oppression was never as effective- in the study area as it was in other parts of the territory, where it proved fatal in the case of many Native languages, it severely undercut **Yup'ik** identity and pride. Also, with language loss, they became cut off from the older generation. Grandparents who had previously overseen the education of the young were made to feel useless, while the children lost confidence in their elders' ability to act and advise. Children were taught to disdain Native ways. Yet, while unable to fit back into the traditional mold, they were never fully accepted by the whites whom they had been taught to emulate.

The far-reaching effects of the spread of **formal** education during the territorial era were out of proportion to the number of teachers employed and the number of students graduated from the early schools.

Along with government-sponsored hospitals and housing, these schools mark a conscious attempt to reorder the lives of **the** Natives based on the assumption that the Native culture was dead and dying. In the name of assimilation through education, settlement was enforced and children were often physically removed from their families and forced to **listen to** the preaching of white teachers who were often far more dogmatically opposed and **less** sensitive to the traditional **Yup'ik** culture than the missionaries who had preceded **them**. As the succeeding sections on the conception and application of educational policies since statehood **will** show, it is **only** very recently that **rural** Alaska in general and the study area in particular have drawn competent and talented educational personnel who are at **all** psychologically and culturally prepared to **deal** sympathetically with their Native students, and to try to present the "facts" which they teach in a culturally relevant manner.

#### **THE FUR TRADE AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A CASH ECONOMY**

Trade on the **Kuskokwim** was **only briefly** disrupted when the assets of the Russian American Company were purchased in **1867** by Hutchinson, Kohl, and Company which had been organized for the transfer (**Kitchener**, 1954) and which was **later** reorganized as the Alaska Commercial Company (**Mack**, 1953)<sup>38</sup>. From 1867 forward, the trade of the **Kuskokwim**, which had previously centered around **KoImakovski** Redoubt, moved lower down the **river**, with the first trading post established at **Bethel** (then known as **Mumtrekhlagamiut**) in the early **1870s**. During the **early** American period,

Bethel as well as two upriver **Kuskokwim** stations were supplied by ocean-going vessels that anchored at the river mouth (Warehouse Creek), as the **Kuskokwim** was thought too shallow for deep-draft vessels (**Oswalt, 1963b:109**). According to **Weinland** (**Oswalt, 1963b:110**), the trade goods most desired by the lower river Eskimo in the 1880s were tobacco, tea, drilling, needles, powder and lead, knives and axes, hardtack, twine for fish nets, sugar and flour, and cooking utensils. Muskets were also sold.<sup>39</sup>

The Russian and early American period trade was characterized by a system of direct exchange well established in the traditional economic system. According to **Oswalt (1963b:129)**, the major change brought about by the presence of a local trader with items of Russian or United States manufacture was that more goods were available at lower rates of exchange. However, others contend that the intensification of trade was marked by a disruption of traditional Eskimo systems of reciprocity. These systems included traditional trading partnerships, the rights and duties of which went well beyond the provision of goods and services of a set economic value, and included formalized, ceremonial exchanges occurring at traditional events such as the Messenger Feast and Feast for the Dead. Although unit price exchange was already familiar, the value of goods of traditional manufacture was distorted with the introduction of large quantities of trade goods (**Ray, 1975:180** in **Ellanna, 1980**).



However severe farther **north**, the direct effects of this disruption of traditional exchange relationships were a long time coming **to** the coastal communities of primary concern here. The central river people were the first to make a serious shift in their subsistence **cycle**, and to place importance on fur trapping as a means of access to goods of foreign manufacture. **As** has been noted earlier, the evidence of the first trade with the coastal Eskimo comes from **late** in the last Russian period, when arctic fox were first traded into **KoImakov** Redoubt. But during the Russian period, the lower river people had available to them relatively few fur animals that the Russians wanted (**Oswalt, 1963b:129**).

During the early American period, however, coastal traders, some of them from **Nunivak** Island, frequented Bethel, contributing substantially to its importance as a commercial center. Not only did these Native traders engage in exchange with **local** Natives, with seal oil, seal and sea **lion** skins, and walrus hides exchanged for pelts and wood for fish traps and dishes. They **also** brought in furs, such as fox and mink, not **easily** accessible in and around Bethel. As land otter and muskrat were the only furbearers available in abundance on the middle **river**, Bethel was increasingly forced to draw from elsewhere in order to thrive as a trading center (**Oswalt, 1963b:112**), and so encouraged this coastal exchange.

The lower river Eskimo were not seriously committed **to** intensive fur trapping **until the** price of mink skyrocketed during the **early 1900s** (**Oswalt, 1963b:130**). From this point forward, **sociocultural** conflict

as a result of trading did begin to develop. But, ironically, the conflict did not center on the mismatch of traditional and introduced systems of exchange. The exchange of labor for subsistence did not affect many families, and then only those living near mission stations or mining communities. It did, however, introduce the concept of working for others in a subordinate capacity, and **it** is probable that working for wages became an established pattern when the prospectors arrived in appreciable number, shortly after 1898 (**Oswalt, 1963b:131**). Currency, however, was not widely used until the early 1950s, as traders by and large preferred to exchange goods for furs in direct proportion to the worth of the furs.

Also the subsistence round remained basically the same, with trapping and labor given in exchange for goods encroaching somewhat on the use of a man's time, but bringing no substantial changes in subsistence technology or patterns, e.g., encouraging more individualistic hunting patterns as among the **Tlingit (Oberg, 1973:61)**. Fish and game resources were never seriously depleted, even after guns became widely used. Instead, the introduction of foreign diseases continued to deplete the human population, so that those who remained in **the** area were actually better equipped to pursue **available**, and still adequate, resources.

Rather, the conflict that **resulted** from increased trapping centered on the fact that while the missionaries and government agents increasingly encouraged families to settle around the **newly** organized schools and mission stations, the traders' demand for prime winter pelts encouraged

those same families to go wandering. 40 According to Oswalt (1963b:130):

When early winter trapping became increasingly important as the only means to obtain trade goods, the men with the largest number of growing children to support were the least able to obtain these goods. There was competition in places such as Bethel in the 1920s. Men went alone to fall camp and trapped mink primarily. In the spring the teachers compromised by permitting the children to leave school and accompany their parents to spring camp.

Another effect on the riverine communities of the missionary/trader impact was that, as the population became more concentrated,

[i]t was then necessary for the men to range further from the village to trap. . . . In turn, it was necessary for these families to maintain larger dog teams. Thus more intensive fishing was necessary (Oswalt, 1963b:131).

On the coast, however, even by the early 1930s when the use of firearms was well established, the subsistence cycle remained essentially the same. Winter fox trapping was never a major disruption, as it did not conflict with either the spring seal harvest or summer fishing (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:44).

Although the coastal and lower riverine communities were slow to feel the full effects of the commercial development of the Kuskokwim, such development was well under way by the turn of the century. Soaring fur prices and the hope that gold would soon be discovered served to attract additional traders to the Kuskokwim. Soon after 1900, the Kuskokwim Commercial Company, as well as several other independent trading operations, were begun (Kitchener, 1954:165-6) and eventually became the backbone of Kuskokwim commerce (Oswalt, 1963b).<sup>41</sup> In 1909

there were some 200 whites along the **Kuskokwim** working as trappers, prospectors and miners (**Oswalt, 1963b:113**). Although fur prices would fall and gold was never discovered in abundance, the delta region was never the same again. Development was never so intense that the **Yup'ik** population was subjected to the debilitating effects of economic boom and bust in these early years, as were the north Alaskan Natives. Yet **development was** marked enough to establish the **Kuskokwim** as a major trade artery into the interior (**Selkregg, 225-6**).

The first steamboats were on the river by 1907 (Maddren, 1915:302-3). The greatest single change in Kuskokwim accessibility, however, followed the charting of a deep channel in the lower **Kuskokwim** in 1914. Oceangoing vessels could then reach Bethel, and a deep-draft vessel anchored there for the first time in the summer of 1915 (**Maddren, 1915; Oswalt, 1963b:44**). This was the most significant historic change in Kuskokwim transportation until the advent of commercial aviation (**Oswalt, 1963b:44**). With the development of river navigation, came the development of Bethel as a major transportation and trade nexus, and the broker of **sociocultural** as well as technological configurations. It was through Bethel that the concepts of wage labor and deferred economic gratification, the use of fixed standards for exchange, and the gradual loss of economic self-sufficiency were, during the succeeding decades, to be introduced into the study area.

## MINERAL EXPLORATION

As indicated in the preceding section, the scarcity of all precious metals along the Kuskokwim River system has been a major reason why the history of the study area differs so markedly from that of other sectors of Alaska (Oswalt, 1963b:41). Schwalbe (1951:88) notes the opening up of the river that was coincident with the mineral exploration of the early 1900s. But as the early exploratory activity was by and large unsuccessful, no gold rush or boom-bust cycle followed.

The first three miners came to the Kuskokwim in 1887, and by 1889 there were a dozen or more additional prospectors. Also, after the Klondike discoveries in 1898, the Kuskokwim was searched for gold as were most other Alaskan river systems. However, no significant discoveries were made until in 1907 a successful strike on the upper Innoko drew prospectors from Nome (Maddren, 1910; Oswalt, 1963b:41). But although several more small strikes were made on the upper river including one on the Tuluksak River in 1907, they were either not found to be profitable or not extensive enough to support a large number of miners (Oswalt, 1963b:42). The only other mineral of economic importance was cinnabar, discovered upriver near the settlements of Crooked Creek, Kalmakov Redoubt, and Sleetmiut. Also Sleetmiut area quicksilver deposits were first discovered in 1906, and the important Red Devil Mine was staked in 1933.

Not only were prospectors few on the Kuskokwim, but more significant, not one of the mines was located at a Native population center. This trend has continued into the present day. Although, in descending order of value, platinum, placer gold, lode mercury, antimony and lode gold are all available in the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta region (Alaska Geographic, 1979:18), none is mined in or near the communities of our immediate concern. The closest active mining is at Goodnews Bay, where platinum was discovered in 1926,<sup>42</sup> as well as minerals in the Aniak Mining District upriver from Bethel. **Coal** beds have been reported on Nelson and Nunivak islands, but they have not been commercially exploited.

Although none of the smaller coastal or **riverine** communities has been directly affected by mineral exploration, Bethel did serve as a major transfer point for the early, and more contemporary, prospectors. **Oswalt (1963b:44)** notes that the influx of gold seekers around 1910 temporarily inflated the price for fish and dogs, but this situation equalized itself when most of the outsiders abruptly departed after the limits of the gold deposits had been realized. Also, the fish wheel was learned from the miners and used on the upper river, but it did not influence the fishery downstream from **Tuluksak**, as from there to the sea tidal waters make it impossible to operate efficiently.

All in all, there was not enough mineral development in the study area to provide an economic base for the development of a permanent white community such as Nome in the Bering Strait region, with its related support services and continuous **influx** of adventurers drawn by the hope

of quick and easy gain. Whereas Nome was dominated by a white **entrepreneurial** class, who had no articulate policy of **social** change but also no reason or desire to understand or have more than practical "economic" **dealings with** the Native residents, Bethel was not only a **local** trade nexus but, **more** important, a mission station founded with the explicit **goal** of "civilizing" and acting in concert with the local populace. Who is to say whether in the end non-intentional change may not be the more devastating?

#### THE REINDEER INDUSTRY

Like mineral exploration, the **Kuskokwim** reindeer industry was relatively unimportant considering **Alaska** as a **whole**. Yet for over **40** years it **played** a definite **role** in **delta** life. In **1892** Sheldon Jackson introduced reindeer herding into northern **Alaska**. Part and **parcel** of his overt **assimilationist policies**, he saw it as the **ideal** means of giving the Natives an industrial education and practical **lesson** in the Christian work **ethic**, turning them from **uncivilized** hunters and fishers into "civilized" herders and teamsters (**Schwalbe, 1951:128**). It was **also** presented as a **viable** solution to Native destitution, although resource depletion was not a severe problem on the **Kuskokwim** and there had been no sharp increase in the population with a consequent increase in the demand for meat (**e.g., Nome miners**).<sup>43</sup>

At any rate, the Bethel missionaries requested deer in 1896,<sup>44</sup> and in 1901, 176 animals came to the **Moravian** mission. By 1904, 1,046 rein-

deer were being herded on the delta, and by 1915 the industry appeared to be firmly established in the area. Annual reindeer fairs were held in Akiak in 1915 and 1916, including everything from foot races to bread baking contests (**Schwalbe, 1951:135**). But over the years the herds became increasingly concentrated in the hands of Lapps (who had originally come to instruct the Eskimo in reindeer husbandry) and white businessmen, while the **Yup'ik** were employed as hired herders. Native and mission herds were **also** consolidated. <sup>45</sup>

Although from 1908 the post-Jackson government policy was to put the deer under Native control, the reindeer industry remained tied to mission activity, as the missionaries played the role of overseers and supervisors. Herding helped subsidize missionary activity and support the mission stations. But ironically, the very Natives who did the herding were thus precluded from taking advantage of the formal education that the mission stations were beginning to offer, as they were away at the reindeer camps for the better part of the year. Herding did, however, provide some trade goods as well as meat to the herders and their families, and put them in contact with whites and white forms of organization.

In the early 1930s, some 43,000 reindeer were grazing along the river system (**Anderson, 1935:197; Oswalt, 1963b:46**). In the late 1930s the number was approximately the same, with herds at Akiachak, **Kalskag** and Kwethluk. Yet in the early 1940s the herds declined so rapidly that they were almost nonexistent by about **1946**, when only 600 reindeer were



reported **for** a single herd **in Akiak**, along with a government herd on Nunivak Island and one **at Hooper Bay**. But by 1949, the Akiak herd had strayed, and the **Hooper Bay** herd had decreased markedly, apparently because the **people** were not interested and had tried to **hold** the herd near the village where the ranges were depleted.

By the **1950s** the only **deer** remaining in the study area were on predator-free **Nunivak** Island. There a slaughterhouse had been constructed **in 1945**, from which 13,000 carcasses were shipped from 1945-7 (**Lantis, 1950:36**).<sup>46</sup> Fifteen thousand dollars was earned in **1946**, and \$20,000 in 1947 through the sale of reindeer meat and hides, a substantial income source which has continued with its ups and downs into the present. No Kuskokwim River reindeer industry remains.

The Natives of the **Kuskokwim** were asked **in** the summer of 1948 what they thought had **led** to the decrease in the **deer**. Predation by wolves, starvation, poor herding and management, excessive butchering, and mixing with caribou were some of the reasons given (**Lantis, 1950:36**). **To** this **list Lantis** later added disease, marketing problems, and vacillating government policies (**1950:47**). There is **also** good evidence that the reindeer industry failed because of its conflict with the still vital indigenous **sociocultural** systems:

The Eskimo herded when they were young and free from **familial** obligation, but very few **viewed** herding as a lifelong occupation. The Kuskokwim Eskimo were accustomed to sedentary **village life**. They were gregarious and regarded the physical **and social** isolation of camp life as disagreeable (**Lantis, 1950:47**).

Although there is some controversy as to the weight that should be given this one factor, the **Yup'ik** are in fact a shore-dwelling people, accustomed to seasonal migrations, but not to the constant nomadic existence close herding required. They were also accustomed to large winter social gatherings that were precluded **by** the lonely life of the herder. Herding was also in conflict with the more recent centralized trends resulting from the establishment of missions and schools. Finally, the formation of reindeer associations, in which ownership was vested in the group rather than the individual, tended to diffuse authority with the effect that no one was willing to take final responsibility for the herd's well-being. This last difficulty is particularly interesting in the light of a recently recorded Native explanation of the deer's demise:

Later on people didn't take care of the meat any more. They threw it around to the dogs. Then one time the wolves came up and the reindeer was gone (Community of Bethel Education History **Services, 1979:Tape 2**).

Although predation certainly figures in this Native account, the hunters' neglect of the hunted is even more significant and is evidence of the traditional subsistence ideology still alive and well among the residents of the study area, by which animals will only continue **to** allow themselves to be taken if they are shown the proper respect.

## **WORLD WAR II AND THE FORMATION OF THE TERRITORIAL GUARD**

The outbreak of World War II had both substantial direct and indirect effects on the study area. Although the study area was not immediately

impacted by the dramatic rise in territorial population, especially pronounced in urban areas, coincident with increased military activity after 1941, the sociocultural climate of extra-regional activity would never be the same. World War II greatly increased general public awareness of Alaska and provided many individuals with a first-hand experience of the area. Moreover, Bethel served as a defense and communication center for the entire western Alaska coastline and Kuskokwim valley. It was considered a potential enemy target because of the Signal Corps station, large Standard Oil tanks and government hospital complex that it contained (Schwalbe, 1951:240), and the Army airfield that was constructed on the opposite side of the river from Bethel where large bombers and transports could land. This facility remained after the war, and in turn provided stimulus for subsequent travel between the coastal and riverine communities and the regional center, as well as increasing trade and cash opportunities in Bethel for employment in the multiple support services the new military installations required.

The major direct impact of the war years, however, was the organization of Native men living along the western and northern coastline of Alaska into the Territorial Guard. The Guard was initially set up for the purpose of coastal defense and surveillance. Members were trained in the observation and communication of enemy activity, as well as for the initial defense of the coastal communities in case of attack. This had relatively little immediate effect on the coastal communities of the study area, as only a handful of men served during and immediately after the war. But in 1949, the Territorial Guard became the National

Guard and was established throughout the state. In **1950** the Second Scout Battalion was formed with headquarters in Bethel (**Marston, 1969:214-15**). The program was expanded in the 1960s, when more than 100 Alaska Natives were enrolled in some phase of the state National Guard (**Mcbeath, 1980:27**). It included volunteers between the ages of 17 and 35.

The effects **of** the permanent establishment of the Guard were multiple. Enlistment became, and remains to the present day, a valuable means of extra income and direct experience of the outside world. It associated Natives from different villages and greatly enlarged their **organizational** and leadership capacities. Initially, leadership was in the hands of non-Natives, and Natives were often exposed to the discriminatory values and actions of non-Native superiors with **all** the negative side effects this entailed. However, authority, especially at the community and regional level, was increasingly given over to young village men, men not traditionally holding positions of leadership in their communities. While this pattern was harmful in that it set up conflicts in traditional patterns of authority, it was ultimately critical to the Natives of the study area as it provided one of the **first** unifying experiences for many Native leaders active in the subsequent land claim movement.

Participation in the Guard, and the fact **of** its presence in the study **area**, also provided the first local experience of being American. **Suspicious** outsiders, including anthropologists, are still viewed by many

villagers as being "communist spies." Rather than viewing patriotism as a significant motivating factor in Guard membership, (e.g., Marston, 1969), it is perhaps more accurate to see increased Americanization and nationalism as the **result of** contact with formal military **organiza-**  
**tion.**

Post-war training outside of Alaska, as well as encampments at military posts within the state, have further increased the opportunities for **sociocultural** change coincident with increased direct contacts with the outside. As training camps (15 days annually) and **drill** sessions (48 a year) were most frequent in the winter months and were never prolonged, Army service was from the beginning compatible with the **sub-**  
**sistence** life-style. It was perceived as especially advantageous by the younger men, men presently in their 50s who have been serving now for 20 years. Young men and even some women continue to serve, often as many as two dozen **per** coastal community. Current attractions continue to **be** extra income, travel experience, increased access to ammunition and modern weaponry, as **well** as a certain amount of status within the community.

#### THE EFFECTS OF EPIDEMIC DISEASES

Along with commercial access and organized religion, disease, too, was **well** established by the 1930s, and the population down by **half** from an estimated aboriginal population of 10,000 in the **delta** region at the time of Russian contact. The influenza epidemic of 1900 **alone killed**

over 50% of the adult population and all of the babies (**Oswalt, 1963b:94**). Measles, influenza and tuberculosis were the primary killers, along with smallpox and **syphilis**.<sup>47</sup> Infant deaths were particularly high.<sup>48</sup>

All introduced, these diseases have brought about changes in two respects. In crippling smaller groups of people, epidemics facilitated the gathering of the traditionally dispersed population into villages. I-antis (1958) remarks on the adaptability of the **Yup'ik** to modern medical practices. From the 1890s, health care was **sporadically provided** by the **Moravians** at their mission stations and served to attract many "converts."<sup>49</sup>

The first medical doctor to practice locally was the **Moravian** Joseph **Romig**, who came to Bethel in **1896**. By 1916 there was a government hospital in Akiak, which closed in 1934, only to reopen in 1940 in Bethel. Although this hospital burned in 1950, it was replaced in 1954 by a 60-bed facility in use until the fall of 1980. Thus the population concentration that had initially resulted from commercial contacts and had been encouraged and reinforced by the attraction of public services, particularly formal education, was further encouraged by the provision of medical **care**.

Prior to World War **II**, the daily radio schedule with the field hospital and the assistance of bush pilots, two or more of whom were bilingual, were also important in facilitating health care. Some medical and

**dental service** was provided the coastal villages by Coast Guard cutters and the BIA "North Star. " There **were** also famous nurses who traveled by **dogteam** (Lantis, personal communication).

However, although **health** care was introduced **early, it** was not **until** after the war that serious attention was given by the United States government to the tremendous problems of the area. Then, in 1955, the **Arctic Health** Research Center of the United States Public Health Service implemented the Tuberculosis Ambulatory Chemotherapy Program, a campaign which was ultimately successful in radically decreasing the incidence of tuberculosis in the Bethel triangle.

The **sociocultural** impact of this program was as important as the **medical** results, and as far-reaching as the **sociocultural** implications of population depletion and **concentration** that that preceded it. In the process of treatment for **TB, ailing** men and women were sent for as long as four **years to sanitariums at** Mt. Edgecumbe and Seattle, where they were exposed to western civilization **on** its own grounds. This experience not only taught them English but **also** helped to make **comprehensible** the demands of the whites they increasingly encountered at **home**. Although the program was statewide, the high incidence **of** disease meant that a disproportionate number **of** patients came from the study **area**.<sup>50</sup> Approximately one-fourth of the coastal population presently over 45 years of age was sent at **least** as far as Anchorage for an extended (over three months) tuberculosis rest and taste **of** white society (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:44).

At the time of statehood, the health problems of the study area remained numerous. Major health problems still included tuberculosis,<sup>51</sup> **enteric** diseases associated with inadequate water and sewage facilities, dental problems, eye diseases, anemia (Porter, 1956), and Otitis media. **Influenza** and pneumonia continued to cause an average death rate of 75 per 100,000 for Native Alaskans, which was 10 times the death rate for Alaska whites (McBeath, 1980: 10). Although by the time of statehood some strides had been made toward correcting these inequities, all remained, and many continue to be, severe.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Russian Administration of Alaska and the Status of the Alaskan Natives (U.S. Congress, 1950) is an excellent source on Russian attitudes and policies toward aboriginal people. The appendices of greatest significance are selections from the works of Petroff and Tikhmenev. The appendix on Russian materials in the Library of Congress dealing with Alaska Natives is also very useful (Oswalt, 1965).

<sup>2</sup> Documents Relative to the History of Alaska, Vol. 1, pp. 378-79, ACC Box 302 (Oswalt, 1965:17): In a report on the Kwi hpay mission for 1863 by Hieromonk Illarion, it is noted that the people are living peacefully "except those inhabiting the coastal region at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River where an epidemic swept away a large number of them."

<sup>3</sup> Kuskokwim River reference, 1822 Vol. 4, Documents Relative to the History of Alaska, Dept. of State, Letter mentions that two "Kuskokhans" visited Korsakovsky at New Alexanderovsk reporting an island, thought by the directors to be perhaps Nunivak, discovered by Vasil'ev in 1821. The directors in the letter are concerned about further contacts with Nunivak. Also, in 1844, three boys from the Kuskokwim were at school at Nushagak, and in 1845 six boys. Documents Relating to the History of Alaska, Vol. 2, p. 351, ACC Box 199 (Oswalt, 1965:20).

<sup>4</sup> The contributions of these men, most of whom worked with the enthusiastic support of Wrangell, have been evaluated in a scholarly manner by M.B. Chernenko in a preface to his biographical sketch of Zagoskin. Chernenko is one of the editors of the 1956 Soviet edition of Zagoskin's travels translated in this volume (Zagoskin 1967:xii).

Tikhmenev (1939) also contains excellent material on the Kuskokwim River explorations by the Russians. Included is a statement on the 1818 explorations of the Kuskokwim Bay and the lower river and the founding of Nushagak Redoubt (Alexandrovski) in the same year. The 1829 trip toward the Kuskokwim River drainage by Vasil'ev and the successful explorations of 1830 plus the founding of a trading establishment at the mouth of the Holitna River in 1832 by Kolmakov, its removal to the Kwigim (Kwik) River mouth and relocation to Kolmakov Redoubt in 1841, are all recounted.

<sup>5</sup> Ray (1975a, p. 8-9) cites the beginning of European trade and the diffusion of non-Native traits across the Strait between 1650 and 1778. Although as yet there was no direct contact, indirect contact had important consequences. During the early period fur was available in exchange for iron tools (needles and knives), tobacco, and beads. Metal was highly prized and some traditional forms were hence made in metal, i.e., the uluaq (or women's knife).

<sup>6</sup> The specific trade goods that the Russians introduced to the **Kuskokwim** during historic times included black and white beads, tobacco, Aleutian axes, copper and cast-iron dishes, flannel blankets, and items of European clothing. Other goods bartered by the Russians in western **Alaska** which in all likelihood were in the Kuskokwim trading inventories, included beads, knives, spears of iron, steel for striking a fire, needles, combs, pipes, tin and cast-iron pots, large cups, mirrors, copper rings, earrings, bracelets of iron and copper, leather pouches, pestles and mortars, small beads and navy buttons (**Oswalt, 1963 b:105**).

<sup>7</sup> On September **14, 1861**, Father **Illarion** recorded in his diary (**Oswalt, 1960: 102**):

The latter (man) came there with his people from the lower parts of the Kuskokwim River to trade, knowing that the manager of **Kolmakovsky Redoubt** was bringing from **Mikhailovsky Redoubt** the things they needed: deerskins, tobacco, calico, "**tsukli**," glass beads, bracelets, Yakut knives, needles. In return, they brought the products of their hunt: seal blubber, seal skins, beaver skins, foxes, and otters, blue foxes and **castoreum**.

<sup>8</sup> The Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic missionary Hieromonk **Illarion** supplies virtually the only account of the Kuskokwim River Eskimos and Indians during the latter part of Russian occupancy.

<sup>9</sup>

In the Yukon and Kuskokwim valleys the natives see no need to change their methods of hunting and will not buy the steel traps which are imported, so that these represent capital that is lying idle. We are not yet strong enough to distribute them without payment; **all** the iron parts of the traps are converted by the natives into knives, hatchets, rings and other things (221). . . .

Not only each clan but each native family has its own hunting shack; the use of these by hired parties could cause bad feeling against us and among the natives, always disadvantageous to the trading interests of the Company (**Zagoskin, 1967:222**).

<sup>10</sup> The earliest known reference to the Kuskokwim area is from the diary of Hieromonk **Juvenal**, who in **1796** went to Lake **Iliamna** as a missionary, and wrote in his diary on 9/13/1796:

Three visitors arrived **at** the village to-day. . . . They lived on the banks of the river called the **Kush-ko-quim** which is said to abound in fish. When they saw me one of them made the sign of the cross and laughed, a sign that they must have come in contact **with** Russians, but they do **not** know **a single** word **of** our **language** (Hoffman, 1952:52; in Oswalt, 1963b:9 )

11 In an appendix the 1834 Bishop **Veniaminov** population figure for the "**Koskoquim**" is given as 7,000 (p. 227) while the Tikhmenev 1863 census of Kuskokwim Christians is given as 755 **males** and 640 females for **a** total of **1,395** (Elliot, 1875; in Oswalt, 1965:22).

12 The Russians failed miserably in attempts to convert the coastal population. This was due both to the hostility of the Natives and the conversion technique, or lack thereof, of the newcomers. In the report for the Yukon mission in **1863**, Father Hieromonk **Illarion** noted that of **all** the Native populations 'Indifference to the Christian religion and its sacraments is especially pronounced among the Natives living at the mouth of the Kwehpah (Yukon) and **Kuskokwim** rivers" (**Illarion, 1863: 378**).

13 In Documents Relative to the History of Alaska, Vol. 5, pp. 36-45, Russian Orthodox American Messenger, Oct. and Nov. **1899**. (**Oswalt, 1965:20**) on Russian Orthodox Missionary Policy, **1899**, the following kinds of instructions are included: refrain from hasty baptisms; modify fasting **rules to** coincide with **local** dietary conditions; respect the **local** customs; do not give presents to neophytes; be gentle with the people and do not coerce them; do not engage in commercial activities; learn the language; and do not meddle in temporal matters. **Krauss** (1980) also makes a strong case for the **bilingual/bicultural** character of Russian policy in sharp contrast to the monolingual/monocultural racism of Sheldon Jackson et al. that was to **follow it**.

14 The annual visit of the revenue cutter was the **only** sign of the **law** of the United States north of the **Pribilofs** until **1897**, when the St. Michael area was declared a military district (Ray, 1975a:190; in Ellanna, 1980).

15 There was also a Roman Catholic church at **Ohagamiut** on the **Kuskokwim** during the winter of 1895-96, but it was destroyed by fire in **1903**, and the mission was abandoned **in 1907**. This failure was because of the depopulation of **Ohagamiut** after the 1900 influenza epidemic. However, Roman Catholics were again on the **river** in **World War II**, when a mission was constructed in Bethel **in 1942** by Father **Menager** to provide service for the 800 soldiers there (**Llorente, 1951:21; Oswalt, 1963b:47**).

Laska, the trader [at Tununak], told me to-day that the Russian priest told an Indian last autumn to put up a stake with the usual inscription at the place **I** wanted to visit. **I** asked if the priest ever went there **to** see the Indians. They told me that he came only once, about thirty years ago, when he was a deacon, and that before him a Russian priest had stopped on his way from **Nushergak**; and that was all they knew about priest or religion. . . . I asked the trader whether he would help me if I should return and whether **I** could stay with him till **June**. He told me that he would do **all** he **could** for me (**Tosi, 1889:341**).

Were **I** a poet or humorist, I might write a most beautiful romance about the Russian priest whose mission is a hundred and fifty miles below mine. He is a trader and nothing else; he baptizes all the people, sells them crosses for skins, and that's all his priestly work (**Robaut, 1889: 102**).

The Russian priests are causing us considerable annoyance [at St. Michael] by spreading foolish reports about us. They tell the people that we will steal the children and send them off to San Francisco: That the sisters keep the devil shut up in a box and feed him well, while they let the little devils out to beat people, (**Treca, 1889:353**).

**In 1890, Father Treca wrote to Father Cataldo:**

Last January I had the pleasure of assisting at a **grushka** in the village of **Agaiotchamute** which is a two days' journey distant from our station (on Nelson Island). . . . It is a feast celebrated by the Indians [sic] in honor of their deceased kinsmen. . . . **I** went all the more willingly for **I** knew that **I** should meet strangers and could easily sound their feelings on

religious subjects. Nor was I disappointed, for during the eight days that the celebration lasted, I had daily conferences with them (1890: 362); (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:42).

19 The Sisters of St. Anne, who had started a school at Akulurak, were actually kicked out in 1898 by the medicine men who told parents that if they let their children attend, they would die (O'Connor, 1978:18).

20 Father Menager made a point of going contrary to the taboos of the medicine men (angalkut) whom he looked upon as charlatans who intimidated people and cheated them of their goods in exchange for empty cures. He thought it his duty "to prove to them (the natives) how clever white people could be" (1962:54) by installing an electric plant and pointing out the wonders of the airplane (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a).

Also, both Fox and Menager discouraged the midwinter festivals, especially the annual Bladder Feast and Feast for the Dead. In their opinion, these feasts were not only a pernicious means of avoiding work but an opportunity for gluttony, waste, and shamanistic extortion, as the events were riddled with "pagan superstition" (Fox, 1977).

21

The natives even now will not even deign to bring their children to the Mission to be baptized, not to say anything about instructing them in their religion. And that for such as live within a few hours drive by dogteam from the Mission. What we need here is a father who has nothing to do but keep traveling from village to village to instruct and encourage the natives in the practice of their religion. . . . Marriages are comparatively rare. . . . We have at present (at the mission) 28 boys and 59 girls. The children are doing pretty well, and I guess our hope for the future has to be placed in these children. The older generation is all but hopeless (Fox, 1928).

22 Schwalbe (1951:144): "Anyone could buy their Christianity for something less than a chest of tea."

23 They originally attended the ceremonies expecting unrestrained pagan ritual but were "pleasantly disappointed" (Oswalt, 1963b:70). According to Weinland (manuscript dated 1/20/87):

We are unanimous in the opinion that so far as these different performances themselves

are concerned, there is nothing immoral in them, but that much immorality is carried on under cover. It cannot be otherwise, where so many uncivilized people are herded together (promiscuously) (Oswalt, 1963b: 67).

24

Brother Schoechert believed that the mission should carry on trade for the benefit of the natives and he encouraged them to provide themselves with traps, bring the skins to the mission and receive good food at fair prices. . . . In good fur years sleds loaded heavily with mink, fox and land otter were brought to **Quinhagak**. Flour, tea, sugar and pilot bread was the barter given in exchange. . . . Furs then sent to outside furriers. . . . The opening up of the river had sharply accentuated the question of engaging in trade to aid in support of the mission. The Brethren Stecker and **Schoechert** assured the board that there were golden opportunities for large profits from sales to the White men streaming through the country. The question which the board faced was not whether they should engage in trade but whether they should engage in trade on a larger scale. . . . Most of the expenses were then being met by profits netted from the sale of sawmill output, sale of furs, and sale of merchandise. But the board held trade in check and later it was discontinued altogether (**Schwalbe, 1951:92**).

25 Paradoxically, while the **Moravians** wanted to civilize the benighted Eskimo, they did not want to alienate them from their own culture, as they were committed to a Native-run church:

They **should** not be Europeanized or Americanized, lest false pride ruins them. . . . They should retain their racial character, remain good Eskimos, expert, if possible, in Eskimo attainments, that they may remain suited to their environment and of truest service to their people, even if essentially civilized (Morrow, 1978).

26 The argument can also be made that, although Protestant practice was more tangible to the Natives, the Catholics offered a hell-fire non-introspective dogma much more easily accessible to the

proscriptive-minded **Yup'ik** than **the** Protestant ethic **of** personal responsibility. **While** the Catholics denounced drinking as a sin, pure and **simple**, the Protestants preached the need to cleanse **one's** soul and think through one's actions. In any event, both brands of Christianity had their strong points, and neither won their fields through correct ideology as much **as** through the personal efforts of individual missionaries, whether Catholic or Protestant (**see** Morrow, 1978).

27 According **to** **Schwalbe** (1951:117):

Everywhere there was ignorance, poverty, squalor and superstition. . . . The missionaries brought light into the darkness. They built chapels and schools. They preached and taught. . . . Furthermore they cooperated with the government not only **in** the introduction of the reindeer to offset the indigence of the Eskimo but in the establishment of decent and Christian homes.

Also, while the **Moravians** concentrated on abolishing the "pot-latch," other **influences** that they considered detrimental emerged. Edith **Kilbuck** repeatedly deplored that the young people were participating in Anglo-American dances and "running about with a certain **class** of white men" (MA, E. **Kilbuck** Diary, Nov. 2, 1919). By 1937 the **Moravians** also lamented the harm caused by the **local** use of intoxicants (**Oswalt**, 1980:23).

28 **Kilbuck** reported that in the village of **Kwethluk**, under the prodding of a vigorous **Moravian** helper, the people burned their dance masks in 1890. By 1894 he wrote that "there was no masquerade this year from Bethel to **Ougavig**, that is in six prominent villages" (**Kilbuck**, Report of the Mission Stations on the Kuskokwim River for the year 1893-94; in **Oswalt**, 1963b:78-9). Note, however, that missionaries had a vested interest in presenting the decline of Eskimo religion in the best **possible** light. **Also**, as overt hostility is discouraged among the **Yup'ik**, conflict and personal maladjustment **would be difficult** to perceive if it did exist. Finally, if what was being discarded were merely the formal trappings of an ideological structure basically **left** intact, then the apparent lack of conflict may **well** have been real (Morrow, 1978).

29 "By 1925, they could no longer think of aboriginal Eskimo culture as a viable organic whole" (**Oswalt**, 1963b:41).

30 **Oswalt** simplistically opposes the "rigid moral code" of the missionaries to the **Yup'ik** design for **living** which included "an inadequately integrated religious system, a morality concept separate from most supernatural concerns, . . . and very **simple** notions of political **organization**" (**Oswalt**, 1963 b:155). He attributes the downfall of this non-system **to** 1) the Russian introduction of Christianity **and** trading posts, 2) the trading company policies of the **early** American period,

3) the **Moravian** mission program of directed change, 4) the dynamic leadership of **Kilbuck** and the helper system and 5) the **Yup'ik** susceptibility to change, i.e., their acceptance of change as a necessary condition of survival. Also, since they were relatively new on the river, their religious system was out of phase with their subsistence reality and they were particularly susceptible to the **Moravian** alternative.

31 In fact, **Oswalt** himself notes that "although Bethel Eskimos gave up their ceremonies in 1916, they were still attending those of their neighbors" (1963b:80), a pattern that has continued into the present day. He also notes, but does not recognize the significance of the fact that, supposedly as a "result of high fur prices, the lower river Eskimo began holding what he deems "purely secular **potlatches** . . . where the exchange was focused upon the hospitality of a temporarily wealthy individual or individuals who organized the redistribution ceremony" (**Oswalt, 1963b:82**). The traditional exchange structure was not easily eradicated.

32

In 1914 the government opened a school at **Naparearmiut**, called also Hooper Bay, one of the most important villages of this region. And as most public school teachers in this country are Protestant, they lost no time in using the public school to propagate their errors among our baptized people. **Fr. Treca** had a little log house at **Naparearmiut**, but he had no chance to stay there long and the Protestants did much as they pleased (**Menager, n.d.**).

Before 1940, the teachers were always **half-baked** preachers from the **Unalakleet** area, people much more interested in preaching than in teaching. That caused the mission lots of annoyance (Fox, Answer to Q #6 in Notes for his **book**).

Eventually teachers ceased being primarily denominational missionaries in public schools. But for awhile the public school was used practically as a branch of the Covenant Church (**Fox, 1972:25**).

In **DeLon, Fox and Menager, 1929**, "Alaska," letters dealing with the necessity of catechists, shortage of missionaries on the trail, and Lutheran competition, **Nuntii De Missionibus, Vol. 2, No. 10**, pp. 337-57.



I would gladly add here something about the necessity of multiplying schools everywhere in our mission, as the **only** way to secure in a **near** future a generation of **fervant [sic]** Christians **[sic]** in a land where heathenism and polygamy are **still** having their own way. We can have **little** influence on the adult population, which has long been the slave of pagan corruption and superstitious habits (**Rene, 1897:523**).

34 **Father Robout (1888)** justified the foundation of a school on the Yukon as follows:

Acting upon a long and **well** tried experience among the Indians, we have come to the conclusion that the training of Indian children both in mind and in **manual** work, when entirely subtracted from **all** Indian **superstitions**, especially from the influence of their parents and others alike, are more apt to enter into the views and manners of the whites and so **to** embrace heartily civilization. . . .

The children do not care much about **school** and do not attend regularly **unless something** be given to them in the way of food or clothing. . . .

The parents generally do not interfere much with the attending or not of their children to school; they take no interest **at all** in the school.

One year **Tater Robout** amended his comment on parental disinterest as follows:

All these Indians are not only willing but most anxious to give me all their children **if** we open a school, and I think we could begin right away with 100 children, if we **get** a **con-**tract school with the American government (**1889: 103**).

35 **As early as 1889**, the **Moravian** John **Kilbuck** had designated **Tununak** a **strategic** location for a school. **In a letter** from **Father Tosi in 1893**, the tactics for successful conversion were addressed as follows:

In my opinion, therefore, Cape Vancouver is the best place for a station. As your Reverence sees, a great deal of good has been done here already. What we need most down there is a good school for our children. Of what use it **will** be to our Indians [i.e., **Yupit**] to learn English and other branches I don't know, but our principal aim is to have them well instructed in our religion and make them good Christians. For this a good school is needed. Besides there is danger that these Indians be ruined **by** the Protestant teachers (**Tosi**, 1893).

36 "If there was a **child** big enough for our boarding school, I would do all in my power to grab him" (Fox, 1972:15).

37 Edith **Kilbuck** wrote in a newspaper interview published in the Christian Herald for December 7, 1892, "Parents said they would not send **their children** to school; they would die if they dwelt with white people" (**Oswalt**, 1963 b:35).

38 The Alaska Commercial Company had a virtual monopoly on the Kuskokwim from the time of purchase until after the turn of the century. The only competition was from the Western Fur and Trading Company during the 1870s, and Reinhold **Separe (Sipary)**, an early American period trader, when he briefly went out on his own (**Oswalt**, 1963b:111).

39 During the time of **Zagoskin's** travels, guns were not a trade item on the Kuskokwim (**Zagoskin**, 1967:131). During the American period and prior to 1896, there was a ban against the sale of breech-loading rifles and ammunition in Alaska. In 1900, the Alaska Commercial Company was granted permission by the Secretary of the Interior to sell and barter breech-loading rifles at certain specified stations (**Oswalt**, 1963b:110). According to **Kilbuck (n.d. 3 Book I:14-15)**:

Upper river people were the first to use fire-arms. First the blunderbuss, with its **flint** and flash pan, whose chief value as a weapon of defense was the deafening report it could make when fired. . . . The blunderbuss was laid aside for the musket and this was replaced by the Kentucky rifle, and now the latest improved repeating rifle is the **equip-**ment of the modern hunter.

40 Trading for many years was actually a part of **Moravian** Church activity. Up until 1925 the store profits at **Quinhagak** were sufficient to support not only that station, but **also** to contribute to the maintenance of the Bethel station (**Oswalt**, 1963b:112).

According to Oswalt (1963b:113):

Detailed published references to the trading activities of the mission are rare. Considering that every other overt facet of mission life was discussed, it may be inferred that the missionaries were not particularly proud of their trading function.

Adolf Stecker in Report of Mission at Bethel, Alaska, June 20 to December 31, 1907 (in Oswalt, 1963b:113) wrote that the Moravians traded because no other Christian concern did so. . . , "[A]nd so for the good of the country, of the natives, and of the whites, we do some trading, in the fear of God."

41 Local traders were especially important at Mekoryuk, Kwigillingok, Eek, and the Bethel area from Oscarville to Kwethluk (e.g., the Samualson family). They usually did not missionize, they stayed a long time, married local women or brought a wife from another region of Alaska, and they reared thoroughly bilingual children, many of whom later became regional or state leaders. Although their prices may have been excessive relative to the prices of local products, and they may have taken advantage of older people's lack of knowledge of monetary values, nevertheless they were more egalitarian than many teachers and missionaries who wanted to make basic cultural changes. Local people also sometimes managed stores for traders, and there were "under the bed" Yup'ik traders, who always had several cases of goods cached for trading (Lantis, personal communication).

42 The platinum mine at Goodnews has been closed since 1975. However, in April of 1981 it was announced that the ownership of the mine had changed hands (from one non-Native to another) and that operations are expected to resume during the summer.

43 It has also been maintained that the presentation of the reindeer industry as a solution for resource depletion was merely a cover for the support of missionary activity.

44 "We feel the need of a more civilized mode of life for these Eskimo, and these deer seem our only hope" (U.S. Bureau of Education Report on Introduction of Domesticated Reindeer into Alaska...1896: pp. 131-33; in Oswalt, 1963b:46).

45

Although these young men [Native herders] were given as a wage, female deer, they were also supplied with food and clothing. The mission was thus forced to expend large sums of money, and at the same time became reindeer poor. As early as 1928 it became clear that it would

not be possible to continue along the original lines of management. Consequently the herds belonging to Native owners and to the mission were consolidated into what was known as the **Kuskokwim River Company (Schwalbe, 1951: 126)**.

46 **The Nunivak** herd, numbering 18,000 or more in 1940, grew from 98 reindeer brought in 1920 and 10 caribou bulls introduced in 1925 (hence their large size). This herd was bought by the U.S. government from the **Loman Company** in 1939. Nunivak herding was more successful than on the coast because close herding was not necessary, as there were no predators and the reindeer could not get away and wander off with the caribou. The heaviest losses were from parasites and overgrazing.

47 **Oswalt (1963b:94)** lists epidemics as a measure of the frequency of widespread illness along the lower and central Kuskokwim, including the smallpox epidemic of 1838-9; the chicken pox and whooping cough epidemic of 1895-6; the influenza epidemic of 1900-1 (secondary infections such as measles, pneumonia and whooping cough following the influenza attack were, according to Dr. Romig, the cause of many deaths (**Anderson, 1930:190-205**)); the diphtheria epidemic of 1906; and the influenza epidemics of **1918** and 1927.

48 **Deschout's** entries in the Nelson Island Record regarding the diphtheria epidemic of **1940** (in **Fi enup-Ri ordan, 1980a:81**):

3/11/40 No babies left in **Tununak, Yukak** and **Nunakak**.

3/28/40 Village of **Tununak** has been put under quarantine by Nurse **Carlson**. The throat disease of which **Simeon** died spread to 3 of Lincoln's children, and there seems danger. Hence, no more church, school, or visiting until quarantine is lifted.

3/31/40 The death of Joseph marks the 63rd death of the Nelson Island District this fall and winter (mostly babies).

4/1/40 Airplane arrives at last with **Dr. White** and serum. Injections right away to sick and **dying**.

49 **Oswalt** states (**1963b:97**) that when the smallpox epidemic of 1838-9 struck the Eskimo of the Bethel area, they went to the Russian settlement of Russian Mission on the Yukon River and destroyed the trading post as an act of revenge (**Zagoskin, 1967:81-2**). Yet during the early **Moravian** period, when epidemics occurred with greater frequency, the **Yup'ik** often sought mission aid in curing.

50 **Bloomquist** (1953) notes the Bethel area situation as follows: "If TB can be said to be epidemic anywhere, I believe it is among the Eskimo of the Bethel area."

51 Oswalt (1965:45) records that in 1951, the death rate in the Bethel triangle was 847 per 100,000, while the death rate for Natives in 1958 was 40.5 per 100,000. He notes that although these are not comparable statistics, they demonstrate a striking drop in mortality due largely to the program (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:81). Yet in 1963, the incidence of newly reported active cases was still 20 times the rate of the U.S. as a whole (McBeath, 1980:10).

#### IV. SINCE STATEHOOD

##### Sociocultural Situation at the Time of Statehood

As the period in the history of the study area since statehood is marked by a number of critical developments, it is important to review briefly at this time the general **sociocultural** situation that characterized the study area at the close of the territorial era.

The geographical isolation of the entire study area, together with its lack of great mineral wealth, timber industry, etc., meant that at the time of statehood, when Alaskan Natives in general were seen as an **extremely** disadvantaged **group**,<sup>1</sup> the **Yup'ik** inhabitants of the study area were viewed as one of the most isolated and impoverished groups among them. Although dramatic changes had occurred (e.g., depopulation due to **disease**,<sup>2</sup> population **concentration**,<sup>3</sup> the widespread use of the rifle, and although communities were not without organization, leadership, and communication with the outside world, much more striking was the degree to which the majority of residents in the study area lived much **like** their ancestors,<sup>4</sup> independent of the benefits of western civilization. For example:

- A) A wider selection of western material goods was becoming available, but at extremely high cost and with little **regular** employment available to help obtain **them**.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, public assistance and welfare represented a

significant source **of** cash for the Native community. <sup>b</sup> Yet, **still**, a cash income was inadequate **to** purchase necessary material **goods**, and reliance **on** traditional subsistence technology and products was **the** norm.

- B) If housing was substandard for Native Alaskans in general, modern housing was almost nonexistent in the study area.<sup>7</sup> Coastal communities were comprised of small plywood buildings, measuring 12 feet square, in which it was not unusual to find over a dozen inhabitants. By **1952**, the Alaska Housing Authority had begun to authorize home improvement **loans** in the study area, but on an extremely limited basis (**Oswalt, 1963 b:29**).
- C) Educational levels were generally low, with **only** a very small percentage (**10%** in the Nelson Island area) of **adults** over 25 years of age having completed even the elementary grades. More significantly, achievement **levels** were predominantly lower in Native schools than in corresponding **white** schools, due to lack of understanding between student and teacher, and fundamental differences in cultural values, conceptualization patterns, learning processes, and language (**McBeath, 1980:12**).
- D) **Almost all** Native residents of the study area **still** spoke **Yup'ik** as their first language (the few exceptions being

young adults who had been removed to orphanages, hospitals, or mission or government schools (Outside the region during their early years). Conversely, few had a comprehensive command of English, and even those who were linguistically competent were far from culturally **assimilated**.<sup>8</sup>

### The Introduction of Government Welfare and Social Services in the 1960s

To redress the backward state of affairs of this previously ignored area of the state, a number of programs were set in **motion** in the delta region during the 1960s that had a tremendous impact on the **sociocultural** configurations of the study area. Although these programs were not always successful in eradicating the disease, unemployment and poverty that they were aimed at, they did introduce important new concepts of community and family organization. Government "**missionaries**" began to actively spread the word about the good life of the American middle class, simultaneously raising local expectations and demands and beginning to provide the mechanisms necessary to satisfy them. However, this process, still in progress, has been a slow and painful one. Traditional and introduced expectations have often been **in conflict**, and, where western **sociocultural** values have been accepted, the continued frustration of demand always overstepping supply in the pursuit of goods and services has been a constant refrain, occasionally leading to out-migration.



The effects on the study area **of** the **civil** rights movement of the 1960s were both delayed and **indirect**, but substantial nonetheless. Although most villagers were personally unaware of the dawn of Native rights on the national **scene**, many white Alaskans were influenced, **including** some of those who taught and worked in the region. State and **general** agency personnel were also influenced. Finally, both **Moravian** and Catholic organizations **in** other parts of the state and country were motivated to support the Native congregations with more donations. For example, in the late **1960s**, a Catholic organization, along with the Community Enterprise Development Corporation (**CEDC**), made **available** over \$200,000 to the city of Toksook Bay for the construction and operation of a pottery workshop as a means of providing **local employ-**ment opportunities for the Nelson Islanders. Although the pottery industry has not proved the cure-all that it was intended to be, it was for several years a training ground for local residents in business management and marketing techniques (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1975).

President Johnson's war on poverty legislation and the ensuing anti-poverty programs **of** the mid- and **late 1960s** were a second major **infl-****uence** on the study **area**. The community action programs, such as Head Start and Neighborhood Legal Services, that the Economic Opportunity Act engendered, have become a **vital** part of community and regional organization in the study area, and were as important in introducing the **Yup'ik** to western "problems" (such as when **is an** adoption not an adoption) as in providing solutions to **felt** needs (**e.g.**, the situation **in** Bethel's **Lousetown**, subject of' a 1967 **Daily News** report). But

perhaps more significant has been the gradual development of an indigenous leadership that programs such as Operation Grassroots<sup>9</sup> helped to encourage. Through this as well as other Alaska State Community Action Programs, cooperatives were started in the study area for consumer marketing and production. Changing its name to Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurALCAP) in 1968 to reflect the focus on rural community action, RurALCAP has continued active in the study area, funding community centers and continuing to encourage and develop a sense of community among groups who until just prior to the advent of the 1960s had strong cultural identity and family ties, but little need or experience in formal community organization.

Legal Services, with a rural office established in Bethel in **1968**, also represented and promoted **Yup'ik** interests in a variety of matters, including voting rights, access to food stamps, and use of the **Yup'ik** language at public meetings (**McBeath, 1980:30**). **Nora Guinn**, a woman of mixed Native/white parentage born and raised in the study area, was sworn in as District Court judge for the Bethel area in 1967 (Tundra Times, **Oct. 20, 1967**).

The federal poverty Job Corps program was launched at Bethel in 1965, and the State Youth Corps program for the area was coordinated at Bethel (Tundra Times, Aug. **9**, 1965). The first VISTA volunteers were assigned to Bethel in 1965 (Tundra Times, Aug. 23, **1965**), but the program as originally conceived was discontinued in **1970** (Tundra Times, July 22, 1970), and a new VISTA program was launched in 1974 (Tundra Times, Oct. 23, 1974, in **Oswalt, 1980:31**).<sup>10</sup>

VISTA was part of a complex sociopolitical process in which volunteers often seemed to act as aggressive reformers. Along with Community Action programs and Legal Services, it had a strong influence on the study area. Although not so pronounced as in other parts of the state, all these programs served to make the Native population, and especially the younger generation, aware of both the benefits and limitations of organized government. Most interesting, unlike other war on poverty-related programs such as Community Enterprise Development Corporation, Operation Mainstream, Head Start and Alaska Village Electric Cooperative which also introduced substantial changes, these later programs were both more controversial in terms of their application in the study area, and more "loaded" in terms of the cultural baggage they carried.

Arnold (1969:15) noted that since 1968 government programs aiming for minimum standards for schooling, housing, sanitation, health and nutrition, and social services throughout the United States have been put into effect in the delta region.<sup>11</sup> Yet as important as the increased availability of economic means to residents of the study area to satisfy nationally recognized needs was the fact that in Alaska the criterion of need meant that Natives were the principal beneficiaries of these programs, a circumstance that tended to confuse cultural with economic change.

Some of the problems that developed in the implementation of anti-poverty programs in Alaska may be seen in an analysis of program

emphasis, the action agency concept, and jurisdictional concepts (McBeath, 1980:32). Looking at program emphasis it can be seen that less attention was directed to the alleviation of actual poverty than to consciousness-raising, and developing awareness of the social and political conditions of poverty.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, the action orientation and dynamic organizational structure of the early programs attracted individuals who were less connected to established statuses or groups in Alaskan society. Personally mobile, they represented a different face of modern western society from that of the familiar BIA and state personnel. Finally, jurisdictional disputes developed both between and within agencies as a result of the free-lance character of these programs. The squabbles, forced resignations and firings that resulted could not help but make residents of the study area suspicious of the dependability of the agencies involved.

In the end the effect of the War on Poverty in the study area was as much to expand **participation** by area residents in the shaping of policy and the administration of programs affecting them (a process that is still underway), as it was to expand the services available through increased federal and state involvement. The anti-poverty agencies were a new means to involve area residents in leadership and organizational roles in their communities. While local control and leadership have steadily increased since the late 1960s, knowledge and recognition of statewide problems and their potential solutions for Native communities has also increased. Although the War on Poverty by no means provided all of the solutions to the social and economic

problems **of** the study **area**, **in** many instances **it** marked a birth **in** awareness **of** problems themselves and the beginnings of the formation of a leadership capable **of** evaluating proposed solutions and putting them into effect.

### The Introduction **of** Formal Self-Government

Although the **War** on Poverty by **no** means solved **all** of the problems of **social** and economic inequity in the study area, the climate of rising expectations created by the programs of the **1960s** was accompanied by a great increase in the indices of political modernization in such areas as discussion of public issues, participation in community affairs by community members and increased concern for the fate of the community and the people. The problems had not been solved, but the mechanisms capable of implementing solutions were beginning **to be set in place**. Although the Native Land Claims Settlement Act of **1971** provided other vehicles through which Native self-government could be realized, some measure of **formal** self-government was already in **place** prior to **1971**.

#### TRADITIONAL VILLAGE COUNCIL GOVERNMENT AND VILLAGE INCORPORATION

Immediately after statehood, most residents of the study area lived in **small** villages with federal Indian Reorganization Act (**IRA**) status. These villages had few governmental powers under **state law**. Most existed **only** as "traditional" villages, meaning that they **lacked formal legal** status under federal or state **law**. Most of the communities

(except Bethel ) numbered less than 250 people, and had informal councils headed by elder males (elected in a few cases) and limited in the range of issues they discussed. Many of these villages were incorporated under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. However, not all of the IRA councils were effective. These villages had constitutions and bylaws under which they provided municipal **services** and engaged in small business **enterprises**.<sup>13</sup>

A number of the IRA-chartered villages, as well as a number of those not chartered, were incorporated cities under the laws of the new state. Of those that were incorporated, the majority were **fourth-class** cities. In sum:

Most villages were not incorporated under state law; of those that were, most were fourth-class cities empowered only to levy sales taxes to raise revenue, and limited to such functions as control of drinking in public, control of stray dogs, and the resolution of minor property disputes. Few villages were second- or first-class cities empowered to levy property taxes and to operate their own schools. (McBeath, 1980: 13).

After statehood, councils lost authority to resolve conflict as the magistrate system was introduced into the study area. The magistrates removed the power to impose sanctions from the traditional councils, and then tended to enforce state laws inflexibly, which had the effect of substantially weakening village councils as authoritative agencies (Corm, 1973).

To the **extent** that there was any leadership in the villages of the study **area**, it **was** both traditionalistic and parochial. Leaders tended to **be** older men who derived their power as much if not more from their positions as **family** heads as from their position as **political** leaders. These individuals were often not fluent in English, and were not the **natural foci** for the statewide organization of Native communities.

Also, to the extent that residents of the study area had an orientation toward governmental bureaucracies, it was to the federal and not to the territorial government. Within the federal government, the two agencies most active **in** the study area were the Bureau of Indian Affairs (**BIA**) and the **Alaska** Native Health Service, **Public Health Service (PHS)**. Yet as **with** the activity of the missionaries during the **early 1900s**, this federal activity can justly be characterized as paternalistic, as no area residents were involved **in** the determination of agency **goals** or in their implementation in the village communities. Thus at the time of statehood, area residents were not represented **in** the **political** structure affecting them. **Finally**, their traditional mechanisms of authority and **social** control (including consensus **decision-making** by a council of respected village elders) were often seen as **blocks** to the creation of an effective political structure.

Not only were Natives minimally represented in federal agencies affecting them, after statehood they were **also** subject **to** state agencies (**e.g.**, **Alaska** Fish and Game Department) bent on regulating aspects of **village**

life that had never been subject to federal or territorial intrusion. This increased regulatory intrusion was often deeply resented, and had a strong impact in increasing villagers' awareness of their political position **vis-à-vis** the rest of the state, as well as mobilizing a response to their perceived powerlessness.

Although the **lack** of representation in existing federal agencies was a problem, the real difficulty in the study area was the lack of local school boards, county health agencies, and other agencies and institutions intermediate between the federal and state ones and the clients, i.e., the citizens. This was a legacy of the territorial status of Alaska and was a problem recognized by both Natives and non-Natives.

The organization of borough governments in the more urban areas of the **state** further accentuated the political **liminality** of the study area. Leaving the study area as part of the unorganized borough meant in effect that the serious socioeconomic problems of the area would receive less attention than would the interests of organized urban areas. Although at the state level the legislature was empowered to legislate for the unorganized borough, it did not do so, suggesting a comparative loss in the representation of Native interests.

#### THE FORMATION OF INTERVILLAGE ORGANIZATION

To deal more effectively with the state and federal governments, the Association of Village Council Presidents for the Kuskokwim area met



in Bethel in 1964. Economic development was the main theme of the initial get-together (Tundra Times, Sept. 21, 1964). For much the same purpose, the Kuskokwim Valley Native Association was formed at Bethel in 1966 (Tundra Times, Feb. 25, 1966), and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Development Council was organized in 1967 (Tundra Times, Feb. 9, 1968). In 1968 the Nelson Island villages, along with the village of Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island, joined together to form the United Village Council. These grass-roots organizations have since become the nonprofit arms of the profit corporations created under ANCSA. However, prior to the passage of ANCSA, they played a key role in vocalizing regional concerns.

#### REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN ANCSA

The formation of AVCP, the Kuskokwim Valley Native Association, and the United Village Council was partly in response to regional problems. However, they were also formed in response to problems confronting all rural Natives, including new limitations on traditional subsistence activities and perceived threats to aboriginal lands. Subsistence issues, including the crucial issue of land ownership, were either an implicit or expressed interest motivating the organization of the early associations. In 1964 in Fairbanks, leaders of seven Native associations, including AVCP, came together to discuss problems that cross-cut regional differences. Leaders began to recognize their common status as Natives, and began to think of this as a political asset in resolving socioeconomic problems and preserving their culture (McBeath, 1980:41).

Although AVCP was not one of the more aggressive and mobilized of the Native associations formed in the 1960s, it quickly came to be motivated by the same interests and concerns that characterized the more extreme Native groups, including the Arctic Slope Native Association. **What** they wanted was clear title to their land and enough land to sustain a subsistence economy for those Natives who chose to retain their traditional life-styles, compensation for the lands on which title was extinguished, and recognition of the self-governing capability of Native citizens. These were the goals that were later embodied in the position papers and action of the statewide organization, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) (Tundra Times, 4/28/67 and 10/18/67). The stormy history of the relationship between AVCP and AFN cannot be detailed here. Suffice it to say that from its inception AVCP was in the peculiar position of being simultaneously the spokesman for one of the largest regional groups in the state, at the same time that, at least in the early stages, it represented one of the more traditional and least aggressive populations. Yet by the very fact of its participation in the statewide struggle, and its need to articulate a regional position **vis-a-vis** other Native regional Native associations, individuals involved in AVCP became increasingly politically astute. While it is difficult to measure exactly the percentage of the Native population that joined in discussion or action on land claims, audience counts for public meetings indicate that one-half to three-fourths of adult Natives attended one or more meetings (**McBeath, 1980:53**). While the anti-poverty campaign had prepared the way for Native involvement in the political process that would ultimately affect the

**sociocultural** contours of their lives, the land **claims** movement, with its **more** tangible, blood-and-guts subsistence/land issue, engaged many more area residents. **At** the same time, the number of people actively striving for land **claims** legislation in the study area **was** relatively **small**. **Although** community participation was encouraged, an elite coterie of individuals in leadership positions made decisions and took stands in the name of the entire study **area**. This same pattern of area leadership continues today.

The contemporary dichotomy between **leader** and led is by no means unique to the political process of the **study area**. **What** was unique to the **pre-land claims** leadership of the study area was the extent to which **it** involved the men who had **held** traditional leadership **roles** in the region. **While** the statewide Native leadership was increasingly characterized as young, educated, and politically aggressive, the study area continued **to rely** on middle-aged men, often not fluent in English, who had **earned** the right **to** speak for their respective communities. At present a younger, more aggressive, leadership is active **in** the study **area, but** this was relatively **late** in **developing** (mostly post-land claims), and **still** does not compare in **political** acuity **to its** northern **and** southern counterparts. Nor do the younger leaders of the study area command the same respect or credibility as the **older** area residents who continue **to** retain the **real** power. Even **in** communities where power has ostensibly been given to the younger men, **their** ability **to legislate** is markedly circumscribed.

One reason that can be given for the limited development of a dynamic, young leadership in the study area is the continued vitality of the traditional authority structure. Indeed, like the language, the relatively late and non-directed character of the contact history of the study area has left much of the traditional informal political structure intact. New organizational forms have been introduced (e.g., the traditional council, IRA council, REAA parent advisory committee, etc.). Yet the style in which the new meetings are handled bears a marked resemblance to the traditional pattern of consensus decision-making with due respect given to the time-tested combination of age and experience (see Chapter IX: Political Systems).

#### THE AFTERMATH OF ANCSA

In the early 1970s the villages were still only indirectly involved in regional politics through membership in Native organizations and the potential for land control. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), signed into law in December of 1971, established 12 regional corporations within the state, along with a 13th corporation formed for nonresident Natives. In addition, all Native villages were required to form village corporations which, with the advice of the regional corporations, were to make land selections and plan for use of the money received under ANCSA. All money and virtually all land went initially to business corporations; through these organizations most of the benefits flowed to enrolled Natives. By mid-1978, the 12 regional corporations had received about \$347 million under the Act,

about one-half of this **going to village** corporations and individuals. Remaining funds were used in administration of the **Act**, litigation over **land** conveyance, and investments. **In** receiving cash disbursements, some village corporations in the study area have **also** hired staffs to complete **land** selections, **issue** stock, and plan the investment of **corporate** funds. Some village corporations have developed intervillage staffs (**e.g.**, the Coastal Management Corporation representing the **Nelson Island** villages). Many village corporations have purchased existing businesses or launched new enterprises (see village **descriptions**, Chapter V). For instance, the **Bethel** Corporation built **multi-million dollar** apartment and office buildings. Many smaller village corporations in the study area purchased village stores.

The most significant change resulting from the **land** claims act was the creation of economic organizations operating for profit. Both the village and regional corporations of the study area function in an area that prior to **1972** had few private or profit-making organizations, save for small locally owned stores and the community-managed stores in the ANICA system. Not **all** investments have turned out to be **profitable**, and the **large** bureaucracies and payrolls have further depleted available capital. Yet many long-term ventures have yet to be tapped. **Also**, many corporations have made **at least** some investments **within** the region or within their village, with the **result** that there has **been** a substantial increase **in** available capital in the study area. Corporations have **also** been **able** to **supply** jobs within the study **area**.

Beyond the economic impact of the formation of the profit corporations, the political impact is also considerable. First of all, and perhaps most important, the corporations are directed by Natives. Second, the corporations have provided a testing ground in which area residents can learn from their own experience. For example, in the last several years the limits of individual village corporations as economic units are becoming clear and the possibility of joint ventures and mergers are presently being looked into (see Chapter X: Economic Systems). Finally, the corporations have increased the opportunities of area residents to participate in decisions affecting their lives. Their direction, then, plays an educational role as residents learn first-hand how the local politico-economic system operates. They are at the same time socialized into broader patterns of political participation (McBeath, 1980:65; see also Chapter IX: Political Systems, for the specifics of the process).

## Endnotes

1

When statehood was achieved in 1959, socio-economic conditions in Native Alaska were those of substantial poverty. Housing, sanitation, health, education, income--all were far below norms necessary for the maintenance and enhancement of community and individual well-being. Comparisons between the Alaska Native population and the non-Native populations of the state and nation show clearly that the Alaska Native population was a seriously disadvantaged sector (statistical data supporting this statement drawn from studies undertaken from 1960 through the mid-1960s, in McBeath, 1980:9).

2 Health conditions, although somewhat improved during the mid-1950s, were still very poor compared even to the generally low standards of Alaskan Natives. Infant and adult mortality rates were extremely high, as were suicide and alcoholism rates for the AVCP region as a whole although again geographic remoteness acted as a buffer for the coastal and lower riverine communities (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a).

3

The biggest single change in exploitation of subsistence resources is the establishment in the last 30 years of permanent year-round villages ranging in size from 100 to 400, in the communities of Newtok and Tununak respectively. A new stability greets the eye, with each village having a steady year-round population, and permanent plywood homes, each of which is a single-family dwelling. The widespread use of the rifle, snowmachine, outboard motor, and wooden skiff have facilitated this concentration. In the spring of 1964, the community of Toksook Bay was created when half of the residents of Nightmute pulled their plywood houses over the ice with 100-dog teams to the fish camp Nunakaulyaq. By settling on the banks of the bay, midway between spring sealing and fall fishing, they obviated the need for seasonal movement. Thus, although the same animals and fish are sought, since 1964 the majority of hunters on Nelson Island, including those of Toksook Bay and Tununak,

circle out from a fixed point in search of their prey (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:54-55).

4 Although the following quote pertains to the Nelson Island area during the 1930s and 1940s, much the same situation prevailed in **all** of the coastal communities of the study area at the time of statehood. Housing was no better, nor were village inhabitants more involved in western material culture:

Father **Menager** spent one day in **Tununak** in the spring of 1929. He described **Tununak** as having 100 residents, a government school with a husband/wife teaching team (Mr. and Mrs. **Sprunger**), and a Northern Commercial Company store measuring 50 by **20**. Until 1936, there was not one native cabin above the ground. Rather the traditional **semi-subterranean** sod houses or **nepiat** were still in use, ranging in size from eight feet square to about ten by twelve, and none of them higher than six feet in the middle (Fox, "Igluos"). There were no planes, no radios, and mail service only twice a year, coming overland by dog team from Bethel. The first airplane came to Nelson **Island** in 1930 (**Bolanz, 1976:5**) and not until 1944 was there monthly mail delivery. The Qaluyaarmiut were equipped with little in the way of trade goods. They had rifles and supplemented a diet of fish and seal with flour and tea, and crackers were still a rare luxury. Tobacco, the original currency of the early fathers (Barnum, 1883; **Treca, 1891**), could now be purchased in the store, **along** with clothing, tin pans, and iron pots. People **slept** on beds of skins, and homes were lighted, and often heated, with **seal oil lamps**. The **qasgiq**, or communal men's house, was **still** in use, and there were still **practicing** shamans with whom the priests were in constant competition (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:37**).

Among all Native village adults, only an estimated 10 percent held permanent jobs in the **early** 1960s (often with a government agency providing local public services). Another 20 to 40 percent was estimated to be employed on a seasonal basis. . . . Factors contributing to the high rate of Native village unemployment were the seasonal nature of economic activity



in Alaska, low educational level, lack of technical **training** for skilled labor, **racial** discrimination, and distance from centers of employment (**McBeath, 1980:11**).

6

In the early 1960s, Natives comprised **69** percent of the total number of cases under four federal programs--**Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)**, **Aid to the Disabled**, **Aid to the Blind**, and **Old Age Assistance**. This support contributed between 15 and 20 percent of the village cash economy. In addition, the **BIA** general assistance program provided temporary financial aid for Natives ineligible for any of the four federal programs mentioned (**McBeath, 1980:11**).

This input met with mixed reaction, and men such as Father Fox who had cried out for aid for starving Eskimos before and during the war years, decried the welfare of the 1950s:

Welfare began being doled out because heads of families were hospitalized with **TB**. The people got money and were able to buy white man's food, clothes and booze and their whole existence changed ("Notes for his Book").

It seems to me that we are demoralizing our people, both white and native by the kind of assistance we give to very many (**Fox, 1962**; in **Fienup-Riordan, 1980a**).

7

Typical dwellings in Native villages were **small**, crowded, constructed of inferior **materials**, and poorly ventilated and heated. Well water was available for no more than 20 percent of these residences; sewage facilities were found in only 3 percent. Such conditions were conducive to the dissemination of a variety of diseases. . . . Only an estimated **1** percent of the Natives had the means to obtain adequate housing through their own efforts in the private market. Close to 100 percent of

the Native population was estimated to be eligible for public housing programs. . . . In 1960 most villages had neither electrical generation facilities nor community distribution systems (McBeath, 1980:9).

Parenthetically, it was not until the late 1960s that the last qasgiq (traditional men's house) was abandoned and the first Alaska State Housing Authority (ASHA) and 131A houses were built on Nelson Island (Fienup-Riordan, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> Although the following statement was made about Alaskan Natives in general, it is especially valid for the residents of the study area:

Few Natives had adjusted to the demands of time and the achievement orientation characteristics of the dominant cultural group in American society. . . . Further, western values of thrift and accumulation of wealth for personal security conflicted with **tradition-based** orientations to the **immediacy** of rewards and the use of any accumulated wealth for the creation of social obligations. Private property and acquisitiveness were **alien** to traditional social organizations based on communal sharing (McBeath, 1980: 11-12).

This program was developed to show rural people how to use their influence to establish community action programs. Operating under a **\$200,000** six-month federal allocation, **23** community organizers from **villages** in western and northern Alaska were **trained** by December of 1966 (McBeath, 1980:28).

10

Problems developed in **VISTA** as Natives learned they could control programs and as volunteers established strong local links and encouraged local control of **VISTA** and other OEO programs. In January 1970, the Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**) charged that **VISTA** had no stated **objectives**, no organizational potential, no resources for Native people to utilize, and had at times acted contrary to the wishes and needs of the people served (Anchorage Village News, Jan. 18, 1970). **AVCP** asked the **state Office of Economic Opportunity** to terminate existing **VISTA**

**funds**, saying it wanted no new VISTA **volun-**  
**teers** except under conditions of local **con-**  
**trol**. **Soon local** Native organizations in **other**  
parts of the state **followed** suit (Tundra Times,  
**Nov. 11, 1970, in McBeath, 1980:31**).

**11** E.g., the Turnkey or **Bethel** Housing Project, to provide **200 low-**  
cost houses for **Bethel** residents, was financed **by** the Department of  
Housing and Urban Development, and the first units were completed in  
**1968 (Oswalt, 1980:31)**.

**12** According to **McBeath**, over 50 percent of available funds were  
directed toward community development and planning, programs that **car-**  
ried heavy administrative costs.

**13** **Calista** regional **village** councils are **still** working to upgrade  
the traditional councils to **IRA** status.

V. CONTEMPORARY **SOCIOCULTURAL** SYSTEMS :  
THE VILLAGES TODAY

Introduction: Village Groups

The following chapter is intended to give a brief description of the various villages and village groups under consideration for purposes of this report, as **well** as to introduce the distinctive features of each. Village corporation viability, community morale, and general community health will be touched on briefly in order to give the reader a general overview of the degree of variation that exists within the category of **small** coastal village community. Although explanation and analysis of these differences will be relegated to the following **sec-tions** on local economy, social structure and political organization, it was felt by the author that this initial introduction would aid the reader in understanding the direction the analysis would subsequently take.

Hooper Bay, Chevak, and Scammon Bay

Hooper Bay, Chevak, and **Scammon** Bay are the northernmost villages under consideration for the purposes of this report. Their residents speak the **Yugstun** dialect of Central **Yup'ik**. Like the **Sugstun** spoken by the residents of Nunivak Island, the Hooper **Bay/Chevak** dialect has its own particular variations in vocabulary and intonation. Residents of **Scammon** Bay speak a cross between the Hooper Bay/Chevak and Lower Yukon dialects.

TABLE II  
COMMUNITY FACILITIES

<u>Village</u>	<u>Education</u> <u>Village High</u> <u>School</u> since:	<u>Law Enforcement</u> <u>Magistrate</u>	<u>Health Facilities</u> <u>Clinic</u>	<u>Armory</u>	<u>Post Office</u>	<u>Airport</u>	<u>Dock</u> <u>Facility</u>
Hooper Bay	1978	X	A11	A11	A11	A11	X
Chevak	1979						X
Scammon Bay	1980						0
Mekoryuk	1980	X					0
Newtok	1980						0
Tununak	1978	X					0
Toksook Bay	1977						0
Nightmute	1980						X
Chefornak	1978						X
Kipnuk	1979						X
Kwigillingok	979						X
Kongiganak	1979						0
Tuntutuliak	1980						X
Eek	1980						X
Quinhagak	1980						0

TABLE II (cont'd.)

<u>Village</u>	<u>Communications</u>		<u>Telephone</u> Residential	<u>Utility Services</u>			<u>City Government</u>	
	<u>Radio</u> Reception	Current T. V. <u>Reception*</u>		Water (Residential)	Power	Sewer	Second Class	Unincorporated Village Govt.
	all have <b>School</b> Radio & PHS Radio							
I-10oper Bay		o	x	o	x	o	1966	
Chevak		o	o	o	x	" o	1967	
<b>Scammon</b> Bay		o	o	x	x	x	1967	
Mekoryuk		<b>X</b>	o	<b>o</b>	<b>X</b>	o	1969	
Newtok		o	o	o	?	o	1976	
<b>Tununak</b>		o	o	x	x	x	1975	
<b>Toksook</b> Bay		o	<b>X</b>	x	x	x	1972	
<b>Nightmute</b>		o	o	o	x	o	1974	
Chefornak		o	o	o	x	o	1974	
Ki pnuk		o	x	o	x	o	?	
<b>Kwigillingok</b>		o	<b>o</b>	o	Own gen.	o		
<b>Kongiganak</b>		o	o	o	Own <b>gen.</b>	o		
<b>Tuntutuliak</b>		o	o	o	Own gen.	o		
Eek		o	o	o	x	o	1970	
<b>Quinhagak</b>		o	x	o	x	o	1975	
Bethel		x	x	o	x	x	1957	

\*Most have had in past but not since 1978 due to state budget cuts.  
Within the last year, videotapes are becoming more and more popular.

TABLE - I

VILLAGE POPULATION TOTALS<sup>1</sup>

Village	1880	1890	1939	1950	1960	1964	1970	1980 <sup>4</sup>
Hooper Bay	75	138	297	305	460		490	617
Chevak				230	315		287	468
Scammon Bay			88	103	115		166	194
Mekoryuk					242 <sup>2</sup>		249	174
Newtok				69	129 <sup>2</sup>		114	154
Tununak	6	48	≤5	112	183		274	299
Toksook Bay						160	257	336
Nightmute			78	27	237 <sup>2</sup>	77	127	135
Chefornak				106	133		147	206
Kipnuk			144	185	221		325 <sup>3</sup>	367
Kwigillingok			146	245	344		148 <sup>3</sup>	241
Kongiganak							190	229
Tuntutuliak				68	144		158	216
Eek	162		170	141	200		186	307
Quinhagak	83	109	262		228		340	448
Oscarville			11	27	51		41	51
Napakiak	98		113	139	190		259	313
Napaskiak	196	97	67	121	154		188	240
Bethel	29	20	375	651	1,258		2,416	3,853
Akiachak		43	156	179	229			354
Akiak	175	97	209	168	187		171	216
Kwethluk	75		186	242	325		408	444
Nunapitchuk								
Kasigluak								
Atmautluak							07	219

<sup>1</sup> According the 1970 and 1980 census figures, between 94 and 98% of the resident population is Yup'ik. The median ages are 14.8 for males and 16.3 for females, indicating a relatively young population.

<sup>2</sup> Subsequent decrease due to relocation, 90% staying within the Nelson Island area.

<sup>3</sup> Subsequent decrease due to relocation to Kongiganak.

<sup>4</sup> Information on incorporated communities from the Municipal Officials Directory, 1981; Dept. of Community and Regional Affairs. Information on unincorporated communities from Census Division, Dept. of Labor, preliminary statistics.

The residents of present-day Hooper Bay (Naparyarmiut, lit. people of a little post) hail from two sources. First they include the descendants of the residents of the village of Askinagnamiut. This is located in and shares its name with the mountainous area between **Hooper Bay** and **Scammon Bay**. It was first reported in 1878 by E. W. Nelson, U.S. Signal **Survive**, as "**Askeenac**," and the 1890 census gave it as having a population of 138 **residing in** a total of 14 dwellings (Department of Community and Regional Affairs, 1979). The residents of **Piamiut** joined those of **Askinagnamiut** at the present site of **Hooper Bay** in 1969. It was only after a mission station was established there in 1927 and a post office in 1934 that the name Hooper Bay came into **common** usage.

The village proper is located two miles from the sea on the shores of **Hooper Bay**. This bay is **11** miles across and opens into the Bering Sea. The city is separated into three sections. The old townsite is a small **knoll** densely built up with older houses constructed in the **early** 1950s. At that time the Alaska State Housing Authority provided materials up to \$500 in cost to build 14-foot by 18-foot structures (Rehabilitation Project, 1966) to replace the traditional sod and log Native housing. The newer section of Hooper **Bay** is located on low ground between this knoll and the airport. Numerous boardwalks ensure dry passage to and from the houses. Finally, Tomaganuk's Village, small but distinct, occupies a second knoll just to the south and across the slough from the old village, and includes **half** a dozen **older** houses. At present there is concern about future expansion of the **village**, as all available high ground is occupied.



Outside of the regional center of Bethel, Hooper Bay is the largest coastal community among those under consideration here. Its present population of 617 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980) is double that of the largest village on Nelson Island (Toksook Bay, with a population of approximately 336) and almost five times that of the smallest village on Nelson Island (Nightmute, with a population of 135). Equally significant, when the population of Hooper Bay is joined to that of Chevak, the total (1,085) is only slightly less than that of the five villages joined in the Nelson Island group (1,130) as well as the small groupings of Moravian villages to the south of Nelson Island. This factor will appear more significant as the dependence of the Napariarmiut on a limited supply of proximate subsistence resources is made clear in the following chapter,

The size of the community is also one of the critical factors in the breakdown of traditional control mechanisms. Hooper Bay has the highest percentage of problems in the area of alcohol abuse, violent crime, and family stress (including a disproportionate number of illegitimate children born to women between the ages of 19 and 24 (Fienup-Riordan, 1979)) of any other coastal community under consideration here. As early as 1940, Father Fox recorded signs of alcohol abuse and community stress (Fox, 1972). This date may not seem early for Native Alaskans in general, but it is early for the coastal Yup'ik.

It is somewhat appropriate that a Catholic priest should record these precursors of more severe social problems, as one of the factors in

Hooper Bay's steady growth and related growing pains was the attraction of the mission station that was established there in 1927, as well as the post office, store and school that came soon thereafter. Of the other coastal villages considered here only **Quinhagak** was a center of mission activity, either **Moravian** or Catholic. Not surprisingly, rapid growth and related growing pains also characterize that community. The Nelson **Island** villages, however, were on the Catholic mission fringe, their resident priest receiving his directives from his superior at **Hooper** Bay. The coastal villages from Kipnuk to **Tuntutuliak** were similarly on the fringe of **Moravian** mission activity.

**It is** ironic that another factor that originally attracted the dense population that is presently responsible for making Hooper Bay a resource-poor area was the natural wealth of this protected bay. Just as the sheltered locations on high ground proximate to good sea mammal hunting have enabled Toksook Bay and **Tununak** to grow and prosper more so than their inland neighbors (**Nightmute**, **Newtok**, and **Chefornak**), Hooper Bay has continued to attract residents. But the traditional system that relied on informal face-to-face interaction as a means of social control is no longer effective in a community presently divided by virtue of both history and geographical constraints between three distinct locations.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the new immigrants from **Piamiut**, although resident in Hooper Bay, have their own corporation and are claiming land in the vicinity of their **old** village

On **the northern edge** of **Kokechik** Bay. Today many individuals tend to **feel** loyalty toward their own particular group over their obligations to the community **as a whole**. For example, this **last** summer commercial **herring** fishing was **begun in the** area **of upper Kokechik** Bay. Although the development of a small-scale commercial fishery might benefit the community as a **whole**, the members **of** the **Piamiut** Corporation railed against it, viewing it as **a** possible infringement on their traditional subsistence herring grounds, when in fact many of them now fish for herring in the mouth **of Hooper** Bay and no longer go to fish camp in the vicinity **of Piamiut**.

The **village** of Chevak (Cev'ag, lit. passage, canal) is located on the north bank of the **Ninglikfak** River, which empties into **Hooper** Bay **17 miles** to the east. The residents moved **from old Chevak** around **1950** with the establishment of a trading post and post office at the present **site**. Old **Chevak**, located nine miles east of **Hooper** Bay on the north bank of the **Keoklevik River**, was abandoned because of flooding from high storm tides. **It was** populated from the **early 1930s** when people moved there from the village of Kashunak for the same reason.

Chevak is one of the more successful of the coastal **villages**, with strengths that are particularly striking in contrast to the severe problems **of** its near neighbor, **Hooper** Bay. **It is** not located on a particularly rich site, and in the **last** several **years** has had problems in obtaining adequate subsistence resources. But although its present size (approximately 488) is edging up to the maximum **that** the area **is**

able to support with continued heavy reliance on subsistence resources the village has been able to come together as a community and to actively support the development of its economic base. The village corporation and city council have been successful in obtaining a number of state and federal grants. This past year they obtained funds for a new public safety building, a new headstart building, a youth center, boardwalk extension, and funds for the expansion and improvement of their airport. Except for the airport expansion, the other facilities will provide jobs through both construction and maintenance **requirements**, as well as the benefits of the facility itself. Also, the Traditional Council has contracted this year to run **its own** high school; Chevak is the first coastal community in the study area to take such a step.

The community leadership that has been responsible for these innovations and successful grant applications is surprisingly young and capable. **Quinhagak** is the only other coastal village in which some administrative power as well as bureaucratic duties have been given over to the younger generation. In most villages, although the younger men, 30 and under, may work in the city or corporation offices, the corporation officers are the older members of the community. **In Chevak**, however, the offices of power have been directly placed in the hands of the younger men of the **community**. The older men are **still** the power behind the scenes, but the responsibility for actual decision-making lies on younger shoulders. This has made a difference not only in the effectiveness of government grant applications and the

efficiency of corporation operations, but also in the style of village programs, e.g., the type of activities the council and corporation sponsor. Not only will the traditional council be running the high school this year, but the Chevak Youth Association sponsored the third annual Tundra Fest in August of 1980. This event brought guests from all over the region to join in three days of traditional dancing and feasting along with various other competitive and recreational activities. While the summer of 1980 saw 15 Hooper Bay youngsters appearing in court before the magistrate for curfew violations, the same age group in Chevak was preparing welcome signs for the Tundra Fest.

Residents of Hooper Bay sometimes blame the lack of jobs and cash income for the social problems that plague their village. But that community has the same median income per household as Chevak (see Table VI, Chapter X: Economic Systems). As will be discussed later, the viability of a community cannot be blamed solely on the availability of cash employment, but the ability of individuals in the community to make decisions as to how the available resources will be allocated. Spending styles have as much to do with the limitations of a small village economy as the amount of money in circulation.

Another indication of the progressive, open atmosphere that characterizes Chevak is its treatment of the linguist, Tony Woodbury, who came to the community in 1978 to record and translate traditional tales for analysis and publication. He was given permission for his work by the city council and actively supported by various members of

the community. In fact, the traditional council president has expressed the hope that more work be done toward recording the oral history of his people for use in curriculum development in the new high school. Although the seal party distribution is no longer a regular feature of community life, traditional dancing is, and in the summer of 1979 musicologists from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Fairbanks were also permitted to work with the older villagers and to record their dance traditions. This is in marked contrast to a **Kwigillingok** council member who expressed the desire to record the oral literature of his village in order to sell it and make some money as well as to a Toksook Bay council member's desire to prohibit oral history transcription or publication of any kind.

Scammon Bay is located to the north of **Hooper** Bay at the base of the **Askinak** Mountains, which rise as high as 2,300 feet above the tundra to the south and east. **Scammon** Bay is presently located on the south bank of the Kun River, one mile from the Bering Sea. The settlement was originally known as **Marayaarmiut** ("people of the little mud flats"). The name **Scammon** Bay came into standard usage when a post office of the same name was established there in **1951**. Although Scammon Bay as a year-round settlement dates from the 1940s, both **Zagoskin** (1967) and Nelson (1899) visited the small scattered settlements of the "**Magemiut**" in the general vicinity of **Scammon** Bay in the 19th century. Other names that have been applied to this locality are **Kutmiut, Mawagmiut, Mariakmiut** and **Mariak**. The name Kutmiut was first mentioned by Dan in 1870 for an Eskimo village located 2.7 miles east of the present village (**Orth, 1967**).

The present population of Scammon Bay is concentrated into a relatively small area, with the approximately 50 households which make up the community all within shouting distance of each other. The current housing is an even mix of older plywood homes (many without sewer and electricity) and new houses built by ASHA in 1974, furnished with electricity the same year, and provided with water and sewer in 1976. However, 34 new houses are scheduled to be built during the summer of 1982.

Along with the new housing, Scammon Bay is currently hoping for the development of both hydropower and wind generation systems to help cut the astronomical fuel costs which plague Scammon Bay as well as all of the other coastal communities in the study area. The hydropower project is made possible by the swiftly moving stream that runs down the Askinak Mountains to one side of the village and is a resource that is unique to Scammon Bay. The wind generation system, which will consist of a number of individual windmills attached to individual houses, has already been tried in the coastal community of Sheldon's Point, the southernmost village of the Yukon Delta, and Scammon Bay's closest northern neighbor moving up the coast. The success of this project to date bodes well for the success of a like development in Scammon Bay.

Along with the new housing and the recent developments in the area of alternate sources of power, there is also substantial interest on the part of the village corporation in the development of a saltery on the Black River during the 1982 fishing season. At the present time the

majority of the residents of Scammon Bay relocate during the summer months to fish camps on the Black River, which enters the Bering Sea just below the south mouth of the Yukon River. As of 1978, **Scammon** Bay residents had 40 gill-net permits **in** the Yukon District. Although residents of Scammon Bay enjoy substantial earnings from the exploitation of the **Black** River commercial salmon fishery, they are in need of new sources of income and hope to find one source in the development of a processing facility at Black River. If during the coming months they are able to find a buyer for their fish, they may well be able to proceed with their plan.

**It** is also important to note that the **summer** fishing at Black River provides continuity in the **historic** connection between the residents of **Scammon** Bay and those of the Yukon Delta. Although **Scammon** Bay is the northernmost village that will be **considered** for purposes of this report, it is by no means merely on the **fringe** of mid-coastal **Yup'ik** communities, devoid of ties with the Yukon Delta villages to the north. **On** the contrary, many kinship and trading relationships join the families of **Scammon** Bay with those of Sheldon's Point, **Atakanuk**, and Mountain **Village** on the Yukon River,

Although **Scammon** Bay is at present most closely aligned with **Hooper** Bay and Chevak, and is usually considered as part of the **Hooper** Bay/**Chevak/Scammon** Bay village group, it cannot be considered as a carbon copy of either **Hooper** Bay or **Chevak**. Not only is it **unique** in its degree of involvement in the Black River commercial fishery, but **it** also has a different ecological setting and a much smaller population.



Finally, Scammon Bay is a multi-denominational village, with residents evenly divided between affiliation with the Catholic and Covenant churches. This interdenominational character does not, however, seem to have resulted in any serious spilt between community members, and intermarriage between the different denominations is not uncommon. At present Scammon Bay remains a small, well-integrated coastal community, still highly dependent on the annual harvest of renewable resources for both subsistence and commercial purposes, and at the same time committed to continued municipal and corporate growth and development.

The Qaluyaarmiut: The Nelson Island Villages, Including Toksook Bay, Tununak, Newtown, Chefornek, and Nightmute<sup>1</sup>

The five villages of the Qaluyaarmiut differ from each other in many respects, including natural resource specialties available (although all follow the same basic subsistence cycle), and in the development of modern facilities (Table II). The newest village, Toksook Bay, and the oldest, Tununak (which has had a spring population of over 100 since 1891 (Robaut, 1891:164)), share equally large populations and favorable locations.

Tununak (lit. the back) is well placed on a high isthmus at the mouth of the Tununak River on the shores of Tununak Bay. Toksook Bay, emulating this advantageous bayside choice which allows equal access to both sea and river hunting and fishing, is seven miles from Tununak,

on the other side of the island. In the spring of **1964**, the **community** of Toksook Bay was created when half of the residents of **Nightmute** pulled their plywood houses over the ice with 100-dog teams to the fish camp Nunakauyaq (lit. place related to land). By settling on the banks of the bay, midway between spring sealing and fall fishing, they obviated the need for seasonal movement. This turned out to be a very shrewd move, and the **community** has become as large as Tununak.

The three remaining villages are set inland, allowing for easier access to winter fishing, although it is more difficult to exploit the sea in spring and summer. These are all winter campsites dating from the early 1900s, whose populations moved to the ocean for spring sealing and herring fishing. Modern transportation has allowed all three to become adequate year-round **places** of residence, although some **families** visit relatives in Tununak and Toksook Bay during peak herring and salmon runs.

Nightmute (**Negtemiut**, lit. people of the pressed down **place**) is within the section of the Clarence Rhode National Wildlife Range that covers the southeast part of Nelson Island. The village is on the **Toksook** River, at the **base of** a steep mountain, and faces marshy tundra to the south. The families that remained in **Nightmute** continued to move to **Umpkumiut** for spring sealing and summer fishing until the summer of **1976**. Only four families made the move in 1977, and none in **1978**, although several relocated to Toksook for the herring **runs**. Thus, although the same animals and fish are sought, since 1964 the majority

of hunters on Nelson Island, including those of Toksook Bay and Tununak, circle out from a fixed point in search of their prey.

Chefornak (Cev'arneq, lit. cut through place) is also located in the Clarence Rhode Wildlife Range, at the juncture of the Keguk and Kinia rivers, three air miles and 12 river miles from the Bering Sea. The village is located 10 feet above sea level on an old lava flow, a small rise in the surrounding marshy plain. The village was formed in the early 1950s when the residents of Old Svarnak, two miles distant, moved from their mud houses to build plywood homes near the new BIA school established at Caputnguaq (the name for the present site of Chefornak, lit. pretend weir).

Newtok (Niugtaq or rustling of grass), the smallest and least advantageously located of the villages, is on the banks of the Kealavik River, situated in a flat, soggy wilderness of tundra, moss, and berries, surrounded by show-and-sink lakes. The present residents moved from Old Kealavik (10 air miles distant) in the late 1940s, in order to escape seasonal flooding, and because there was not a suitable site for a school at the old village. As late as the early 1960s the village population continued to move in April (before breakup) by dog sled to summer camp on Nelson Island about six miles from Tununak. There they lived in tents. Some families traveled north to Hooper Bay. Early in June most of the men left their families to go to work in the canneries.

Although **Toksook Bay** is an outgrowth of **Nightmute**, the-home village for 80% of **Toksook's** present population, it also draws residents from the other three villages. Five **Nightmute** families originated in **Chefornak** and **Tununak**. Although villages began to solidify in the 1930s and 1940s, families still continue to move between them. The channels and significance of this movement due to marriages, disagreements, jobs, and hopes of better fishing will be looked at shortly.

The villages thus vary considerably. Toksook Bay is centrally located with a large population, the island's first REAA high school, a community center, and consequent year-round employment possibilities and population influx (Table 11). It has a larger percentage of younger families, and the fastest growth rate. **Newtok**, on the other hand, has a small population, few opportunities for cash employment, limited facilities, and difficulty of access.

But this variation, dramatic as it is, is along a continuum, and a more useful differentiation than between villages is between families, based on income, education, size, and dependence on subsistence resources. Each village has the full range of variation, although Toksook Bay and **Tununak** have more families on the upper end of the spectrum. Also, families with equal limitations will do better in the larger villages, in proximity to more public wealth, and Toksook is indeed growing from immigration.

But availability of cash employment is not the only factor, by any means, in **Toksook's** rapid growth. Village identity is already strongly developed, realized in part, as we shall see, in unique elaborations and transformations of the traditional ceremonial **cycle**. Wealth and poverty, **modern** and traditional, are not the terms in which the villagers perceive meaningful differences between villages. Rather, each village has its own **bingo** schedule, steam bath style, basketball teams, and curfew regulations. People often speak of feeling lonely when visiting their relatives in a village 10 miles distant from their hometown.

**Finally**, as mentioned in relation to **Hooper Bay**, as well as in the previous section on mission history, the Nelson Island villages grew up on the fringe of missionary activity. If the coastal villages can be generally characterized by extreme isolation and late contact with the outside world, the Nelson **Island** villages remain five of the most isolated among them, excluding only **Mekoryuk**. The net effect of this isolation has been, among other things, the active retention of traditional dance and **ritual** distributions to a degree unmatched by any other village group (see Chapter **VIII: Cultural** Systems). Community pride runs high, and regardless of how poor many of the families are by western standards, they are far from culturally bankrupt. On Nelson **Island**, strange actions by white residents may **well be** interpreted as "spying." Far from laughable, this evidence of a **still** jealously guarded heritage provides a strong indication of the high **value** the

Nelson Islanders place on their way of **life. It** is so satisfying that they can well believe somebody from outside might want to, let alone have the power to, steal it!

### The **Nunivagimiut:** Mekoryuk

**Mekoryuk** (**Mikuryaq**, lit. gathering or flocking together of people) is located at the mouth of Shoal Bay, 2.7 miles south-southwest of Cape **Etolin**, on the north shore of **Nunivak** Island. It is the only year-round village remaining on **Nunivak** Island. In 1940 when Lantis reached **Nunivak**, she found the population still divided into seven smaller villages, of which Mekoryuk was the largest. With the establishment of the BIA school at that site, the population began to concentrate there. However, after an initial period of growth, the population of Mekoryuk has been steadily decreasing through out-migration, a trend which seems to be turning around marked by the construction of a new high school on the island in the summer of 1980. Presently there are no infants and only a half dozen children under the age of four in the village, and hence there has been no Headstart program there for the last several years. This paucity of youngsters is certainly unique among coastal communities.

**Mekoryuk** is the only village among those we are considering to experience a steady depopulation through out-migration. According to one villager, "The **people** of Mekoryuk have been on strike. They don't want to live here any more because of the high prices." High prices are certainly part of the problem, exacerbated by the isolation of the

island, and its perennial difficulty of access. According to Lantis (1946:156):

The sea floor is muddy and sandy. The sea itself is only a shallow encroachment over the continental shelf. In the rivers of slight gradient and in muddy bays, there are no large whales, none of the great runs of salmon, no seal rookeries with their tempting wealth. In the low hills and the tundra there are few minerals.

These limitations, however, contributed more to the disregard Nunivak experienced from the early traders and whalers than to the attitude toward their home of the Nunivagimiut. Also, in spite of early neglect, it must be pointed out that Nunivak was in contact with the whites well before their neighbors on Nelson Island. During the 19th century ships anchored in the good harbors on the south side of the island, and by 1970 at least seven anthropologists had worked there. Also, the white Reindeer Project superintendents were unusually involved in the community, living closer to the village level and style than did most of the teachers. Many skills were taught in a practical context, and the reindeer industry provided the Nunivagimiut an early experience of industrial development. (For other aspects, see Lantis, 1972:43-65). What has seemed to discourage them from continued residence on the island is a simultaneous increase in their wants (e.g., desire for western goods and comforts, hospital care, education) and decrease in their means. Because of Nunivak's difficulty in access, with weather patterns closing the airfield one-third of the year, it is more difficult for the Nunivagimiut to travel to and from their island to acquire the goods they desire than anywhere else along the western coast of the AVCP region.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, a number of families moved from **Mekoryuk** to Bethel to take advantage of the hospital facilities, and later on in order that their children might attend the regional high school in Bethel. Being a Protestant community, they did not take advantage of St. Mary's, the Catholic boarding school available to their Nelson Island neighbors. After achieving the desired cure or degree, the families often did not return immediately to Nunivak but continued to work in Bethel, returning to **Mekoryuk** only in the late spring and early summer for fishing and sea mammal hunting. In fact, a small enclave in the Bethel Native housing area is still occupied by a number of such relocated families. Although individual families from the other coastal villages have moved to Bethel in the last 20 years, there has been no comparable group migration as that of the Nunivagimiut. Also, families from other villages tend to move out of the village to Bethel or **Dillingham** for commercial fishing in the summer, not from Bethel to the village for a subsistence vacation as do the **Nunivak "townies."**

**It is** consequently not surprising that a larger percentage of **Nunivagimiut** have moved from Bethel to Anchorage and the Lower 48 than any other coastal group under consideration here. This is probably attributable to their early and sustained contact with the facilities and resources of Bethel. Also, the Protestant upbringing of the younger generation has made them particularly anxious to take advantage of the jobs and possibilities available in the regional center. A letter from Father Deschout to Father Fox in the early 1940s gives



an interesting although not **wholly** objective comparison between the generous support **of** his Catholic parishioners motivated **by love of God** and the perhaps equally generous **but also** more calculated support given the Covenant Church **by** the **Nunivagimiut**. Also interesting here is **the** ethnocentricity of **Deschout's** perception. Like a true **Qaluyaarmiut** (Nelson Islanders he sees the **faults** of the **Nunivagimiut** more clearly than he does his own.

Continuing in this historical **vein**, it should be noted that although there is no origin myth for the coastal people as a whole, the **Nunivagimiut** hail from the mythical marriage of a **dog** and a woman from Nelson Island. This legend is known up and down the **coast** (often entitled Dog Husband, I-antis, **1946; Fienup-Riordan, 1980a**). Hence, **the Nunivagimiut** are said to have a better sense **of smell** than their **mainland** relatives, and to speak with a nasal intonation. **In** fact, they do speak the **Sugstun** dialect of Central **Yup'ik** as opposed to the **Yugstun** spoken by their coastal neighbors. Both are **mutually** intelligible, with minor variations in stress patterns as **well** as **vocabulary** differences.

**Finally**, a feature of Mekoryuk that should be apparent in the fact that it is considered separately from any other village, is the social as **well** as cultural distinctiveness of the **Nunivagimiut**. Resident on an **island** located **23 miles** from the mainland, they did not traditionally and **still** do not today participate **in** the **intervillage** visiting that enlivens the winter months for the villagers **living all** up and down

the coast. <sup>2</sup>As will be explained in more detail further along, a **Moravian** Church rally in **Tuntutuliak** will draw visitors from as far north as Hooper Bay, while a Catholic Song Feast in **Chefornak** will host dozens of families from Toksook Bay, Tununak, Kipnuk and Nightmute. Regular trails connect the mainland villages, and increased air taxi service makes **intervillage** travel accessible to the villages. The **Nunivagimuit**, on the other hand, travel almost exclusively to and from Bethel or Anchorage. **While** the Catholic **Qaluyaarmiut** share activities with their **Moravian** neighbors to the south, the Protestant **Nunivagimiut** remain aloof and uninvolved in this modern variation to the traditional **intervillage** kalukaq (feasting) and yurarluni (dancing).

Winter weather has always excluded the **Nunivagimiut** from this social network. But traditionally there were a number of smaller villages on **Nunivak** among which socializing was possible. Note **also** that in the last two years **intervillage** basketball games have come to include the **Nunivagimiut** team. Along with the recent trend in repopulation, this bodes well for the future vitality of the community of **Mekoryuk**.

#### The Kuskokwim Delta Villages

##### KIPNUK

The village of Kipnuk (Qipneq, lit. a bend) is located on the left bank of the Kuguklik River, five miles inland from Kinak Bay. **It** is located at the delta's outer edge, almost at sea **level**. Boardwalks are

necessary to walk **about** in the village because the ground is soggy; coastal flooding occurs on an average of once every 20 to 40 years (Alaska Planning and Management, Inc., 1972:404).

The **village** proper is ranged around a **small lake, which** effectively divides the community into two parts: a rather **densely** populated area characterized by older houses, and a newer development consisting **primarily of** ASHA houses. The community is small enough, however, that the physical division of the community has not resulted in a **social one**. In fact, Kipnuk is interesting in the degree to which a number of highly individual, **vocal**, and ambitious middle-aged **men** have been able to maintain rather **strict** control over the community. The seat of their power is as much the **Moravian** Church Council as the city **council**, although the membership is largely overlapping. They maintain a strict moral hold over the community and have **ruled** against everything from social dancing by high school students to playing basketball by young married men on "church day" and while church is in session. **While** the villages to the north are **all** Catholic, in the **villages** to the south of **Kipnuk** the **Moravian** Church and Russian Orthodox **Church** exist side by **side**. Although this is a peaceful coexistence for the most part, the one church/one mind character of Kipnuk may be a contributing factor to its social stability. **If** anything, the problem is too tight **control** over the younger generation **rather** than the **alcohol abuse** and attendant vices evident both to the north and south of **Kipnuk**.

## KWIGILLINGOK

**Kwigillingok** (Kuigilnguq, lit. place without a river) is a historical community populated since before 1900. It is located on the west shore of **Kuskokwim** Bay. Like **Kipnuk**, it is subject to coastal flooding and stream overflow on a 5- to 20-year basis, at which times 100% of the village is inundated. Because of this irregular flooding, as well as the gradual subsidence of the terrain,<sup>3</sup> over half of the residents of **Kwigillingok** moved to the previously abandoned site of **Kongiganak**, three miles to the east, in 1968.

The community was first **missionized** when the **Moravians** set up a mission station there in the late 1800s (**Schwalbe**, 1951). At the present time there is also a resident Russian Orthodox population. They are **fully** members of the community and apparently on good working terms with the **Moravians**, although they **live** at the far end of the village and do not make up the dominant, ruling body of the community. Like **Kipnuk**, **Kwigillingok** (commonly referred to as **Kwig**) is a **well-disciplined**, no-nonsense, conservatively governed community. Since on this point the Russian Orthodox and **Moravians** are in agreement, the tension between the two groups is minimal,

## KONGIGANAK

**Kongiganak** (Kangirnaq, lit. a corner) was first reported in 1878 by E. W. Nelson, U.S. Signal Service as **Kongiganagamiut**, meaning people

of Kongiganak. During the mid-1900s, however, the population, still extremely mobile, moved to Kwigillingok for better fishing. However, in 1968, ostensibly because of the subsidence of the land around Kwigillingok, over 100 people, mostly the younger and middle-aged families moved, houses and all, back to the site of present-day Kongiganak (known as Kong). Both Moravians and Russian Orthodox made the move so that the heterodox character of Kwigillingok has been reestablished. Kongiganak, however, does have a younger population and a younger leadership than Kwigillingok. It is also interesting to note that not all of the families who had originally made the move from Kongiganak to Kwigillingok moved back again. Of the elderly villagers who made the move, the majority were individuals who had been born and raised in the Kongiganak area.

#### TUNTUTULIAK

Tuntutuliak (lit. place of many caribou or reindeer) is located three miles northwest of the junction of the Kinak River with the Kuskokwim River. Like its neighbor Kwigillingok to the southwest, stream overflow occurs on a 5- to 20-year frequency, and erosion and subsidence of land are occurring. The residents moved to this site from the old village of Kinak in about 1945. The village is 45 miles south of Bethel, a two-hour ride by boat. People go upriver as far as Napaskiak for fish camp and often visit the regional center of Bethel for shopping and visiting. Thus the community is less isolated than the other coastal communities considered so far. Lying halfway between the two,

the community of Tuntutuliak shares the subsistence features of both the coastal communities to the south and west and the **riverine** salmon fishing communities to the east and north.

EEK

The village of Eek is located on the Eek River, 12 miles east of the Kuskokwim River. The village is **41** miles southwest of Bethel, with the **Kilbuck** Mountains rising 35 miles away to the southeast. Subsidence of the adjacent land is occurring, and like **Kwigillingok** the village site is slowly sinking (Alaska Planning and Management, **1972:220**). The first settlement in the area of the present-day community was **Ahguliagamiut**. It was subsequently referred to as **Aklut**, and became known as Eek only at the turn of the century. A post office was first established there in 1949. Like **Quinhagak**, the population was early in contact with the Russian traders as well as the **Moravians** after their establishment of a mission station at Bethel in 1885.

Although the majority of community members are **Moravian**, presently they have a Russian Orthodox Church as **well**. Like the residents of **Tuntutuliak**, Eek villagers move upriver for summer fish camps which are chosen for their access to whitefish lakes as well as good drifting grounds.

## QUINHAGAK

Quinhagak (Kuinerraq, lit. new river) is located at the mouth of the swiftly moving Kanektok River on the east side of the Kuskokwim Bay. The village was first reported by Lt. Sarichev, IRN, in 1826, as "S[elo] Koingak," meaning "Koingak Village." It was the first village of the lower Kuskokwim to undergo sustained contact with whites. It was used as a supply station and lightering point for the Bethel Moravian Mission and was itself an early mission outpost. By 1905, a post office under the present name was established, In 1912 the Moravians, by then the "official owners" of the land immediately surrounding the village, opened a school at Quinhagak, and by 1916 the residents were, under the supervision of the Moravians, actively involved in the reindeer herding.

The village proper is divided between an old village and a new one. The older section was densely populated until four years ago when 30 new units were constructed by the Native Housing Program one mile up-river from the old village. Most families presently reside in this new development. The houses are the newest and the best constructed of any in the delta region.

A well-organized city government, with a fairly young leadership like Chevak, also characterizes Quinhagak. It is also less traditional and considerably more progressive than the villages to the north. For example, last year a 40-year-old widow lost the election for city mayor

by one vote. However, the city council does not exercise **as** tight control as in the smaller **Moravian** communities. There is a definite **problem with** alcohol abuse, exacerbated by bootlegging during the summer commercial fishing periods. Movies are shown by the city council in the community hall and a recreation center is under consideration.

All five of these Kuskokwim delta villages (**Kwigillingok, Kongiganak, Tuntutuliak, Eek and Quinhagak**) share several important characteristics. All have both **Moravians** and Russian Orthodox resident in their communities, with the **Moravians** substantially in the majority. All are what can be characterized as stern communities. As one villager put it, "Here there is no sinning, never! That's the way we like it." The ethic of don't smoke and don't chew and don't go with them that do holds sway. Social dancing is not allowed, nor is bingo, or, for the most part, recreational films. Although with off-and-on television reception this is gradually changing, the contrast between the **fun-loving**, although by no means more sin-loving, Catholics to the north and their serious-minded **Moravian** neighbors is striking. This will be fully detailed in the succeeding chapters, but it is important to note at this point that whereas the Catholic **communities** have retained traditional Native dancing as well as encouraged teen dances at the local community halls, the **Moravians** have dispensed with both their traditional recreational activities, as well as some of the modern alternatives. **What** they have retained is significant. **Just as on Nelson** Island, the spring seal party, a ritual distribution of the meat and blubber of the first seal of the season, is carried on down the coast



from Hooper Bay to Quinhagak. Although the Nelson Island area is the only one in which it is an annual requirement for village women, still during good years (and 1980 was such a year), many of the women in the villages to the south host these community-wide distributions. The cultural significance of this ritual exchange will be detailed further along, but it goes without saying that if the successful hunters in all the coastal communities under consideration can by and large be seen as engaging in a community-wide redistribution of their subsistence catch, the implications of subsistence will have to be looked at on a community rather than an individual, or individual household, basis.

#### The Tundra Villages: Nunapitchuk, Kasigluk, and Atmautluak

The three communities that comprise this village group include Nunapitchuk, Kasigluk, and Atmautluak. The two closely allied groups of houses that make up Nunapitchuk #1 and #2 (Nunapicuar, lit. small real land) are on the right bank of the Johnson River, 26 miles northwest of Bethel. The community of Kasigluk (Kassiglu, lit. where rivers meet) is located two miles to the west. Atmautluak (Atmaulluaq, lit. "related to the word backpack") is located on the Pitmigalik River 12 miles east-southeast of Nunapitchuk #2.

Three camps came together in the early 1900s to make up Nunapitchuk. Another traditional site, Nanvarnarluk, was abandoned in the 1920s, and the residents established Nunapitchuk #2 as a temporary site.

Many of these people later moved on to **Atmautluak** which is itself a new village founded in the 1960s, and which is presently strung out along over a mile of riverbank.

The mainstay of all three of these communities are the Kuskokwim salmon runs and the whitefish runs in the Johnson and **Pitmigtalik** rivers. Many residents leave the villages from May through August to go to fish camp. Others prefer to remain in the village, coming and going from their fishing sites on a daily basis. Rabbit, **ptarmigan**, muskrat, mink and wild fowl supplement the diet, as well as various **berries** and greens. Trapping is engaged in, and mink and muskrat are the most **important** furbearers.

**Atmautluak** has a **Moravian** church, while **Nunapitchuk** and **Kasigluk** have both **Moravian** and Russian Orthodox residents (75% **Moravian** in **Nunapitchuk** and 60% Russian Orthodox in **Kasigluk**). At present, **Nunapitchuk** also has **residents** affiliated with a new fundamentalist, Protestant sect. **Division** between faiths and between the four groups of houses is quite real. Yet all come together for **Slavik**, the annual **celebration** of Russian Christmas. Russian Orthodox tradition has in this case supplanted traditional **Yup'ik** winter activities. However, the tundra villagers still engage in a number of **Yup'ik** activities long since gone for their **riverine** neighbors (**e.g.**, bird drives, storyknifing). As the conservative, tradition-bound Nelson Islanders are to their more progressive avant-garde coastal neighbors, so are the tundra villagers in relation to the riverine villagers living in **closer** proximity to

the regional center. And again, as with Nelson Island, this proud traditionalism can be directly tied to relative isolation and circumstances of contact (see Chapter III).

### The Riverine Villages

The Yup'ik Eskimo have not-always lived along the Kuskokwim, but only entered the area during the Christian era (Collins, 1954; Giddings, 1960), moving in from the coast, presumably because of population pressure and resource depletion. The same topography that typifies the coastal communities typifies the riverine village sites as well, although above Bethel the plant cover begins to change, and willows, small birch and spruce first make their appearance. Interestingly, both beluga and hair seals were plentiful along the lower river until the mid-1800s (Wrangell, 1970:17; Oswalt, 1980:30). In the late 1800s caribou were also plentiful, and wolves were even a problem in Bethel (Oswalt, 1980:30).

Moving up the river from the coast, the first village we come to is Napakiak (lit. a small post), located on the river 10 miles southwest of Bethel. This community has been inhabited since 1890 when people moved to it from the mouth of the Johnson River.

Four miles farther upriver is the community of Napaskiak (lit. something related to tree or post), located at the mouth of Napaskiak Slough six miles south of Bethel. The community was settled in the early 1800s by both downriver and upriver migrants (Oswalt, 1980).

Directly across the river from **Napaskiak** is the **small** community of **Oscarville** (Kuiggayaga, lit. small river), settled in **1908** when Oscar **Samuelson** started a trading post there, which subsequently attracted several Native families. Ironically, both **Napaskiak** and **Oscarville** have Russian Orthodox churches, although because **of** their close proximity to Bethel they were the earliest targets of the **Moravian** missionaries who settled there. ,

The history of the settlement of Bethel (Mamterilleq, lit. site of **lots** of caches) has been given in Chapter **III**. **It** is interesting, however, to note that although at present it is the undisputed urban hub of the AVCP region, up until 1930 Akiak (lit. the other side), located 20 miles upriver was the major white-oriented settlement in the region, despite the foundation of the **Moravian** mission at Bethel in 1885. The importance of Akiak stemmed from the fact that it was the farthest upriver point that could be reached regularly by shallow-draft, ocean-going vessels (**Oswalt, 1980:21**). As well as a center of trade, the first 61A school was established there in **1911** by John **Kilbuck**, and in **1918** the Alaska Native Medical Service established an n-bed hospital (**Oswalt, 1980:22**). Another reason for the early importance of **Akiak** was the involvement of its residents in the reindeer industry. The first regional reindeer fair was held there in 1915. At this time there was also a sawmill at Akiak, along with numerous gardens as well as some livestock including cows and pigs. In the 1930s Akiak was said to consist of two villages, White Akiak on the east bank of the river

and Native **Akiak** on the west bank (George, 1979:9; Oswald, 1980:23). Today, **all** that remains of White Akiak are a few frame buildings inhabited by a handful of **Yup'ik**.

The village of **Kwethluk** (Kuiggluk, lit. bad river) is located on the **left** bank of the **Kwethluk** River **just** east of its junction with the Kuskokwim Slough, 11 miles **east** of Bethel. Slightly farther upriver **is** the community of Akiachak (Akiacuar, lit. **small** other side) founded by the former residents of Kihtagamiut in the late **1800s**. A **Moravian chapel** was completed at Akiachak in **1916**, a Bureau of Education school was founded there in 1930, and a post office opened in 1934 (Oswald, 1980:20).

**It** is interesting that in **all** three of these upriver communities the population, although predominantly **Moravian**, **still** has devout Russian Orthodox among them. Similarly, in **Kwethluk**, alongside the remnants of the **Moravian** Children's Home, is a well-attended Russian Orthodox church.

**It** is **also** important **to** note the population stability of these upriver communities, a feature that generally characterizes the villages of the AVCP region as a **whole**. For example, Oswald notes that of 232 people **living** in **Kwethluk** in **1953**, **181** were born there. Thirteen were born at Bethel, **7** at **Akiak**, **8** at **Tuntutuliak**, **5** at **Eek**, **4** at **Kipnuk**, and the others **at** diverse settlements in the area (Oswald, 1980:50).

## Mamterilleq: Bethel

Located on the outer eroding bank of a broad bend of the Kuskokwim River is the city of Bethel. The first permanent **community** was established across the river from the present site in the 1800s. This settlement was known as Mumtrekhlagamut ("people of many fish houses"), reflecting the rich subsistence base that sustained the local residents. In 1870 Reinhold **Separe** established a trading post at **Mumtrekhlagamute** Station on the present site of Bethel. Thus, Bethel's position as a regional transportation and supply center dates from the very beginning.

As of 1880, Mumtrek Station (the designation of the U.S. census) had 29 residents, with the old village across the river numbering 41. It was to grow slowly but surely from this time forward. The **Moravians** arrived in 1885, becoming the first permanent non-Native settlers in the region. They renamed the community Bethel and opened a school there in **1886**. With the new mission station and school, Bethel began its career as a center through which western culture as well as trade goods would enter the region.

Located 86 miles in from the Bering Sea, Bethel was also the upper limit for most oceangoing vessels. In the years following the founding of the **Moravian** mission, the necessity for transferring upriver cargo to smaller boats made Bethel an early secondary transport center. Thus, aside from early settlement, the geographic location of Bethel

was **one** of **the major** reasons for its growth from a **small** trading post to a regional center of trade, transportation, and distribution. **In** fact, the development of river navigation went hand **in** hand with the development of **Bethel** as a trading **center** during the early decades of the **1900s** when access to western **Alaska** was **still** restricted to ocean and **rivergoing** vessels.

As Bethel continued to grow, the first territorial school was **estab-**  
**lished** there **in 1913**, followed by the opening of several roadhouses and, by **1930**, seven separate stores and trading posts. The mission compound grew to include not **only** a church and school, but **half** a dozen dwellings, a dormitory for the students, a sawmill, **light** plant, and dock. The **Moravians** also managed a reindeer processing facility in the early **1900s**, which continued with ups and downs into the **1930s**. **In 1954**, a **60-bed** hospital was opened, and in 1955 funds were provided for the first stage of construction **of** a municipal airport. (For more detail and many useful historical observations on Bethel's **early** years, see **Oswalt, 1980; Drebert, 1942; Schwalbe, 1951.**)<sup>4</sup>

Although **large** in importance for the region, Bethel was not a particularly populous community, even by **Yup'ik** standards, until well into the **1930s**. Then it numbered **275** people, including traders, trappers, and some government personnel as **well** as the missionaries. By **1940** it numbered **376**. **With** its use **as** a defense base during **World War II**, its population almost doubled by **1950**. And, because of the construction of large-scale **capital** improvement projects **in** the community and the expansion of the commercial fishery (which started in **1913** but did not

take off until the 1960's), it has continued to double in population every **10 years** since (1950 - 650; 1960 - 1,250; 1970 - 2,416; 1979 - 3,900). Presently it accounts for a full 20% of the region's population and is the biggest and fastest growing second-class city in the state.

Government and social services became the dominant force in Bethel's economy during the 1960s. Direct government employment and publicly funded positions today account for nearly 60% of Bethel's total employment, with Bethel the major service and supply center for 56 villages within the Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**) region.

In 1969 it was predicted that subsequent Bethel growth would be primarily through an influx of villagers. However, in the last **dozen** years the population mix has increasingly tilted away from the original Native majority which had persisted into the late 1960s and continued to mark Bethel as a Native town. Several factors combined to slow the expected trend of regional migration to Bethel. First of all, **ANCSA** provided a limited employment and investment base in the **villages**. Also, an expanded state education program and commitment to provide full elementary and secondary education in **all** communities also removed the necessity of many students and their families moving into Bethel. This trend toward supporting the smaller, outlying communities has continued as other capital improvements (housing, expanded airfields, water plants, and waste-disposal facilities) have been constructed in the villages as a response to community population



growth and to support **school** facilities. Instead **of** people within **the** region moving to Bethel **to** take advantage of the availability **of serv- ices**, services were provided directly to people in their home villages. The centralization of service delivery systems in Bethel, and the attraction of new people from outside the region to Bethel, due **to** improved professional and managerial employment opportunities, are the results. <sup>5</sup>

Although the population structure of the **community** is changing (**pres- ently 50/50 Native/non-Native**), a corresponding decline or suppression of **Yup'ik sociocultural** configurations does not seem to be taking place. The basically positive, pro-Native, non-racist character of the community remains. Although some Natives are beginning to feel they are outnumbered, so far the community has been able to absorb newcomers. According to a recent survey by Derbyshire and Associates (1979), Yup'ik culture (defined by residents **as** knowledge and use **of** subsistence resources and the **Yup'ik** language) is an important part of life **in** Bethel for over three-fourths of the citizens. As detailed in the chapter on cultural systems, many community events and organiza- tions in Bethel (**i.e.**, the **Yup'ik** Language Workshop, Nunam **Kitlutsisti**, Kusko 300, Yukon-Kuskokwim State Fair) actively support the **Yup'ik** lan- guage and life-style. The city government, through its parks and rec- reation programs, senior citizens program, **and** museum also supports interest **in Yup'ik** cultural history, arts and crafts. Even with the rapid **influx** of **non-Natives**, Bethel continues as a **bilingual/bicultural** community in the best tradition, with 40% of the community speaking and understanding the **Yup'ik** language.

Also, subsistence hunting and gathering activities are pursued by the majority of Bethel residents, both Native and non-Native. Seventy percent of those surveyed by Derbyshire and Associates stated that they used some form of subsistence foods, with almost one-third obtaining one-half or more of their total food supply through subsistence. In fact, many Bethel families are as subsistence oriented as their **village** relatives. Although **now** there are certainly alternative food sources available in Bethel, the price is still often prohibitive. Even those who can afford alternatives continue to fish and hunt to cut food costs, obtain preferred foods, and for recreation. While half the respondents on the Derbyshire survey own a car, over half also own a fishing boat.

Also, although foods obtained from subsistence activities may only account for a small portion of most families' food supply, the use of land in and near Bethel to obtain food was reported by over 50% of those interviewed by Derbyshire and Associates. Subsistence resources pursued within the city limits include salmon fishing and driftwood gathering on the **Kuskokwim**, picking berries on the tundra, and bird hunting along the sloughs and swampy tundra to the north of Bethel. The most heavily used areas are the lands around the old White Alice site and the BIA offices. The land north of the airport is also heavily used. Continued access and use of these areas is an articulate community goal. In current land use planning, provision is being made for the preservation of the most important food-gathering sites. Reconveyance to the City of **Bethel** may be sought (Derbyshire and Associates, **1980:Vol. 2**, p. 44).

Another aspect of Bethel subsistence **activity** and social **life** is the continuity in **inter-** and **intrafamily** and village systems of reciprocity. Sometimes the exchanges **are** more **formal** than substantive (**e.g.**, a visitor is **given** a one-pound package of salmon strips rather than a **10-pound** king salmon), but the **social** effect **is** the **same**. Also the cultural requirement that a guest never **leave** empty-handed is followed in both **Yup'ik** and **non-Yup'ik** households.

**In** sum, the community-wide pattern of mixing traditional and modern activities that was characteristic of **Bethel** in the past continues to be qualitatively, if not always quantitatively, important to Bethel residents. **An** historically seasonal economy, remoteness, and the high cost of imported **fuels**, materials and food meant that residents must alternate between cash employment and subsistence activities as in the **village**. This has solidified into a **Bethel style** which combines a strong interest in learning about and maintaining traditional cultural activities. Yet to see subsistence harvesting as a "necessary supplement to a limited cash economy rather than as an alternative for growth or stability of present standards of livelihood" (Derbyshire and Associates, **1980: Vol. 3, p. 84**) is a distortion. Subsistence activities do more than either supplement **or** provide an alternative to cash employment. Rather, they embody a positive attitude toward the **local** people, **land**, and resources.

**As** significant **as**, and **related** to, the continuity in the practice **of** subsistence activities by the residents of **Bethel** is their development

of a sense of community. Replacing the shifting population of "Bowery-type roughs" that frequented Bethel in its **infancy**,<sup>6</sup> has come a relatively young, energetic, and increasingly stable population. Although Bethel's present population has a large proportion of recent residents (approximately one-third have lived in Bethel for two years or less), regarding their length of stay, 42% of those surveyed by Derbyshire and Associates said they intended to live in Bethel permanently or indefinitely. Although employment is seasonal (see Figure II), **seasonal** movement in and out of Bethel is limited. Approximately 80% of those surveyed reported living in Bethel year-round. Also, Native households by and large do better financially in Bethel than in the villages.<sup>7</sup> As reflected in the *Tundra Drums*, the concerns of residents are those of any other small rural community: dog control, school lunches, high school sports and taxi fares. Two-thirds of those surveyed in 1979 thought that the type of people resident in Bethel and their social attitudes were the best things about living in **Bethel**.<sup>8</sup> Yet some of the problems experienced during Bethel's infancy persist, as alcohol and drug-related crime continue to be by far the most significant and often identified negative social issues.

Finally, Bethel continues as the center for demand for services, trade and transportation in the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta. This demand is expressed through the purchase of goods (groceries, building supplies, fuel, etc.) and services (charter **flights**,<sup>9</sup> machinery repair, and so on) in Bethel by residents of the region living outside of Bethel; and

the provision of **public** services to the region. **Public** service agencies, such as the **AVCP** Housing Authority, **AVCP** Manpower Office, **Yukon-Kuskokwim Health** Corporation, **Prematernal** Home, **Public Health** Service Hospital, **BIA**, **Kuskokwim** Community College, Lower **Kuskokwim School** District., and the Alaska Department of **Health** and **Social** Services, have programs serving residents of both **Bethel** and the outlying villages. <sup>10</sup>

The **bulk** of income to the study area comes not from the export of goods and services, but from state and federal expenditures to meet the social needs of the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** region. In keeping with this, over 50% of Bethel income and employment is dependent on its **role as a regional** center. Over **\$10 million** (34% of Bethel's total gross local product/ **local** income) is added to the **Bethel** economy directly as a result of those regional responsibilities.

Also, Bethel's unemployment rate, at **15%** of the **labor** force, is **probably at** a minimum. As stated, an increased number of jobs in the region's villages has **slowed** the migration of **village** residents into Bethel. At the same time, an expanding economy has **allowed** more **people** to find jobs in **Bethel**. However, these trends are not expected to continue. **With** many village construction projects scheduled for completion by the **mid-1980s**, and the phasing out of the **CETA-funded** positions, unemployment **levels will** increase once **more**. **People will** begin to move to **Bethel** to find work, where the number of unskilled positions **will** continue to be limited (Derbyshire and Associates, 1980:Vol. III, p. 29). Rapid and **largely** unplanned growth has already

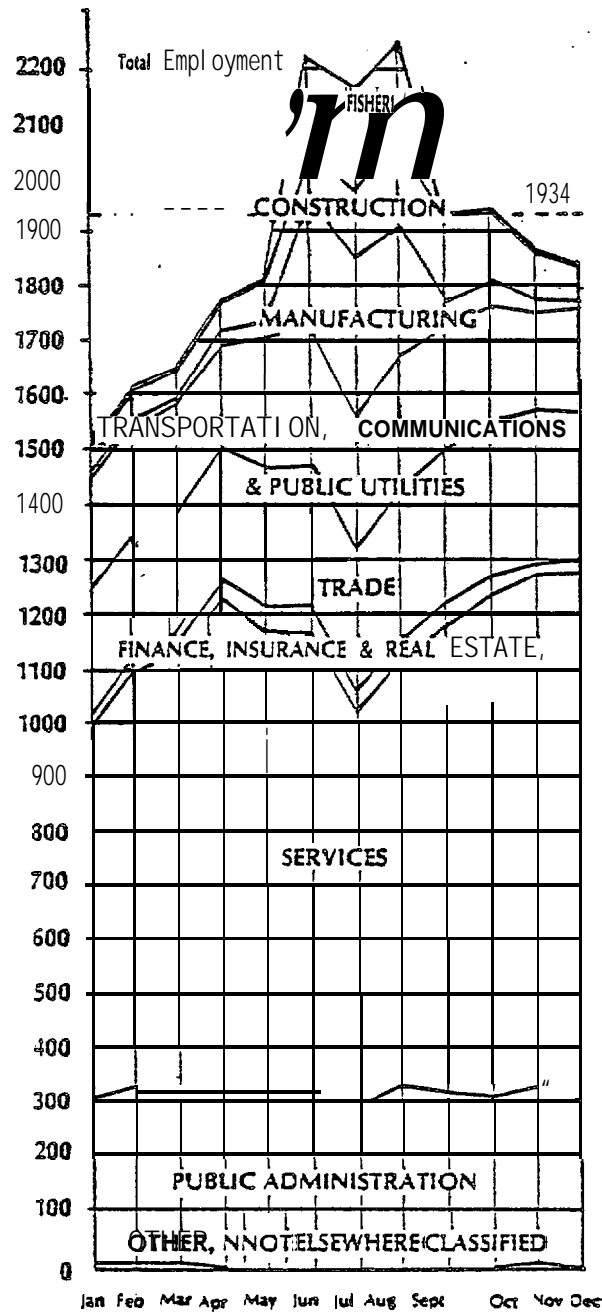


FIGURE 2. SEASONALITY OF EMPLOYMENT CUMULATIVE BY INDUSTRY, BETHEL, ALASKA - 1978 ( FROM DARBYSHIRE AND ASSOCIATES, 1980)

created a **host of social**, economic, **land** use, and community facilities and **service** problems that include riverbank erosion, inadequate **housing**, high unemployment, limited **land** availability, and disjointed land ownership **patterns**, to name a few. Yet **while Bethel** is **clearly the largest** community in the **study** area **at** present, its identity as the only government, commercial, and transportation **center** in the region may decrease in the future.' Subregional centers may form in the future (i.e., **Aniak**, I-Looper Bay, Mountain **Village**) which might detract from Bethel's growth.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The following section is taken almost verbatim from Fienup-Riordan, (1980a:55 et seq. ) although the order in which the information is given has been changed in order to emphasize historical village interrelation.

<sup>2</sup> Summer excursions were, however, possible between **Nunivak** and the mainland. For the purpose of economic and social exchange, boatloads of **Nunivagimiut** traditionally crossed **Etolin** Strait to camp on the shores of Nelson Island. These summer exchanges still take place (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a: 112).

<sup>3</sup> While the Yukon River is building a delta into the Bering Sea, the Kuskokwim ends in the estuary of a drowned river mouth. Subsidence of adjacent lands is occurring, which lengthens and widens the estuary (Alaska Planning and Management, 1972: 429).

<sup>4</sup> Extensive construction of capital facilities from the early 1940s to the present day reinforced Bethel's role as a regional trade and service center. The major facilities built include the Alaska Native Health Service (**ANHS**) hospital and the original Standard Oil tank farm in 1940; an airstrip southwest of town in 1937; and a military airfield across the river near the original site of Mumtrekhlagamute in 1941. An Aircraft Control and Warning Site was constructed by the Air Force in 1952. The building at this site currently houses the Bethel Bureau of Indian Affairs offices. The White Alice site and a new ANHS hospital were constructed in 1954. A state airport, located four miles west of town near the White Alice site, was begun in 1955.

A number of roadhouses, hotels and restaurants operated in Bethel from 1930 to 1950. These facilities served construction employees as well as the increasing number of people traveling between Anchorage, Bethel and the outlying villages (Derbyshire and Associates, 1980: vol. 2, p. 2).

<sup>5</sup> With regard to occupational mix in relation to the state, Bethel has an unusually high proportion of professional, technical, managerial and administrative positions. The proportion of Bethel workers in these occupations is about two-thirds larger than the state-wide average (Derbyshire and Associates, Vol. 3, p. 44).

**6**

The great difficulty with **Bethel** is its shifting population. There is no village spirit. People drift in here from the most backward villages (**Butzin**, Arthur F. Semi-annual Report of **Bethel**, January to June, 1916. **Proceedings...1916**, pp. 40-41).



Added to the already heterogeneous native population there has been a coterie of the "Bowery" type of roughs about Bethel, during the winter. They have caroused and fought night upon night. When real whiskey failed, they brewed their own dope. (Butzin, ibid., p. 81).

7 In 1979 median income of Native households was \$17,500 per year, and non-Native households averaged \$26,000 annually (Darbyshire and Associates, 1980, vol. 3:47). A report published in 1977 by the Office of the Governor, on the other hand, discovered a median family income of about \$4,060 per family in six of the 48 villages in the Bethel region!

8 Graffiti read in the summer of 1980 on a bathroom wall of the city office building provides a view into the positive side of Bethel that has blossomed since Butzin's day. In five different handwritings was written:

Jesus is the way the truth and the light  
Praise the Lord  
Glory to God!  
Hallelujah  
Jesus is peace and Eternal Love

9 -- When people here speak of caribous, beavers, weasel's goose, wiggins and hercs they are speaking of planes.

-- Numbers most often used in Bethel are: 170, 172, 180, 185, 206, 207. (Tundra Drums, April Fool's issue, April 3, 1980, p. 18).

10

It is imperative that newcomers learn the Bethel alphabet, once you completely understand each of the following initials you will be a part of the community.

AC, AVCP, ASHA, AANHS, ADF&G, ATV, ACS, AVEC, ACL, ANG, AHFC, ATC, APUC, AFN, APBC, AST, BLM, BIA, BSS, BRHS, BNS, BPP, BDA, BPD, BVFD, ALASCOM (We don't have RCA to kick around anymore), CETA, CIA, CINA, COPE, DSS, DOE, DOT, ELM, ERA, EEK, FAA, FAL, FBNA, GTE, GOP, HUD, HESS, HEW, IKSD, ID, ICP, ILOC, IHS, JOM, JBC, KNA, KCC, KVNA, KYUK, LTC, LKSD, MCH, MCI, NCC, NC, NCA, OCS, OMVI, PATC, PHS, PATCH, PAL, R&R, ROTC, ROCK, REAA, QFC, SCHPD, TWC, TD, TLC, UT, UBA, USARAL, USF&W, VFW,

YKHC, YKPCP, YKSD, WATS and so on. (April Fool's issue of Tundra Drums, Apr. 3, 1980, p. 18).

PART II: **SOCIOCULTURAL** SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

## VI. INTRODUCTION

### Historical Overview

The picture that has been given of the study area is one of a population that has grown steadily since the 1940s and that continues to be committed to village life and the mixed subsistence/cash economy that makes such a life possible. The coastal and riverine communities described in the previous chapters vary in size, length and extent of early missionary and commercial contacts, current availability of goods and services, corporate sophistication, etc. However, they share a common context which continues to circumscribe present variation. The historical dimension of this shared experience can be summarized as follows:

1) Commercial Development. Initial geographical isolation and lack of great mineral wealth, timber, etc. meant that the study area was not the initial focus of exploration and commercial development. However, trade and commerce had been developing slowly but surely since the turn of the century, given an initial boost by the charting of the river coincident with mineral exploration and the beginnings of a Kuskokwim commercial fishery, and followed by the construction of an airfield during World War II. Although slightly affected by boom-bust cycles of activity, Bethel was from the beginning much more stable and oriented toward the indigenous population than Nome, its northern neighbor.

2) Missionary Impact. Although Moravian and Russian Orthodox missions were both well established along the Kuskokwim by the turn of the century, and the Catholics on the coast by the 1920s and 1930s, Native **cultural** identity and subsistence ideology, if not **all** of the traditional ritual embodiments **of** this world view, are **still** quite vital. Although the Moravian missionaries were stricter than the Catholics in **their** suppression of traditional religious activity, **their** commitment to a Native-run church, with liturgy translated and communicated in the Native language, allowed the riverine Yup'ik to convert without many of the negative overtones religious **enculturation** entailed in other parts of the state. **In** the Catholic area, the priests tended to be more dogmatic and paternalistic in their dealings with the Native population. Yet in allowing them to retain their traditional **ritual** distributions, they encouraged a concrete **link** to the traditional **sociocultural** complex they sought to undercut which **would** in succeeding years provide a healthy mechanism of cultural identity and self-expression as the coastal Yup'ik came increasingly in contact **with** the white world in the 1950s.

3) Depopulation and Gradual Population Concentration with Improved Transportation and Economy. The initial period of direct contact, running through the 1940s, was characterized by depopulation following the introduction of foreign diseases, and the transformation of the distribution of the traditionally dispersed and seasonally mobile **population** into a more stable one. The rifle facilitated hunting, and the trader encouraged trapping without substantially altering hunting

patterns or game pursued. Less people remained in the area, and were better equipped to pursue available resources (Fienup-Riordan, 1980: 45). Minimal population aggregation had resulted from commercial contacts. Later, the attraction of certain public services, particularly education and medical care, accelerated the process. But the Native population remained highly mobile. Many coastal communities would not stabilize until the **mid-1960s**, when **snowmachines** began to rapidly replace dog teams.

4) Impact of Introduced Goods and Services. Although a wide selection of western material goods and services became increasingly available, high prices and limited regular employment still put what goods were available in the luxury category or out of reach altogether. **Public** assistance and welfare continue to represent a significant source of cash in the study area. However, employment and welfare combined are still inadequate to purchase necessary material goods, and residents of the study area continue to rely on the regular exploitation of subsistence resources. Although dramatic strides have been made in the study area, especially since the early 1960s, in the provision of housing, health care, and public education to the villages, as striking is the extent to which these goods and services, when available, have been used to underwrite the continued exploitation of traditional subsistence resources in the village, rather than provide a stepping stone out of the villages into mainstream America.

## Analytical Focus

Two fundamental assumptions **will** guide **the** analysis **of** the different sociological systems of the study area. The **first** is that the different systems **or** domains of **human activity** have an underlying infrastructure **or** ideological connection (**cf. Levi Strauss, 1969**). The second fundamental **assumption** is that different sociological systems **will** be simultaneously yet often differentially affected by changing circumstances (see Study Design).

**In** order to understand the connections between the different **sociocultural** systems, and how these systems have been and might continue to be impacted by changing circumstances, we will first look at these systems **as** they appeared traditionally, making some attempt to lay bare the contours **of** the infrastructure underlying the different manifestations in the realm of human activity.

Second, a careful **look** will be taken at the previous responses of these systems **to** impinging events. Any predictions as to the **potential** effects of OCS development on the study area must **be well** grounded in a fair assessment of past responses of the **sociocultural** systems to situations of impact. For instance, the history **of** the development of organized religion provides an example **of** the way **sociocultural** systems of the study area have been directly affected and consciously modified while at the same time **able** to retain something of their traditional infrastructure. The modifications **in the**

economy and ecology of the study area that OCS development **might** entail can then be looked at to see to what extent they involve comparable continuity in or transformation of the present **value** hierarchy.

Last of all, careful attention will be given to areas of particular susceptibility to change and inabilities in the systems to absorb particular types of change. For instance, alcohol abuse is one of the most severe problems of the study area. It is simultaneously a cause and effect of domestic and community stress. The inability of many individuals to deal with alcohol is a social problem that has already been greatly exacerbated by the rapid influx into the study area of outsiders culturally capable of handling alcohol and so demanding ready access to liquor to meet their own needs, regardless of the effect that this easy accessibility might have on the indigenous population. Although both Native and non-Native value systems stress the fact that use of alcohol should be a matter of individual choice and not community legislation, the severity of the problem has led to the support of at least interim regulation as a partial solution to the problem. However, underlying causes of alcoholism still need to be addressed as exemplified in the following discussion of the process of **delocalization** (see Chapter VII: Social Systems: Indicators of Inter- and **Intra-Family** Stress). Keeping historical context and analytical focus in mind, we will now turn to a detailed analysis of the **sociocultural** systems of the study area. ,



## CHAPTER VII. SOCIAL SYSTEMS

### Traditional and Contemporary Yup'ik Social Structure:

#### An Overview

The following section is a loose paraphrase of the material contained in **Fienup-Riordan** (1980a) Chapter **III**: Kinship and Marriage. The **attempt** here has been **to** summarize and **generalize** in the interests of the reader not familiar with anthropological discourse. However, it was felt that detail **should** be retained in order to make two crucial points:

1) That the traditional social structure of the coastal communities in the study areas is far from defunct. This point **will** be made many times throughout this report. The **Family** Histories in Appendix **III** as **well** as the working and exchange relationships between families **detailed** in Chapter X (Economic Systems) below give a very clear picture of how the relations between brother and sister, husband and wife, **etc.**, are played out in hunting and gathering activities on a **daily** basis within the communities of the study area. Chapter **VIII** (**Cultural** Systems) also shows how relatives join together in traditional events such as the spring seal party and winter dance distribution to act out their kin categories. For instance, **in** the **seal** party **siblings** join together to host cousins in celebration of their children and their projected marriages. **In** this chapter, the emphasis **will be** on how social relations are talked about as **well** as enacted in the

coastal villages of the study area today. As the **Yup'ik** language is still the predominant means of communication, it should come as no surprise that the traditional kinship terminology is still in use. Far from a museum piece fit only for after-the-fact anthropological museums, traditional kin terms, traditional **Yup'ik** names and related elaborate name sharing and joking relationships, and traditional name avoidance are all the **stuff** of everyday conversation and activity. A villager may try to explain pieces of this system to an outsider. For instance, referring to a parallel cousin, a **Yup'ik** might say, "You would call her a cousin, but for me she is a sister." Also, through naming and joking the **Yup'ik** will often try to fit an outsider into the system. In fact, this approach is still more common than the alternative which would be to try to adopt the terminology, kin categories, and way of thinking about **kinship and** family of the outsider. The **Yup'ik** way of thinking about social relations is complicated, vital and unique. And **it** is impossible to understand fully their actions or their way of thinking about themselves **vis-à-vis** other community members (their kinsmen), and outsiders (the ultimate nonrelative) without trying to understand this system in its entirety.

2) This leads directly into the second point to which the following pages speak. This section is designed specifically as a rebuttal to the attitude persisting **in** the literature (**Burch, 1975:62; Guemple, 1972:1; Adams, 1972; Honigman, 1959; Wilmott, 1960**) that the Eskimo somehow have less structure in their lives than other people. The **professional** and the lay view of contemporary Eskimo social structure is

that **it is** now **as it** has always **been**: a very loose and unspecific set of **guidelines** for how relatives **should** act toward each other, and that under the stress **of** rapidly changing circumstances even this loose kindred is breaking down. **As we** have seen in the history section, although **social life** was significantly redirected by the missionaries (premarital sex and adultery denounced, marriage made into a **formal** contractual arrangement, divorce made difficult and the traditional men's house abandoned), the **Yup'ik** retained their language, traditional standards of childbearing and **adult** behavioral norms, learning patterns, curing techniques and subsistence patterns, as **well** as many of the components of their traditional subsistence ideology, including celebration of children's firsts, such as first berries picked, first bird shot, etc.

**In the** study area, kinship ties are stronger than ever before with "lineal augmentation on the increase" (**Burch, 1975**), even in the face of an increased mobility and family spread. This translates as the use of tape **recorders**, telephones airplanes etc. to **enable** relatives to keep in touch. The following **will** clarify what the **Yup'ik** mean by relatives.

#### NAMING AND THE USE OF **PROPER** NAMES

The traditional procedure for naming provides a good introduction to the **Yup'ik** conception of **social** interrelation. When a **child** is born, it is most often given the name of a recently deceased grandparent or

member of the **grandparental** generation. Or the child might be named for an older sibling, either biological or classificatory, who has **re-**cently died, and whose name originated in the grandparental generation. Children are also sometimes named for living or ailing grandparents, and if named for the dead, not necessarily the most recently **dead**.<sup>1</sup>

Some spiritual essence **passes** with the name, and in an important way the dead are still believed to **live** again through their namesake. The perpetual collapsing of the generations is captured in the justification given for spoiling children: i.e., the inability on the part of the parents to discipline their infant "mother" or "father."

In sum, by the **Yup'ik** view of the world, procreation is not the addition of new persons to the inventory of the universe, but rather the substitution of one for another (**Lévi-Strauss, 1962:195**). The result of this view is that the newborn succeeds to a name which is symbolic of a position which must always be filled. Out of respect for the namesake, however, the name is then never used in direct address or indirect reference. Rather the form of address is a kinship term, which term depends on the relative age of **the** speaker and the person addressed, as **well** as his or her relationship to the deceased. If a person has the Eskimo name of the dead kinsman of another, then both the namesake and the kinsmen of the deceased reciprocally refer to each other with kin terminology appropriate to the dead kinsman. Thus, two infant children are jokingly referred to as husband and wife because of the relationship attending their **names**. **Also**, just as a name

**implies** a relationship, a desired relationship may be affirmed by use of a name. Naming becomes a mechanism of absorbing outsiders into the community.

What becomes apparent in our consideration of **Yup'ik** naming and the subsequent **terminological** skewing **is not simply** the existence of a relationship between the living and the dead, but a cycling between them, and a consequent collapse of **the** system into two generations, with alternate generations equated. Although as **we shall** see the possession of children is of critical importance to the married couple, parents never directly acknowledge their offspring **as offspring!** Social hierarchy is alternately exaggerated and turned on its head, the young metaphorically first and the oldest last, just as in the reversals we **shall** see attending traditional and contemporary ritual distribution (see Appendix II: **Social Structure and Ritual Distribution**).

#### KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE

As the concept of a short-cycle, **closed** system where newcomers are deemed ancestors is fundamental to the system of naming and kinship terminology, it is fundamental to social structural relations among the residents of the study **area**. The **social** system of the coastal **Yup'ik**, rather than manifesting the linkage of individual and **conceptually isolatable** nuclear families, is a prime example of what Lévi-Strauss has labeled **social** concern, or the **denial** of the family's right to exist in isolation or permanently. **The** concept of reproductive

cycling is critical to the **Yup'ik** social system. A marriage is solidified only when children come, and through them the young couple becomes parent to their ancestors.

Marriages were traditionally arranged, with first and second cousins prohibited and third and fourth cousins prescribed. Today, although parents and grandparents no longer arrange matches without the knowledge of the bride- and groom-to-be, marriages will not occur without the approval of the parents, and engagements contracted between two young people will often be broken off if the parents disapprove.

The traditional age at first marriage and the age differential between spouses have been altered by the direct and indirect effects of contact. Traditionally, women were between 12 and **14 years** of age at the time of their first marriage, and men between **18** and 26, with an average differential of 10 years. Couples married in the last 10 years, however, tend to be more equal in age, and their marriage occurs later in life. Thus, the average age of first marriage for women is presently between 18 and 22, and for men between 25 and 28. This has left 20% of the girls on Nelson Island, between the ages of 22 and 26, unmarried. Men five years their senior have chosen their juniors in marriage, while men more their own age have been and are choosing women still slightly their juniors. This change in marriage patterns cannot be attributed to the effects of depopulation in the area due to epidemics, as these tended to hit **all** sectors of the population with equally devastating effect. The sex ratio (52% men) among the island

population has remained relatively **stable**. This unbalanced sex ratio requires some difference **in** age between husband and wife. **But** these factors, **although** they create the preconditions for change in marriage patterns, do **not** explain emerging **cultural** patterns. As **Kelly** points out (1974:168), changes in demography tend **to** be transitory. Rather, the process of **sociocultural** change is dependent on a value system of **rules** which governs the cultural interpretation of events.

Along these lines, two potentially critical factors in emerging marriage patterns would **be** movement to cities and intermarriage with whites. The former is as yet not an important factor **among** the coastal **Yup'ik** population. Even movement to Bethel by unmarried young **adults** from the villages tends to be temporary. Intermarriage with whites, however, is increasingly the choice of the younger generation, with 50% of the interracial marriages ending in divorce. Marriage between men and women more **equal** in age, **later** marriages, particularly for women, and marriages to whites in the **last 10** years can be correlated with increased opportunity for and value **placed** on higher education, including both high **school** and college. Ten years ago, when the present generation of marriageable women reached **the** traditional age for marriage (**14** years), **St. Mary's** and Bethel regional high schools were drawing increasing numbers of students from the coastal villages. Many families supported the choice of high school education over early marriage. For instance, 80% **of Nelson Island** students that attended **St. Mary's High School** went on to graduate, the **first** students **return-**ing to the **island** with their diplomas in **1968**. As men were the first

to attend St. Mary's in number, they were also the first to begin to continue in college at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. In the fall of 1978, 14 students from Nelson Island were studying in Fairbanks, including nine men and five women. Not only has continuing education postponed marriage, it has influenced choice of mates. Romantic love is beginning to win out over the arranged marriages of 10 years ago, although parents still have the ultimate say in the choice of a spouse.

If the bride and groom are accepted, a church service is performed and the couple, whenever possible, settle down in their own small house. Traditionally, the marriage ceremony consisted of the presentation of a parka and boots by the groom to the bride, and cooked food brought by the bride to the men's house of her husband and his father. The traditional pattern during the first year of the marriage was that the groom came to stay in the qasgiq or men's house of his father-in-law, while the bride remained under her mother's roof. This was normally followed by a move to the husband's home after the first child was born and the marriage had solidified.

A number of **trial** marriages were often necessary before children were born and a couple finally settled with one another. The birth of a child was traditionally and **still** is the cornerstone of a successful marriage. Also, not only does a marriage solidify with and ultimately revolve around the birth of a child, but through marriage the parents themselves are held to be **reborn**.<sup>2</sup> Thus the wife metaphorically gives birth to her husband and actually gives birth to her child, so



solidifying **the** marriage. Although **the** system **traces** descent through **both** the **male** and female lines, brothers and sisters are held to be related not by the **blood, but** by the stomach and womb. Thus siblings born **of** the same mother, with either the same or different fathers, are said to be "**of one** stomach."

This explicit reification **of** pregnancy and the birth process has important implications for the cosmological as **well** as the social system, **which**, as we shall see, makes much of the reproductive process. The father's contribution, on the other hand, to the creation and maintenance of the **child**, is conceptually given in terms of meat, including responsibility for the flesh of the child, for the seal meat necessary to grow and maintain it, and, traditionally through the **patrilateral** inheritance **of** secret hunting charms, by both male and female offspring, for continuity in man's relationship **to** the natural **world**.

**The** fact of different paternity has important implications for the relation of the offspring of such half-siblings, as does the fact of different maternity. As **to** the half-siblings themselves, both are **felt** to be not quite siblings, but almost. Step-siblings, on the other hand, are **decidely** in a different category from siblings "of the same stomach." Stepchildren invariably maintain allegiance to their living parent, either father or mother, while maintaining a formal relation with their stepparent and siblings, often on the order of **af-final** avoidance. Neither of **two** stepbrothers the author spoke with included the other in his **list** of relations, and for one man this included a full-scale genealogy running **to** seven generations.

Adoption, on the other hand, creates a more binding tie between the adoptive parents and the adopted child (kitugtaq fr. kitugte, to repair, mend, fix or arrange). Yet the fact that the relationship between an adopted child and its natal parents and siblings is maintained despite the adoption lays emphasis on the inalienable character of the relationship through the stomach.

If reared by the adoptive parents, and literally fed with the stepfather's meat, the adoptive child becomes **like** the parents' own. As adoption is most often between families already related (i.e., a woman taking the child of either her daughter, son, or sister), the "one stomach" relationship is maintained, in reference to the ascending generation. Adoption is most often movement of a child between **house-**holds related in the ascending generation through a parallel sibling relationship (most often between sisters) where the child moved into the family of his classificatory siblings. This is true in temporary as well as permanent adoption. The verb alartuq (lit. mixed up) is specifically applied to a child who gets attached to his mother's **sis-**ter when his mother has been gone and he is staying with her. In all, one-tenth of the current population of coastal **Yup'ik** has been adopted out of their family of generation, and cultural adoption continues to be an important form of social relation.

Besides the relation through the name, and the classificatory cycling between alternate generations, at the birth or adoption of a child two other important relations are put into effect. Both stress the

relationship **of the child to** the alternate ascending generation, and **the** ways in which the child is considered **to** be a member of that **generation**. These two relationships, although distinct, are not **di-**metrically opposed, **but** are rather more and less friendly joking relationships.

The friendly side of the **coin** is **cingarluni** (**fr. cingar**, to kiss or snuffle a **child**) and is the request for the bestowal of special favors by relatives. The relationship is most often **put** into effect between a newborn and a **member** of the alternate ascending generation, although it may also take **place** between age mates or between cousins once **re-**moved as an explicit play on the relationship between alternate generations. The person demanding a benefit **will** kiss (literally smell) the **child**, demanding in return some **small** token such as a piece of dried fish or a handful of tea (the same quality and quantity of gifts distributed in the seal party, as we **shall** see). Parents are expected to honor these kissing requests in proportion to their **love** for their **child**.<sup>3</sup>

**Aryuqluni**, or giving presents with a delay, is the formal counter to **cingarluni** and is usually cross-sex as **well** as cross-generational, **i.e.**, the gift of an ivory story knife (**yaaruin**) or a spoon **by** an **old** man to a young **girl**. Here again, it is the young **girl's** cross-cousin, by name, who gives the **gift**. Also implicit in her **acceptance** is a recognition that through marriage she **will** give herself back to **him**.

In fact, there is some evidence that the kissing requests were traditionally and **still** may be a means of securing rights to a child as spouse of the grandchild of the relative requesting the benefit. And in fact the gifts requested in cingarluni along with those returned through aryuqluni constitute both sides of the marriage exchange. These kissing requests and their return with a delay still occur in the coastal communities **of the** study area today.

The second kind of relationship an adult may instigate with a small child is kumuqluni (lit. trying to make cry) and connotes the playful teasing of babies. It is distinct from kissing, snuffling, or petting the child, in that an attempt is made to surprise the child, bring it close to tears, and then laughingly comfort it. Gift giving is not part of the relationship. It is the nursery world's counterpart to qinucetarluni (trying to make mad). One woman defined kumuqluni also as "how you get when your ilug (same sex cross--cousin) teases you and **always** is on top."

As we shall see, the relationship between cross-cousins (persons related to you through a cross-sex sibling relationship in the parental or grandparental generation) is by definition a joking one. It is said both that a man has lots of cousins because he teases so much, and that he teases so much because he has so many cousins. There is a variety of **mumbletypeg** played among **Qaluyaarmiut** men and boys where the loser must endure a "friendly" tap on the wrist, A man may turn his arm black and blue playing with cousins, but **will** never take a turn with his uncle or in-laws.

Often there is a particular joke or series of jokes that passes between two cross-cousins each time they meet. Also, this formula may be handed down, as when two individuals regularly address each other as Usivilinguq (crazy one) or Assilinguq (bad one).<sup>4</sup>

First cross-cousins are the prohibited marriage category while third cross-cousins are loosely prescribed. But an old man may "marry" his cross-cousin when he gives gifts to and accepts gifts from an infant named for her, so securing rights to her for his child's child. By the recycling of souls through the naming process, actual cross-cousin marriage has been accomplished.

In conclusion, the cycling down the generations originates in the cross-sex sibling relation of the parents. This distinction is a critical one. In terms of social action, this translates into the informal sharing (of children, meat and sometimes money) that characterizes the relationship between siblings as opposed to the more formal and circumscribed exchange relations between cousins. It is between these two categories that the "we-against-them" ("relatives" vs. "non-relative") division is made. And through the gift of a name or a joke, the Yup'ik still attempt to absorb outsiders into this system.

#### Changing Population Structure and Residence Patterns

Besides the more formal and stable features of Yup'ik social structure, it is also important to consider some of the more significant

events of the last half century in terms of their immediate impact on this system. Although the naming system and system of kinship terminology persist, much has transpired that affects the way these still vital systems are presently played out, and how they might be predicted to respond to future impacts.

1) Population Concentration. As detailed in the section on **Pre-Contact History**, the inhabitants of the study area traditionally moved annually within a clearly circumscribed area, inhabiting fixed dwellings at each site. But with the establishment of trading stations, missions, schools, and post offices, population concentration around particularly rich subsistence sites and settlement into more or less permanent, year-round villages began to take place. Although this population concentration into villages has been taking place over a long period of time, the late 1930s and **early** 1940s saw the acceleration of the trend with villages finally solidifying in the 1950s and 1960s corresponding to the introduction of an improved technology that enabled hunters to move out from a fixed site on a daily basis. This general phenomenon was true throughout the state. What is unique to the coastal communities in the study area was the fact that although year-round living in a populous community was new, residence in relatively large groups (often between 150 and 200 people) for some part of the winter or spring was already an established pattern. Traditionally people had been identified with their home base, the winter village.

Both the **winter** inland gatherings and the coastal summer gatherings usually focused **on** a particularly rich subsistence site (e.g., the spring camp **of Tununak** on the coast of Nelson **Island** and **the** winter village **of Chukchuk** 20 miles inland). Although the traditional coastal settlements of the study area were smaller in size than those of the larger sea mammal hunting communities of the Bering Strait, during the winter social gatherings, sometimes as many as 700 people would gather for a week of dancing and feasting. Then the host village would **feel** the strain **of** hospitality, **not only** toward their human guests, but through their obligation **to** feed the dogs that had brought them. **How-**ever, although many **out-of-towners** must be provided for, many distant relatives from nearby **villages** could also be called upon to help carry off the occasion. During the spring encampments as well, with the obligatory distribution **to all** non-relatives present of the first caught **seal** of the season, as **well** as numerous first fruits ceremonies given for children throughout the spring and summer, there was formalized gift giving between the different extended families gathered at the site. Although the specific configuration of families might change from year to year, these recognized distribution networks served as a means of expression of community solidarity and inter- and **intravil-**lage and family relation. Although the recent solidification of the villages brings families into direct contact for longer periods of time, mechanisms already existed to channel social relations within relatively large gatherings. Indeed, a case has already been made for the superior community **mental health in** areas such as Nelson **Island** where these traditional mechanisms have been retained and even

amplified<sup>5</sup> as well as in the villages such as **Kipnuk** where a direct substitution of social get-togethers has taken place (e.g., the **tradition** mid-winter dances replaced by the **Moravian** song feasts and church rallies).

In conclusion, the permanent villages, rather than something entirely new, can be seen as more of the same. More people stay together longer and do more to celebrate and **talk** about themselves. Hunters hunt more within traditional configurations, and ritual activity is richer than ever before.

Also, besides subsistence specialties, basketball teams and bingo days, each village has its own ritual specialties. The villages are marked by differential retention of traditional distribution rituals as well as by that which is distributed. Where families continue to use **individual** seal parties to talk about their parameters, now villages, by differential use of ritual forms, talk about their new boundaries (see Chapter **VIII**: Cultural Systems).

2) Residence Patterns. **Along** with the change in the number of families that live together, there has also been a change in household composition. Prior to contact, the average family size was estimated at four persons, with several families often living together. Today, in the study area, although the number of households varies from village to village, household composition does not. For example, the village of Toksook Bay consists of 53 households, with an average size of 6.5



persons per household. **The** residence pattern of husband and wife and **their** unmarried children accounts for 34 households, **or** 64%. Another **seven** households have women as **family** heads, due to death **or** divorce **of** spouse (**all** divorces to date are between Native women and white men). **No** men **live alone with** children. Seven more households add grandparents, grandchildren, or **older** unmarried brothers and sisters to the basic marital **unit**. 'Only two young couples live **alone** without children, and **only** one older couple lives **alone**, although their children and grandchildren live close **by**.

This **normal** household, consisting of husband, wife, and unmarried children is typical in **all** the coastal villages, but like the permanent village, it has become widespread only within the last 30 years, although as early as **1891** the **Moravians** persuaded one Bethel **family** to **build** a single-family dwelling (**Oswalt, 1963:157**). Traditionally the men and boys over five years **old** spent **their** days and nights **in** the **qasgiq**. Every settlement had at least one of these semi-subterranean sod structures, measuring 20 feet by **20** feet or **larger** and serving as the communal men's residence **hall** and workshop, where men repaired **tools**, told stories, took sweat baths, **slept**, and were served meals by their wives, sisters and daughters. Its construction was a major **community** enterprise, and in fact it was often the **only** village-wide cooperative endeavor. **It** was also the **place** where community dancing **and** **ritual** activity were **held**. **Women** and children resided in smaller individual **nepiaq**, the old-style sod **house** (hence **neliaq** (womb or uterus, **lit.** a made house)). Sleeping patterns in **the** new **BIA** housing bear an

interesting relation to the traditional pattern. The honored elders continue to sleep safe and secure in the back of the building, while the young unmarried men sleep on the floor by the door.

The proximity of the different sexes and different age groups in the nuclear family household does not appear to be a contemporary source of stress. Daytime work configurations continue to exhibit the traditional separation of the sexes. Adult men stand around in groups outside of the houses, in the community hall or store, or gather together in twos and threes around a kitchen table for a cup of tea. A woman's visiting is still, as it was traditionally, somewhat more circumscribed, especially for the younger women. Relations between the sexes in a social context have always been governed by the age of and degree of relationship between the individuals, and continue to be governed by the same rules. For example, an elderly village man is still likely to make a young **Yup'ik** matron feel shy, or self-conscious, out of respect, and cross-sex cross-cousins of relatively equal age are still prone to rag each other outrageously, whether the encounter takes place in one of the smaller coastal villages or in Bethel. There is some feeling on the part of older villagers that the children of today are "too much," i.e., do not show the proper respect, run around, are lazy, etc. Certainly a generation gap exists, exacerbated by an educational system that takes children out of the home and away from their parents for years of formal, very **non-Yup'ik** instruction. But by general American standards, the average **Yup'ik** family with which the author is

**familiar is** a remarkably close and well-integrated **unit**. In fact, **with** the decrease **in infant mortality** and consequent rise in number of children per couple (see **below**), the nuclear **family** is perhaps stronger than ever before. Yet **distinct** household groups **can still** be distinguished in **Bethel** as well as the **villages, with** positive working interrelations (see Appendix **III: Family Histories; also, Chapter X: Economic Systems**. These household groups within the **village were** the units that traditionally, and sometimes **still**, moved **to** fish camp together in the summer and spring.

3) Changes in Population Structure. The decrease in 'infant mortality and the improvement of **health** delivery systems in general have also had a strong impact on household composition. Changing trends in birth rates appear to have accompanied the changes in death rates. According to available evidence, in the **pre-contact** era both births and deaths were relatively **low**; in the contact era deaths from disease increased and the birth rate increased; and **in** more recent times Western medicine has both reduced the death rate and provided contraception **to** reduce the birth rate. **Early** observers have noted that family size in the study area was generally relatively **small** at the time of white contact, with **an** estimated two children **per** family. During the contact period, the high death rate from disease and the increased **incidence** of sterility from venereal disease may have resulted in higher values being **placed** on fertility and higher fertility rates. Statistics from this **period** suggest the average number of children in a **family** was **5.5 with families having** as many as **12** children, Fertility

values established in the contact period seem to have continued into the post-contact era until population growth became substantial. However, when the U.S. Public Health Service began to introduce modern methods of contraception in 1965, the acceptance rate was immediately high, even in Catholic villages, and continued to grow, accounting for the present decline in the birth rate in the study **area**<sup>6</sup> (Dixon, 1976). This drop is only just beginning to be reflected in average family size. The population continues to be relatively young, with the number of dependent children per household averaging 4.5 (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1980a).

This increase in the number of children, as well as the **length** of their social and economic dependency, has put strain on the resources of the communities in the study area, and has radically affected the time the adult population (particularly the women) must spend in child care, as opposed to other community and subsistence activities. Although older siblings regularly care for their juniors, the requirements of elementary and secondary schooling take these built-in babysitters out of the home for significant portions of the day. Women have certainly been freed from much burdensome food storage and clothing construction in the last 30 years, but with the increase in the number of children to be cared for it is doubtful if they are any less home-oriented as a result.

This large family size has also had the interesting effect of making some families potentially much more self-sufficient and independent

than was possible traditionally (see the George Family in Appendix III, with their few dependents and **large** number of adult sons capable of providing for the family). However, although a large number of productive children can make a **family** rich, the tendency, within the coastal villages **especially, is still** for those families to share their wealth through recognized **redistributive** channels (see Chapter X: Economic Systems).

4) Increased Mobility. In the **late 1960s** a dramatic increase in permanent **outmigration** by entire families from the villages into Bethel was predicted. This **outmigration** has not taken **place**. Instead, the villages have grown and prospered. Yet as villages become more permanent, villagers, especially the young and **single**, become more part time. The question then arises as to what this means in terms of their **social** relations in the village. As in northern Alaska, this increased mobility, due primarily to seasonal employment, has **until** recently involved more men than women. Now everyone within the 20- to 30-year age bracket wants a **job**, and both young men and women seek seasonal employment outside the village. In the coastal villages, the months of June and July see an out-migration of the men and teen-aged boys and **girls** to the **Dillingham** or Kuskokwim fisheries and processing plants, leaving the villages largely inhabited by **older** couples, **mid-**die-aged women and **small** children. This pattern is different for the **riverine** villages, where **whole** families move together to fish camp on the river.

The question arises as to whether when people leave the coastal communities this alters their perception of the way things are, and so indirectly the way things should be, on their return. It is hard to measure the effects of ethnic stereotyping, reflecting back on the villagers' view of themselves, and implying and promoting a new view of activity within the village and household. One measure might be in the division of game (**e.g.**, preferred allocation among only co-located kinsmen, equal treatment of all village members) (Fienup-Riordan, **1980a:9**). Indeed, the contributions of the absent hunter are often **sorely** missed, especially by older villagers, and this is in fact a fear expressed in relation to oil development. For besides the threat to game resources, it is feared that increased employment opportunities in the regional center will deprive them of the hunters necessary to exploit the resource and so sustain village **life**.

In contrasting permanent and part-time villagers, we might expect observable differences, particularly in ideologically defined relationships such as food sharing and food exchange in which they cannot participate. Preliminary investigation indicates that while daily substantive activity such as food sharing, cooperation, borrowing, visiting and communal eating are obviously curtailed during the absence of a particular villager, on his or her return even after a period of years, it is still possible, and in fact difficult to avoid, being reintegrated into this community network. Yet although reintegration is encouraged, villagers, and perhaps young villagers in particular,

especially those who leave the village to attend school, or for **full-** time rather than seasonal employment, might begin to view **social** and exchange relations as conforming to understandings derived from the outside and come to develop a more salient identity. **In** fact, younger, educated villagers with more experience outside the village, are sometimes more conservative than the **older** villagers, as they are aware of and understand more clearly impending threats to village life as **it** is now known.

Also tied to the issue of mobility is the question of the **value** placed **on** success outside of the **village**, and the extent to which compartmentalization (Singer, **1968:438-9**) characterizes an individual's response **to** extra-village activities, with continuity maintained in the **old value** system by limiting its applicability, things permissible in one social space clearly restricted in another. For instance, in the study area Bethel serves as a no man's **land** where villagers both young and old feel free to drink and generally let loose, yet not have their actions reflect on their status within their home village. **As** another example, for the village high-school-aged students boarding at Bethel Regional High **School** (vs. those attending **St.** Mary's) during the 1970s this compartmentalization was evidenced in the extremely high percentage of young unmarried women who returned to their families with **child** (**Fienup-Riordan, 1979**). Many of these young women subsequently left the infant in the care of their mother, often as a **legally** adopted "sibling," and went about their life in the village as any other young woman of marriageable age. Here although **the** initial **re-entry** into the village was not always easy, no strong negative stigma seemed to

attach to their transgression once they had returned to their **place** in village life. This may, however, be an unfair estimate of the ability of village society to compartmentalize the actions of individuals who have lived on the outside, as traditionally a child out of wedlock was no heinous crime. In fact, although the traditional **Yup'ik** were monogamous, a succession of spouses was not unusual, and the idea of marriage for life was one of **the** more difficult concepts introduced by the missionaries. **Also**, traditionally virginity in a bride was not of critical importance, either ideologically or actually.

While the reintegration into village life of young adults and of men who have left for seasonal employment appears to be fairly painless, there is some evidence that the increased mobility of married women in the last **10 years** is not so easily reconciled. Married women **traditionally** and in the villages today still do work very close to home, with occasional outings for bingo, church, and visiting. What has happened recently is that an increasing number of bright young and **middle-aged** women have been employed within the villages as health aides, teacher aides, bilingual instructors, magistrates, etc. Although men are beginning to take over some of these now lucrative positions, when they first became available they were not full-time positions, and were not considered desirable by village men who wanted to have the freedom to leave the village on a daily basis for hunting and fishing. The job of health aide, especially in the smaller and medium-sized villages where there is just one aide who is constantly on call, was particularly shunned by the men. Women, on the other hand, took these positions



**and have** done **very** well **in them**. **But** what this **has** entailed is a **fundamental** challenge to the traditional system whereby a younger married woman was **seen but** not heard (except by other women) in the community **at large**. Now **the** wife is not **only** the breadwinners but **as** a paraprofessional she is often required to go into Bethel for training **sessions**, ranging from two weeks **to** two months, and occurring several **times** a **year**. From interviews with village women in this position (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1979), it appears that they experience considerable stress as they try both to **fulfill** their role as a **Yup'ik** wife and mother, and do their job (sound familiar?). Although the children seem to do well in the care of aunts or **other** relations' during their mothers' absence, the husbands often resent and feel threatened by the intrusion to the point of **alcoholism**, wife battering and **child** abuse. As this problem is increasingly recognized by agencies employing village aides, training sessions are carefully planned so as not to **conflict with** subsistence activities, and more and more families are being encouraged to accompany the working spouse during his/her stay in Bethel.

Finally, for **all** the **newly** acquired weight and immobility of the villages, any morning at the airstrip evidences a new mobility with new goals: cash jobs and corporation **meetings**, schooling, check-ups, and shopping. Yet the same traditional structure patterns this new motion: summer movement is **still** for food acquisition (**e.g.**, fishing **in** Bristol Bay where cash is netted for the spring sealing) and winter movement **for intra-village** socializing (song feasts **in** **Tununak**, Christmas

shopping in Bethel, and trips to Anchorage for the annual Fur Rendezvous). The **Yup'ik** do not randomly arrive at Anchorage International Airport. This ability to go back and forth must be taken into account in **evaluating** village viability. Villages **will** perhaps live through future developments since they have this ready mechanism to assimilate us!

5) Increase in Non-Natives and Changes in Community Structure. The issue of the increase in non-Natives in the study area can be divided into two parts: non-Native immigration into Bethel, the regional center, and non-Native immigration into the villages. In both cases, changes in population and attitude structure correlating with this increase have an effect on community structure and social relations as a whole.

As noted in the description of the community of Bethel, an increasing number of non-Natives and a simultaneously decreasing number of Natives are moving into the regional center, so that the ratio of Natives to non-Natives in that community is approaching 50/50.<sup>7</sup> Also, the non-Natives in Bethel, the majority employed in technical and managerial positions, are increasingly making their stay more than a year-long flirtation with the Alaskan Bush. More non-Natives are moving into Bethel, and they are coming to stay. So far the rate and quantity of the influx has been **slow** enough and low enough that the community has been able to successfully absorb the newcomers (see Chapter **VIII**: Cultural Systems). As the city's population continues to grow, new

arrivals will make up a smaller and smaller proportion of the total population, At the present rate, or even at a slightly accelerated rate, Bethel, as a relatively large community, will probably be able to absorb a substantial further increase in non-Natives without resulting in social disintegration. Also the prediction for the mid- and late 1980s (Derbyshire and Associates, 1980: Vol. III) is that with the completion and cutback in village construction projects Natives will again be moving into Bethel in considerable numbers, so that Bethel is not likely to lose its Native majority,

On the other hand, if a rapid influx into Bethel of non-Natives did occur, it would not only change the population composition, but would produce increased impersonality and disruption of existing sociocultural patterns. This would lead to racial tension as it would make Natives more powerless in relation to the non-Native population. An increase in conflict between divergent cultural values would also take place. Existing as well as potential sources of discrimination and misunderstanding in interethnic relationships (employer/employee; teacher/student, etc.) will be dealt with in the section on Cultural Systems. What has preserved Bethel so far from many severe social problems (although, as we shall see it has its share) has been the general attitude of newcomers, Native and non-Native alike, that Bethel is worth learning about and living in. Villagers and Anchoragites alike may make derogatory comments about the community, but in Bethel itself there is both a strong sense of identity and community. The majority of non-Native newcomers view the inconveniences and deprivations as a

challenge, while Natives view the relative conveniences with a grain of salt and do not see them as a total replacement for village patterns which are never completely rejected. As the community orientation of many of the Bethel church congregations as well as public service groups such as the senior citizens group and the Tundra Women's Coalition makes clear, Bethel is viewed in many ways as being much closer to a large village than to a **small** metropolis. The dividing **line** between Bethel and Anchorage is much more awesome.

At the present time, in the villages the situation of Natives **vis-à-vis** non-Natives is substantially different. There the population mix is presently 95% Native as opposed to 5% non-Native, including teachers as well as non-Natives who have married into the community.

Villages in the study area are at present extremely insular, and none of the coastal communities are desirous of either a temporary or permanent influx of non-Natives. A classic, although not typical, example of this closed-door policy is the ruling made by one village council after the second-degree murder of a non-Native man by a Native. The victim was a Mexican American, and both men were in an intoxicated condition. The village council (whose president was closely related to the defendant) decided that the best way to prevent future incidents of this kind from taking place was not to legislate against violence or alcohol. Instead, their decision was to ban Mexican Americans from the village, which they did.

In fact, non-Natives can often be subject to reverse discrimination in the villages, especially if they **fail to** seek village council approval for their actions in a community. Tourists are not appreciated in the villages, by which is meant any individual, however harmless, who enters the community, has a look-see, and **leaves** without stating his business on his arrival. Even after seeking formal permission, an outsider, be he anthropologist, **rockhound** or representative of the oil industry, may be denied permission to work in the village, especially if he does not have prior connections in the community to speak for him and explain his intentions. **In** keeping with its village character, this protective attitude characterizes **Bethelites** as well. There newcomers from outside the region are more easily accepted, but are still on trial for an initial period during which residents evaluate both their character and intentions. Because of the size of Bethel, however, this initial judgment is less intense. **It** manifests less racial discrimination than human nature, and in fact runs across racial lines.

On the other hand, although residents of the study area are **understandably ambivalent** about the permanent influx of non-Natives, hospitality is the essence of **Yup'ik social** relations. Although they might find an outsider's motives questionable, a handshake, a friendly smile, and the offer of tea, a **meal**, or even a steam bath traditionally **characterizes** the **villager's** reception of an outsider. Perhaps the villages are especially vulnerable precisely because of this time-honored open manner of greeting strangers. One of the saddest things that **I** have

noted in the village traveling I have done is the increasing wariness, often more than warranted, on the part of villagers toward unknown outsiders who previously would have been welcomed wholeheartedly. The furor caused by the recent publication of the chapter, "The Villages," in Joe **McGinniss'** book, Going to Extremes, was in fact due to **McGinniss' denial** of this typically open and warm character of **Yup'ik** social relations. And, paradigmatic of the love/hate relation with outsiders, one proposed response to his ignorance and misrepresentation of the situation was, like the Mexican American, to ban him from the region (Tundra Drums 7(36):22 Letter to the Editor from Mary Gregory).

The situation of non-Natives marrying into the villages is a **good indication** of just how difficult it is for outsiders to be effectively absorbed into village life. Aside from the remarkably high divorce rate in marriages between Natives and non-Natives, even marriages that do last must often survive a great deal of strain. In the case of the non-Native wife, the birth of children can help to facilitate her acceptance into the village, but only if she proceeds to raise them in a manner acceptable to her ever-present in-laws. For the non-Native male, the situation is often complicated by the fact that he is either perceived as, or actually is, a threat, i.e., competition in the very limited village job market. His lack of relatives within the village makes him a desirable addition to a village extended family, as he comes with no strings attached. At the same time (and this applies to both men and women), the non-Native has no immediate family to share

**the** responsibilities and **risks** attached with setting up a new **household**. **Also, a real** problem arises when either the husband or wife is reluctant to participate **in** subsistence hunting and gathering activities. **While** the Native spouse is **firmly** entrenched **in village** social and exchange **relations**, the **non-Native is bored**, has nothing to do, and wants to **leave**. This recalcitrance may **lead** directly **to** divorce. This is not surprising when **it** is recalled how much the extended family relies on the contributions **of** each of **the** individual households of which it is composed. **If** one household is unable to provide its share, not only is the whole system thrown off balance, but the definition of the marriage itself, as a **real** marriage, **is called** into question. Village social relations do not exist separately from the relationship of the people **to** their **land**, and a man who cannot hunt or fish is hardly in the position to be considered a **proper** husband. This attitude may at first **glance** seem provincial, yet when the extent of village **sharing** and exchange of the products of the hunt is presented (see Economic Systems), the public sense **of** this intrusion into the "private" relationship between man and wife **will** become **clear**. Certainly the contemporary village **Yup'ik** have market **relations**, but as such a large part of significant economic exchange (**e.g.**, the exchange of meat, **labor**, etc.) takes place outside of the context of the market, the failure of a husband to hunt is a **social** as **well** as economic **impossibility** (Fienup-Riordan, 1982).<sup>8</sup>

Finally, there **is** a difference between **Bethel** and the **villages** in terms of their ability to withstand the **influx** of outsiders, and

although it may appear easier for Bethel as a community to absorb outsiders, even in the regional center neither racial group actually absorbs the other. Rather, Bethel's size gives room for differences to co-exist as well and provides **an** arena for the active acceptance of differences. In this sense, Bethel is less a melting pot than a crossroads. It is a frontier where external and local social, administrative, and economic organizations meet. Added to the resident mixture of Natives and non-Natives, there is also a large transient population. If possible, Bethel is being used more than ever before by residents of the study area as a place to shop, visit, or just take a break from village life. This use of Bethel has both positive and negative impacts. On the negative side, Bethel is an easy sanctuary for **individuals** who are having difficulties in the village. The problem of compartmentalization has already been mentioned. Today whole families move into Bethel when they are on the outs with their home village, or to transact their less savory business away from the watchful eyes of their relatives.

The regional extension of effective kin ties is one of the more positive social aspects of the constant flow of villagers in and out of Bethel. The extremely protective attitude of villagers originates in their being aware of their own vulnerability, and by and large valuing the retention of the traditional value hierarchy over the advantages of increased contact with whites, including increased employment opportunities, in their village. Employment in the regional center is, however, another matter. In fact, for short-term periods of employment



as well as for **visiting**, Native **people** are more easily absorbed into the existing social structure **of the** regional center as they may stay **with a family** in Bethel. They **do not always** create the same kinds of needs or hazards as a **comparable influx** of non-Native **people** into the villages may create.

The ever **mobile** villagers come into town for a night or a week and stay with a sibling or cousin. This hospitality they **will** reciprocate in the spring or summer when their relative spends time in the **village**. **In the** same way many of the non-Native **Bethelites**, often equally **mobile** as **their** jobs involve **village** travel, come **to** expect overnight guests sleeping **on** their floor, and **to** receive in their turn the hospitality of the villagers when they travel. For many non-Native residents, this **social** dimension of living in Bethel is as **important**, if not more **so**, than the accessibility of subsistence activities which they **also** enjoy **along** with the Native residents. **In** the community survey (Darbyshire and Associates), two-thirds of the population indicated that the nicest part of **living** in **Bethel** was the **people**. That is **quite** a positive statement!

As **well** as providing an opportunity for non-traditional patterns of affiliation (**interethnic** friendships and marriages, increasing **opportunities** for **same-** as opposed to other-generation relationships), the regional center, **itself** a relatively new **social** institution, **is** becoming a frontier where new forms of **social** organization (new in the **con-**

text of both traditional Native and traditional western patterns of organization) are being tested and developed (see following **section, Formal Support Systems**). For instance, as the women's movement gains momentum in Bethel, the perspective it brings to bear on the problems of the region is a singular combination of **Yup'ik** self-reliance and western humanism rather than the traditional radical feminism so often associated with the women's organizations of the 1970s.

### Indicators of Inter- and Intra-Family Stress

In the fall of 1980, the Tundra Women's Coalition, along with the Native Women of **Calista** and the Association of Village Council Presidents sponsored a regional conference in which **the** social problems of the study area were addressed. The conference theme was "**Having a Voice,**" and the issues identified provide a valuable entry into both the actual and perceived pressure points of the **sociocultural** systems of the delta, as well as area residents' proposed solutions to these problems. Instead of the handful of women expected, the turnout was spectacular, with both men and women attending. **It** gave clear evidence that although problems might exist, more than a handful of **resi-**dents were interested in identifying them and trying to work **out** solutions. As identification is half the battle, attendance and interest in the conference provide further indication of the community strength, even as it mobilizes to deal with its weaknesses.

1) **Delocalization.** During the first day of the conference a workshop was held to address the problem: When alcohol threatens a family. Besides identifying the problems that were caused by alcohol abuse (i.e., violence in the home, child abuse, divorce, accidents, etc. ) the workshop labeled the causes of alcohol abuse itself. Alcoholism was seen as but an indicator of personal, family and community stress deriving from a number of sources. This intra- and inter-family stress takes many different forms, including lack of communication between and within families, lack of confidences and lack of self-esteem. The common origin of these feelings of inadequacy was then identified as part of the process of delocalization. Delocalization was seen as the core problem, from which alcohol abuse, violence and many of the mental health problems of the study area stem. By delocalization is meant the real and perceived feeling of increased dependency by area residents on external sources of power. This includes dependence on everything from distant sources of energy (e.g., gas and electricity) to dependence on western educational policies, federal and state monetary support, as well as health and social services. The superimposed human support systems (see below) are simultaneously appreciated, taken for granted and resented.<sup>9</sup> The traditional Yup'ik household was materially independent and self-sufficient for the better part of the year. At the same time the community-wide distribution and exchange of subsistence products was traditionally, and still is today, an important statement of community interdependence and social solidarity. The rationale for individual economic production was in order to fulfill community social obligations. Now things are reversed. Families are

increasingly dependent on the state and federal governments for many of their material needs, yet increasingly independent from **inter-**family and community responsibilities. Turning the social whole into the provider rather than the recipient of individual services is a drastic change from the traditional **sociocultural** patterns (Fienup-Riordan, 1982).

As will be detailed further along, the response of the healthier, more together communities as well as individual families of the study area has been to use that which the external sources of power provide (i.e., welfare checks) to support traditional **intracommunity** exchange relations. One good example is the way in which cash on Nelson Island cannot be used to buy meat, but continues **to be** divided up as if it were a seal, and given away in traditional ritual redistribution (see Cultural Systems).

This appropriation of external resources and reintegration into the traditional system is critical for maintaining continued community, family, and individual mental health. For this reason the gradual **de-**emphasis and disappearance of such integrative mechanisms as the seal party and traditional **kalukaq** (feast) in the larger communities of the study area such as **Hooper Bay** and **Quinhagak** is a negative indicator of both community solidarity and family strength. Although it might be expected that these communities that have historically had extensive experience of outsiders would be better able to cope with OCS impact, these are the very communities that presently have the most severe

**social problems**, and **at** the same **time lack** the traditional mechanisms for dealing **with** them. Both were **early** centers of mission activity on the coast and thus subject to early contact, population concentration, and cultural disruption. **The** more isolated communities of the study area, such as the **Nelson Island** and the tundra villages, were insulated from **early interethnic** tension and are **still** cohesive communities, with traditional mechanisms of **inter-** and **intra-family** relation **still in-**  
**tact**. Thus the threat to subsistence activities posed by **oil develop-**  
**ment**, and the development of the cash economy in general, must be seen as having **social** as **well** as economic implications. Within the "economic **sphere**," if there is no **longer** meat or **fish** to give a neighbor, **how will social** continuity be expressed or maintained?

2) Alcoholism, Violence and Mental Health Problems. Aside from the **decline** in certain communities of the study area of the traditional **redistributive** mechanisms, a further indication of **intra-** and **inter-**  
**family** stress is the increase in alcoholism, physical violence, and **mental health** problems in the study area.<sup>10</sup> These **closely** related problems originate in the same process of **delocalization** and **depend-**  
**ence** on external sources of power (including money, political control, **legal** authority, **etc.**). Often alcohol related, physical violence in the study area is **doubly** tragic, as it **is** most often perpetrated on the defendant's nearest and dearest.

The traditional **sociocultural** pattern of conflict resolution was for the individuals involved to turn the other cheek and above **all** to show

restraint. This response was tutored from infancy.<sup>11</sup> Also, nonconformity was not traditionally dealt with by punishment. It was a subject for gossip or ridicule which eventually would reach the offender. This was usually sufficient chastisement. Even today, a person who is dissatisfied with the behavior of another will not complain to him directly but will ask a friend to relay his misgivings. The problem is that under the influence of alcohol all of this carefully inculcated self-restraint and indirection is dissipated, and both real and imagined complaints are addressed with violence.

Family violence, most often connected to alcohol abuse, is a recognized problem in the study area.<sup>12</sup> A new law regarding domestic violence went into effect in September of this year. Described as a **do-it-yourself** temporary restraining order, it provides an alternative to forcing families apart by making families file for divorce in order to get protection from threats of physical violence. It is hoped that the new legislation will prove preventive as well as provide a temporary solution. **When** the possibility of restraint is made known, abuse **will decline**. In general, more education and political involvement are recommended as solutions both to the problems of alcoholism and physical violence in the study area. Education can certainly help, but not unless the **sociocultural** mechanisms necessary to deal with these problems are in place.

Directly connected to the problem of alcohol abuse and related violence

in the study area is the issue of availability, and whether Bethel should maintain its dry status.<sup>13</sup> This "issue was much deliberated prior to the 1980 October elections in Bethel, and the issues that surfaced during the debate are revealing of community concerns related to the problems of alcohol abuse. The major justification given for legalizing the sale of alcohol through a city-owned liquor store was that it would cut down on bootlegging. Also with a city-owned liquor store, the profits of the sales of alcohol that presently line the pockets of the bootleggers would come to the City instead, which could then use the money to provide improved correctional and treatment facilities. Yet although the revenue it received from liquor sales might pay for the correction of additional problems in Bethel, no provision was made for the impact the easy accessibility of liquor would have on the adjacent villages. Although opening a store might not overburden social services and law enforcement agencies in Bethel (and many argued that it would), the overflow effect on the nearby villages would be disastrous. Bootlegging would increase in the villages, and Bethel would become a source of supply. Since Bethel voted itself dry in 1974 health conditions of the general population in the area have definitely improved, including a decline in suicide, child abuse, accidental deaths, social problems stemming from alcohol abuse and alcoholism as a disease (Dr. Albrecht, Tundra Drums 10/1/80:8; Dr. Francis J. Phillips, Tundra Drums 9/4/80: 10). With alcohol made legal, all this might be undone.

In the end, the "wet" proposition was defeated **by** a vote of three to one. At the same **time**, under the new alcohol control law, two villages (Chevak and **Mekoryuk**) elected to ban possession and importation of alcohol.<sup>14</sup> Although the City of Bethel's long-standing illegal liquor open container (**ILOC**) ordinance has since been ruled unconstitutional, alcohol treatment facilities such as the Phillips Alcoholism Treatment Center in **Bethel**, as well as alcoholism education in the villages, continue to be actively supported. Area residents recognize that over the long haul, villages must be made as well equipped as Bethel to handle the social problems associated with liquor. With improved transportation and communication, villages are sure to inherit Bethel's problems. In the end, use of the law as a **prohibitory** device has been a mixed blessing in the study area. One can only hope that treatment alternatives can be defined, implemented and controlled by Native people in both Bethel and the surrounding villages. At this point, law enforcement has a long track record. Treatment has had less time to be tried and is just beginning to be given a chance.

#### Formal Support Systems

In accordance with the philosophy of improved treatment and education as a solution to the **sociocultural** problems of the study area, the women's conference that addressed the problems of alcoholism, violence, etc. last fall also planned a distribution of information to the conferees on support services available in the region. The huge information fair that resulted made it abundantly clear that in keeping with



**its** crossroads character, most services for the villages originate in **Bethel**. Thus, the quality of **Bethel** services directly affects the villages. Economic development in the region, even if **it** were to involve a rapid **influx** of **people** into the regional **center as** opposed to the villages, **would** thus **affect** the villages insofar as it **put** added strain **on** regional human support systems. Health services, the educational system, and housing-in the regional center as well as the **villages will** be **looked** at to determine the present **level** of service delivery and the ability of these systems **to** withstand an increased workload brought on by OCS development.

#### HEALTH CARE

In general, while significant progress has been made in controlling some historically serious health problems, overall **health** conditions in the region remain poor (see **Bantz, 1979:1-9**). A report by the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** Health Corporation (**1979**) ranks the study area as having the poorest **health** status of the several health planning regions of the state. For example, the incidence of deaths from such causes as accidents, diseases of **early** infancy, influenza and pneumonia, diseases of the central nervous system (such as meningitis), and tuberculosis in the region were among the highest of **16** health planning areas in the state. Leading causes of hospitalization include accidents and injuries, chronic ear infections, influenza and pneumonia, and skin diseases. Childbirth is ranked as the leading reason for **hos-**pitalization, another indication of the high birth rate in the region.

The Tribal Specific Health Plan for **the** Yukon-Kuskokwim Region shows the following top 10 health problems as ranked by key health care providers: mental health, alcoholism<sup>15</sup> and drugs, venereal disease, accidents, respiratory conditions, infectious diseases, dental caries, diet (lack of balanced food intake, **Heller** and Scott, 1967; Draper, 1978), **otitis** media, and inadequate housing.

The plan **also** shows that the study area has (in relation to the other Native regions in Alaska):

- 1) The poorest socioeconomic status (lowest educational status and highest degree of poverty)
- 2) The worst health conditions (poorest housing and sanitation status)
- 3) The largest number of villages
- 4) The largest Alaska Native population
- 5) The third largest service area.

Yet, the study area has the lowest per capita **health** expenditures, according to a 1978 analysis done by the Norton Sound Health Corporation.

In response to these problems, Bethel serves as the center of a health care system which provides services throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta. The two major organizations responsible for health care in the region are the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, a Native-operated health organization formed in 1969, and the Alaska Native Health Service's Bethel Service Unit, with a hospital in Bethel. The majority of the funding is through the federal government by way of the Indian Health Service. There are also clinics employing one or two aides in each of the outlying villages, visited by state public health nurses. With the exception of two dentists, there are no private providers of health care in the study area. Also, all of the professional health care providers are non-Native.

1) Bethel Hospital. A new \$30+ million IHS hospital was completed in the fall of 1980. It is a 50-bed facility, replacing the 42-bed general medical/surgical hospital in operation in the study area since 1954. The emphasis in the new hospital is on the delivery of more quality services rather than on the treatment of more patients.

2) YKHC. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, through its Native health aides, provides primary health care services in the 48 villages of the region. Further, it provides a wide range of health prevention and promotion services, some direct care services, and does the majority of the health planning for the area. It is also involved in a highly successful program to train nonprofessionals from the outlying communities to supplement the existing health care delivery system.

3) Public Health Nursing. The Public Health Nurses (**PHN's**) provide the **bulk** of itinerant care to the villages. They are organized **according** to the district team concept. All **PHN's** are stationed in Bethel **with** the exception of one nurse who operates out of Aniak.

4) Health delivery system. Basically, the system functions as **follows** in the 48 villages: **The** system's first line of defense against illness or injury in the village is the village **health** aide. The aide is chosen by the village council with approval by YKHC, and receives a total of nine weeks' training, plus one week of preceptorship, prior to being certified. (Presently about 42% of the primary health aides are certified.) Training is provided by Kuskokwim Community College, YKHC, and hospital staff. The aides are in daily radio contact with the Bethel Hospital physicians. Matters of a medical nature are discussed, and on-the-spot recommendations and/or prescriptions are provided by the physicians. When more intensive or extensive care is needed, the patient is referred to Bethel, then to Anchorage.

Another component of the health system is the Itinerant Public Health Nursing Service. These nurses try to visit each village four times a **year**. However, due to staffing and transportation problems, the actual number of visits each village receives **will** vary from two to four. Depending on the size of the village, the nurse **will** stay in the **village** from two to five days. While in the village, the nurse **will** provide backup to the health aide and **handle** special health problems that may be referred by the village aide.

Yet another part of the system are the nine physicians located at the Bethel Hospital. Each village receives one or two physician visits a year. While in the village, the physician deals with acute problems and also does hospital follow-ups, physical examinations, well-baby checks, pap smears, **intra-uterine device checks** and insertions, and performs other services as needed.

5) Supplementary health care facilities, The Phillips Alcohol Treatment Center provides sleep-off services, **nonmedical detoxification**, outpatient counseling, some outreach and after care, and community prevention and education services. It has also recently inaugurated (fall of 1980) an innovative inpatient program which will be able to accommodate eight live-in clients, along with counseling for their families. For the first time, funds are available to fly clients in from the villages for the **30-day** program.

The Bethel **Prematernal** Home is an independent corporation, funded by the City of Bethel and private donations, although the Bethel Service Unit plans to fund it in the near future. It began in 1967 as a result of the difficulties experienced by pregnant women in outlying villages who because of inclement weather, finances, communications, or transportation problems were unable to reach the Bethel Hospital for delivery. In 1977, 171 women used the facility, and their average length of stay was 19.6 days. Services provided include labor and delivery, health education, nutrition, infant care, contraceptive education, maternal and child health, and venereal disease education.

Finally, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State of Alaska social services programs are all important in providing for the general physical and mental health of the study area, through the provision of general assistance, child welfare, and emergency services (see Economic Systems).

From the above it can be **seen** that health care for the villages is very expensive due to isolation, climate, and the high cost of transportation to and from the regional center. There is some debate as to the wisdom of the recent construction of the expensive new hospital facility over the development of district health centers in communities such as **Chevak** and Hooper Bay and the expansion of the health aide system. As it stands now, the new hospital is more than adequate to meet the needs of the region (especially as it was planned based on 10-year-old patient stay patterns predating the village **clinic** system), while the village health delivery system still leaves much to be desired. Improvement of village health delivery is presently a high priority for residents of the study area. If present funding levels are maintained, the health care system of the region will be able to meet the present demands of the region. However, substantial regional growth will not be easily **accommodated** under the present system.

#### HOUSING

Housing in the villages is generally of frame or **log** construction, and whole families often still live in one room, **18** by 24 feet in **size**.

Prior to the recent electrification of the majority of area homes, blazo lanterns were the main source of light. Many coastal communities still do not have electricity, and small village or individually owned diesel generators often provide the power. Heat is provided by oil-burning stoves. But with the present high cost of stove oil (fast approaching \$100 for a 55-gallon drum), many homes have reinstated the oil-drum wood stoves that were the predominant form of heat a dozen years ago. Most villages have a common community water system built by Public Health Service. Few have sewage systems or indoor plumbing.

Some new homes have been built in the villages by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Alaska State Housing Authority, and the Association of Village Council Presidents (the most successful housing provider to date). These new homes are generally large and well lit, although they often contain extraneous features such as bathtubs with no available running water. Also, many are cold and use excessive amounts of fuel oil in the winter.<sup>16</sup> Housing in the villages remains inadequate in size, construction, and safety features (Bethel Service Unit Operating Plan FY 1979). Poor housing presents a major health hazard due to overcrowding, poor sanitary facilities, inadequate heat and the inability to perform routine hygienic practices.

Housing in Bethel is expensive and difficult to obtain. The population is growing at a rapid pace. The Alaska State Housing Authority has 183 low-income family units in Bethel, notorious for their inefficiency

and the problems that have plagued them since their construction, and the Bethel Native Corporation operates multi-unit apartments. The **com-**mon pattern is for Natives who have recently come to Bethel to occupy this low-income housing, or the privately constructed, cold, **small** shacks that line Mission Road. Rents are high, and Native families are forced into high household density to cut costs. Also, as previously pointed out, many Native families are subject to constant temporary and not-so-temporary visitors from the outlying villages, which causes overcrowding even in the more spacious Bethel dwellings.

In the villages there is **less** incidence of housing stratification than in Bethel, although federal employees, specifically BIA personnel, live in segregated enclaves. This physical separation only exacerbates the social and cultural separation that already strains Native/non-Native relations in the villages. Recognizing the extent of this problem, the state has not constructed teacher housing to go along with the new **REAA** village high schools. This has backfired in many villages, where teachers have been forced to leave, or have decided to leave, the community because they have been **unable** to find adequate housing within the village.

Although new houses have been and are continuing to be constructed in the villages, this has not reduced the housing density. Housing construction in fact has been barely adequate to keep up with population increase. When new homes are **built**, the **old** ones are used by the young



married couples. **Also**, the decrease in infant mortality has helped to keep the existing houses filled, not to mention the return immigration experienced in many of the coastal villages (**e.g., Mekoryuk**). Surveys indicate that villagers are dissatisfied with the present housing **situation**. They want new and more energy-efficient homes, both because of the money that housing construction brings into the village, as well as the status and comfort that will accompany ownership of the new **and**, it is **hoped**, improved houses. However, even if financing is approved, the proposed federal budget cuts for **FY 82** threaten to further slow down the construction of new homes in area villages.<sup>17</sup> AVCP estimates that there is currently a need for another 600-800 housing units in the **delta**. Ironically, there is only **one** problem with AVCP's current housing program: many village residents are too poor to qualify for **it**, as they cannot **at present** meet the minimum income requirements of **\$12,240 per year**. Persons making as much as \$37,000 annually are, however, eligible. **In** order to rectify this inequity, credit is being sought for subsistence, as well as the free medical care available for Native residents, which **would** cut the minimum limit in **half**.

#### EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The recent report of the Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant of the U. S. Department of Labor) confirms the **low** educational status in the study area, with two-thirds of the heads of households of those families interviewed having less than seven years of education,<sup>18</sup> This low educational **level** is gradually being improved through expanded educational facilities both in the villages and the regional center.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs operates schools at the kindergarten through eighth-grade level in 27 villages in the Bethel region. There is also one high school under **BIA**. There is a trend toward regional management of education, and in line with this a number of villages now have schools under the jurisdiction of Rural Education Attendance Areas (REAs). These schools range from kindergarten through high school. There is also one private school, St. Mary's (a Catholic boarding school). For the ramifications of the transition from BIA through SOS to **REAA** schools in the villages of the study area, see the discussion of bilingualism (Chapter **VIII::** Cultural Systems).

The Kuskokwim Community College (KCC), an affiliate of the University of Alaska, also offers a variety of classes and extension courses in Bethel as well as in the villages. KCC has made higher education possible for many high school graduates who would not otherwise be able to attend college. Even in the face of constant problems in staffing, funding and program delivery, KCC has been able to provide a varied menu both in Bethel and in the villages. Presently it provides general education courses as well as training in health education, bilingual teaching, and maintenance technology.

The Adult Education Center in Bethel, as well as various adult basic education programs in the outlying villages, offers training in the following areas: office occupations skills, preparation for taking entrance tests, basic skills, English as a Second Language, **Yup'ik**, and various high school subjects.

A further- educational facility available to the residents of the study area is the **X-CEED** program for **rural** teacher training operating independently through **the** Center for Cross-Cultural Studies **at the University of** Alaska, Fairbanks.

Although there are definite advantages to the range of educational opportunities available in the study **area**, problems **also** arise from the fact that no less than six different agencies, none of which are administered any more **locally** than Bethel, and **all** with **policy** and **fund- ing** decisions being made in even more distant communities, are involved **in** education **in** the study area. And this does not include either the one private church-operated boarding school in the region. (**St. Mary's**) or Covenant High School in **Unalakleet**, attended by many Nuni vak Island students. Conflicts **arise** not only between the **Bethel** public schools and the agencies that **deliver** education to the region as a whole, but **also** internally over the use of **Johnson-O'Malley (JOM)** funds **specifi- cally** earmarked for Native students but needed to cover general oper- ating expenses. Added **to** this is the pressure to comply with federally mandated bilingual education programs for students who are not mono- lingual in English but who do not come from English-speaking **house- holds**. Teachers and administrators must **also** be sought and trained to meet the needs of a predominantly Native student body. For a brief history of the problems in **rural** secondary education that **led to the** formation of **local** REAA high schools in the villages, with **all** of their coincident advantages and disadvantages, see Chapter **VIII**. **All** that need be said here is that the ability of this new system **to** adequately

prepare students to take their place as successful workers and parents, in the villages, in Bethel, and beyond **the** region, will depend on its ability to address the specific needs of the **bicultural**, bilingual community that it serves. Pushing Native residents of the study area into a non-Native  **mold** is neither possible nor desirable. Searching out viable alternatives is essential.

Although parents and students alike recognize the benefits of higher education, including increased possibilities for employment, formal education is not always a priority activity. Statistically, the education level for residents in the study area is on the rise. But this rarely means graduation from college, even for the most recent high school graduates. In the experience of the author, the brightest, most promising high school students are often those with the largest families and strongest kinship ties in the village. They are very pragmatic about continuing their education. Ironically, because their families are strong and as family continues to be the most important thing in their lives, they have no pressing need, nor any strong desire **to leave** the village to seek further education or the job it will bring. Whereas one might think that a large family could afford to lose one working member to the university at Fairbanks, these are precisely the families which mobilize their resources, including their children, to maintain their collective well-being. **An** orphan would be a much more **likely** candidate for college graduation. **Also**, because there were no jobs there, few college graduates of the early 1970s returned to their villages to **live**. For that reason, parents are with good reason

reluctant **to see their** children **leave** the village **in** pursuit of higher education. **Although in** the **last** five years there has been increasing demand for trained Natives **in** the villages (as bilingual teachers, health aides, light **plant** operators, **etc.**), and parents and students **alike** see the advantages **of** training for specific occupations most of the limited number of positions in the villages are already staffed with individuals who can meet the new requirements for their jobs by professional upgrade training delivered by **KCC** either in Bethel or directly in the villages.

Finally, this chapter opened with the statement that the view commonly taken is that the residents of the study area suffer from social disorganization and a breakdown of the traditional forms of social support and control. **On** the contrary, the **Yup'ik** language and traditional distributive mechanisms are **still vital** in the study area, as **well** as the kin relationships **that** they **talk** about and embody. **The** apparent failure of students in the study area to **succeed in** the realm of **higher** education is just one more instance of **this** confusion. The high dropout rate **of** the post-secondary students of the coastal villages, rather than being taken solely as a negative indicator of social disorganization, must be seen at least in part **as** a positive indicator, of both the student's desire to remain in his or her village and of the **families'** commitment **to** community coherence over increased employment **opportunities** and economic advancement for their children. **Also, while** college graduation continues to **be** infrequent, an educational milestone took place in the study area in the **summer** of 1980 **when** the

villages of Akiak and Chevak concluded three-year contracts with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, allowing the villages to take over the operations of their local elementary schools. These are **the** first two instances of Alaskan tribal organizations invoking the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975 in order to gain control of **local** school operations. **Chevak** Traditional Council secretary-treasurer, **Ignatius Chayaikun**, was excited about the prospect of his village being able to exercise local control over education: "**We're** gambling a **lot** by doing this, but somebody has to, and we're proud to **do** it! There are bound to be some changes. We would like to incorporate into the curriculum our ancient way of life" (Goldstein, **1980a:1**). The intent is clear; it remains to be seen how successfully this can be accomplished.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The customary procedure for naming is no longer always followed, although aspects of **it** remain. Traditionally, the name giver would enter the house where the mother and child were staying, bringing dried **fish, an akutaq mixture of seal oil and berries, and a dipper of water.** These would be given to the infant. The child's mother would drink the water, sprinkling some on the **floor** and/or on the head of the **child.** The name giver would then **call** the infant with the dead person's name and hand the food to the mother, who would take a pinch of each type of food and throw **it** on the ground, so "pretending that the dead person was alive and letting the infant become the dead person" (Beaver, 1975: 36).

<sup>2</sup> As one elderly woman expressed it, "If you marry you **will** become **like** your partner, and away from your parents." The reference here is not to residence, but to the fact that if a man marries a lazy wife **he, too, will** become **lazy,** or a mean wife and he **will** become mean. Conversely, a bad man can change **into** a good one **if** his wife respects **him** and does whatever she **is told to do.** According to the same informant, "A husband becomes a new man just like he was born again."

<sup>3</sup> Kilbuck noted (Journal:7) that traditionally kissing requests often occurred during the midwinter dance **distributions** and Bladder Festival, and were made by distant friends and relatives when they saw the child for the first time. A suitable return was also expected, and might occur either immediately or after the **delay** of many years, when the **child,** grown to young adulthood, visited the village of distant relatives and was clothed from head to foot by the cousins of his grandparents.

<sup>4</sup> To return to our original distinction between the cingarluni/aryuqluni kissing request and delayed return and the kumuqluni teasing, what stands out **is** that **although all** three involve an exchange of **gifts** or of banter between members of alternate generations, a **child** and some member of its **grandparental** generation, through the cycling of names, the exchanges are between nominal cross-cousins. **Also,** although the kissing requests and their return explicitly precede an **affinal** tie, and the kumuqluni (teasing) relationship is synonymous with the joking relationship between cross-cousins who can never marry, the same person may both kiss and request gifts from, as well as jokingly tease, a child. Thus, there is a contradiction between the place of the cross-cousin as a relative whom you may tease but not marry and as a potential affine whom you may marry **but** not tease. Cross-cousins are not what they are, or rather are all things **at** once.

<sup>5</sup> In Toksook Bay today, there may be as many as **80** seal parties during the month of **May.**

6 Birth rates **in** the region have declined dramatically, although they are still somewhat higher than the state as a whole. Between 1960 and 1966, the crude birth rate in the Bethel region was 47.2 births per 1,000 population, according to the 1968 Bethel Comprehensive Plan. By the period of 1970-77, the birth rate had declined drastically averaging 25.6 births per thousand population and ranging from an annual high of 29.0 to a **low** of 22.6 births per 1,000 population (Derbyshire and Associates, **1980:Vol. II**, p. 21).

7 In 1960, Bethel's population was about 90 percent Native; by 1970, approximately 80 percent of Bethel's population was Native. By 1979, however, Bethel's Native population dropped to about 65 percent of the total population of the City. This change in racial composition has resulted from a **large** influx of non-Native people responding to government and service-related employment opportunities in Bethel.

In addition, the declining regional birth rate has produced a gradual slowing of the growth of the region's Native population. As a result, Bethel's recent population increase appears to be due as much to the influx of non-Natives as Natives. Between 1960 and 1970, the population increased by 1,158 people. Of these new residents, about 680 were Native and only 475 were non-Native. The 1970-1979 estimated population increase of **1,484** people was composed again of 680 Natives and 800 non-Natives. (Derbyshire and Associates, **1980:Vol. II**, p. 23).

8 Eminent in the traditional roles was the specification that a man give his wife raw animal products, and that she reciprocate with cooked meat and other finished products. In the villages today there is continuity in the fact that a woman still sews skins, although using a Singer machine instead of a bone needle. Yet when she gives the finished garment to the local co-operative store instead of to her husband, there is a **fundamental** change in the substantial and relational components of her handiwork. In exchange for the garment she receives money from a nonrelative instead of meat from a relative. There is innovation in that the finished product enters the public domain, violating its traditional exclusion from exchange **cycles** external to the **immediate** kin group. Yet although this is an important transformation, it is no simple blurring or equalizing of the public and private. As differential access to goods by different categories of persons is retained (meat something a man can provide, but money cannot buy), the woman still requires relatives to provision her. Thus there may be continuity in structural terms as the woman uses the money she receives to purchase the finished products necessary for her to hold up her end of the exchange (Fienup-Riordan, 1977).

9

Although this is an apparently contradictory attitude, it is actually indicative of a very revealing Catch-22. I have often heard it stated that whites brought disease to the study area, and thus should continue to support



**the Native** hospital. By a similar logic, if non-Natives want Natives to speak their language, they will have to pay to teach **it**, and in fact pay Natives to **attend** the classes! Non-Natives living outside the study area find **this** unabashed acceptance, and sometimes demand for, **free** services reprehensible. However, residents **in the** study area **are** aware that **these** free services are not without a price. **While** they often unquestionably improve material **life in** the villages, they **do** so only by making individuals and families dependent on external sources of power, a fact which residents in the study area are becoming painfully aware of (Fienup-Riordan, **1982**).

**10** Although domestic violence is not as frequent in Bethel as in communities such **as** Barrow, the crime rate is **rising** in the study area. The City of **Bethel** had a 9.6% increase in the crime rate in 1980. A new correctional facility is being sought for Bethel. In the **Bethel** area, the Department of Youth and Family Services sees about 950 cases each year. Most of these cases are children who are neglected because of parents **with** serious **alcohol** problems. However, the number of children who are beaten and abused is increasing. And even in the smaller coastal communities city **jails** are not **only** not uncommon but often insufficient to meet demand.

**11** As in the Kumuqluni teasing of infants mentioned above, a **3-month-old** may be coaxed **into** giggles and then suddenly given one quick spank **on** the bottom. When the baby looks up in surprise and fear, it is comforted and tickled into **smiles** again. What is going on is early instruction in the art of keeping a smile in the face of adversity, and an ever-changing and unpredictable environment.

**12** In March of **1981** the Tundra Women's Coalition and the Bethel **Clergy** Conference sponsored a three-day workshop entitled "Violence in the Family: A Community Concern," in order to help **people** better recognize and deal with feelings of **anger**, frustration and stress. The large turnout was another indication of strong community concern in Bethel.

**13**

Soon after the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in **1933** most **Bethel** stores stocked intoxicants. The **sale** seems to have been discontinued during World War **II**, and afterwards intoxicants were ordered by airfreight from Anchorage or Fairbanks. **In 1954** a Bethel resident sought a liquor license but failed **to** obtain enough signatures on the necessary petition (The

Moravian, Nov. 1954, 8). In 1960 the people of Bethel voted again on whether to legalize the local sale of alcoholic beverages, and the measure failed by 25 votes (The Moravian, Nov. 1960, 5). In 1963 the question was once more put before the voters and passed (The Moravian, Nov. 1964, 5), but in 1965 the legal sale of liquor was revoked by the residents of the town. A major factor contributing to the dry vote was that the previous summer there were 13 drownings directly attributable to drinking (The Moravian, Nov. 1966, 5; Aug. 1967, 5). The following year the sale of intoxicants was again approved (The Moravian, Aug. 1967), but the town went dry again in 1974 (The Moravian Messenger, Aug. 1977, 460). A major reason the vote went back and forth was that the city owned a liquor store and derived much of its revenue from the enterprise. Another argument for the local sale of intoxicants was that when the city voted to become dry, the flow of intoxicants continued but the profits went to bootleggers.

Ekayurvik, or Sleep-off Center, was founded by the Greater Bethel Council on Alcoholism and opened in 1971 on a 24-hour basis. From that time until 1974 between 200 and 1,000 persons used the services each month (TD, Sept. 21, 1974). The Bethel Alcohol Treatment Center was opened in 1975 (TD, Oct. 18, 1975) (Oswalt, 1980, p. 32).

14 Since this was written, more and more villages in the study area, including seven of the fifteen coastal communities under consideration here, have also taken this option, and more are expected to follow suit in the near future!

15 Alcoholism is a major contributing factor to the region's health problems. Alcoholism is associated with many of the leading causes of death and hospitalization in the region. Through its effects on the general health conditions of expectant mothers, alcoholism may also affect the region's high infant mortality rate.

16 "We used to live underground and we left our dead above the ground. Then the missionaries came. Now we live above the ground and bury our dead. And we are always freezing cold, and the dead are always popping up" (anonymous).

17 Presently new homes are slated for 10 area villages in the next two years, including 6 new houses in Quinhagak, 15 each in Akiachak and Scammon Bay, 26 in Chevak, 25 in Hooper Bay, and 15 in Chefornak.

18

EDUCATION : HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD (Y-K DELTA)

	<u>Number of Years of Education Completed</u>				
	1-3	4-7	8-11	12-14	15-16
Percent of respondents	41.15	24.42	12.40	19.22	3.25
Number of respondents (from Banz, 1979:26).	886	526	267	414	70

## VIII. CULTURAL SYSTEMS

### The Ideology of Subsistence

In the Introduction to this report, a cultural system was defined as a system of beliefs, values, and culturally constituted activities characteristic of a group of people. It is a people's unique way of looking at the **world** and is articulated in action as well as ideal.

In descriptions of the coastal **Yup'ik**, as well as other Alaskan and Canadian Eskimo groups, their ability to survive in a frigid and inhospitable environment has often been emphasized, to the exclusion of a comprehensive account of the value system that makes such survival meaningful. In fact, by idealizing their survival ability, we emphasize that aspect of their way of life most comprehensible in terms of our own cultural system. Small wonder the students of **Malthus** and Darwin are continually drawn to the contemplation of the life ways of the inhabitants of the arctic, whose cultural adaptation seems to epitomize the necessary fit between natural constraints and human response. **Yet a closer look** at the value system and ritual exchanges that go along with their elegantly efficient traditional technology reveals less common sense environmental determinism than cultural imagination. Certainly when the significance of the traditional distributions of seal meat is addressed, the fact that they serve to feed the aged and the needy cannot be denied. In fact, the periodic random **distribution** of the products of the chase may well be ecologically

required, something on the order **of** give now so that in your turn you may receive and so survive. Yet how this redistribution is accomplished, through an exchange of gifts between male cousins, or between married women who are not related, is culturally determined, and not **nearly** as **pre-ordained** as one might suppose.

The system that underlies the choices that the **Yup'ik** traditionally made and continue to make in how the "necessary" is accomplished is the subject of the following pages. **As will** be demonstrated in the following section **on** Economic Systems, subsistence production **is** closely tied to a larger cultural framework of values and self-images that perpetuate it, and the choice as to whether to exploit subsistence resources rather than use the products of wage labor to purchase commercial goods is not simply one of economic necessity. The balance between subsistence and **market** activities that individuals achieve **reflects** more than cost efficiency, although at the present time, given the **level** of rural economic development, the most cost-efficient pattern does seem to be the local acquisition **of** protein through hunting and fishing and **the** purchase of imported cereals.

As space does not allow for a comprehensive account of **Yup'ik** culture (for such an account see **Fienup-Riordan, 1980a**, especially Chapter V), and as an analytical summary has **been** made available in Appendix **II** for the reader who is really interested in systems of symbols and **meanings**, I will be **brief**.

If the reader were to visit the coastal communities **of** the study area today, he **would** more than **likely** be initially struck by the technological advances these villages have made since the 1940s. The semi-subterranean sod house and the seal oil lamp are things of the past. Yet if the visitor were to remain in the village for any length of time, he might well be even more profoundly moved by the continuities evident between traditional and contemporary village life. Around the stove in the community hall or village store, the **older** men **still** gather to exchange news and knowledge much as they **did in the traditional** men's house. In the springtime, the women still carefully divide the first caught seal of the season into equal parts and distribute them, along with numerous small gifts, to the other married women in the village. Similar distributions are also still given for the first berries gathered by a young girl and the first small bird killed by a young hunter. **In** the Catholic villages of the study area, the mid-winter counterpart of these individual distributions is still celebrated in the form of a community-wide dance, in which large and important gifts are sung into the community hall and presented to the chanting elders much as they were in the snow-covered qasgiq not 50 years before. Even in the **Moravian** villages where the traditional dancing is no longer practiced, a large, centralized **public** gift exchange has been substituted for the traditional distribution. And, as discussed in the previous chapter, traditional naming practices still accompany the birth of a child, honoring its appearance with the public recognition of its incarnation of the near dead. In fact, these distributions are on the increase, with more seal parties celebrated and mid-winter distributions

**held** than ever before! Recent evidence even indicates that the identity of many of the **relatively new** coastal communities revolves around **the** precise manner in which this **cycle** of **ritual** redistribution is **carried** out (Fienup-Riordan, 1979).

Community structure is also often being affirmed through the distribution along traditional lines of the assets that come into the village as a **result** of a structure perceived as arbitrary and **external, i.e.**, food stamps distributed by the government used to extend effective kin ties by providing for a bigger seal party give-away. The traditional distributions thus become an outlet for the new cash income, working to undermine an artificially induced hierarchy, by seeing to it that the money that comes to the family, often in inverse proportion to the coherence of that unit by traditional standards, is distributed along traditional lines and not accumulated, which **would** be very untraditional. Thus to date, in the study area, far from **seals** are being given a cash equivalence, within any one village money is getting divided up as if it were a **seal!**

**As** significant as these major cultural continuities are the shreds and patches of traditional practices that continually impinge on daily life. Traditional pregnancy taboos are **still** followed by the women, as are the **rules** for proper sea **mammal** hunting and fishing by the men. Teenage **Yup'ik** are certainly very different from their forefathers. Yet they have **more** in common with them than with their youthful white counterparts.

**Also**, as noted time and again by village teachers and visitors, white institutions, when successfully introduced, are played out in a very **Yup'ik** fashion. For instance, the weekly bingo game, more than an individual diversion, becomes a formal means by which individual wealth is redistributed and thus status achieved much as in the traditional distributions of seal meat and oil in the traditional **qasgiq**. Corporation meetings, at the village level, are also opaque, and often very frustrating, to the outsider with no knowledge of the traditional authority structure and decision-making process which is being acted out. **Moravian** song feasts and church rallies are much more than Christian testimony. Rather, in the hospitality shown out-of-town guests, there is continuity in traditional reciprocal and exchange relationships.

In all of these events the traditional values of respect for the individual and hospitality between individuals are expressed. Simultaneously, all **Yup'ik** systems of reciprocity between humans (from the exchange of food between two closely allied households, to the exchange of gifts between the men and women of an entire community, and finally to the hosting of one community by another) are ultimately tied to the system of mutual hospitality embodied in the relationship between men and the natural world. What comes freely must be given freely in order to ensure that it will return. With the upset of this relationship, the essential egalitarianism and cooperation between hunters is threatened.



In **order to** make this **point**, one anecdote **is** worth relating. In the spring of **1979** the author visited Nelson **Island**. **It** had been a good spring, and numerous **seal** and walrus had been taken. But Fish and **Game** officials had unfortunately found several **walrus** carcasses at Cape Vancouver. Head hunters had taken the valuable **ivory** and left the rest of the meat to **rot**. **Nelson** Islanders accused **Nunivak** Islanders **of** the infraction **and** vice versa. Talking to an **old** man about the incident, the author played devil's advocate and queried, "What difference does it make who killed them? Dead is dead and nothing can bring them back now, can it?" **The old** man never lifted his eyes from the bench. "No," he **said**, "if they had been properly cared for they would have been **able** to return. Now they are gone forever."

Can this experience help **you** to see the significance, in **Yup'ik** eyes, **of** the threat of an **oil spill** or game mismanagement? Although active shamanism and the celebration **of** the bladder feast are no more, too many embodiments of the traditional cosmology remain to be casually cataloged as superstition or **to allow** the scientific attitude toward species extinction to hold sway. Even the youngest **child is still** instructed in a code of etiquette toward its natural surroundings as important as any code of etiquette toward other human beings (cf.

Nelson, **1970**):

Part of the Eskimo teaching is that animals have the power to hear and understand what **people** say. Animals can hear through **walls**, at great distances and at **all** times. Nelson says it's much the same as the western idea that God hears everything. **If you believe, as the elder Inupiaq** teachers did,

that there is something spiritual in the animal world that can know when it's disrespected then to speak badly of an animal is to ask for punishment (**Schiller**, 4/15/81).

Given this cultural framework, it is possible but altogether inappropriate to reduce subsistence activities to mere survival techniques and their significance to the conquest of calories. Their pursuit is not simply a means to an end, but an end in itself. It is often commented in what little literature exists on the area that, even given alternatives, subsistence is **still** the preferred pattern. This preference is only explicable in terms of the intrinsic value of the life of the hunter. What Nelson says of the **Inupiaq** holds equally true of the coastal **Yup'ik**: "One of the things that continually amazes me when I go back there is that people are still out there hunting, dedicated -- sometimes almost passionately dedicated -- to continuing this way of life" (**Schiller**, 4/5/81).

Small wonder the words of the Nighmiut elders were echoed by their children and more sophisticated contemporaries during the recent testimony in Bethel on the repeal of the subsistence legislation. Everywhere the emphasis is on the real kinship between the people and their environment. Stewardship, let alone ownership, of resources is taken with a grain of salt, as the real power is not in men, but in the continuing relationship between men and the natural **world** on which they depend.

Finally, as **we shall see**, this emphasis on experience, **on process** rather than product, pervades **other** aspects of culture and cultural transmission. **For** example, a **recent short book on mukluk** making produced by residents of **the** study area devotes pages and pages to **seal** hunting, with only a few paragraphs actually dealing with skin sewing. **And then**, presto, the **muklucs** appear completed. **Similarly**, a film on **blackfish** fishing on **Nelson Island** (made by the Tununak film maker Andrew **Chikoyak**) begins with **the** gathering of wood for the **blackfish** trap, proceeds through a five-minute sequence of men standing around on the tundra smoking cigarettes and trying to decide which direction the stream is **in**, and **only during** the last instant focuses on the actual setting of the trap. **In** both cases, what is important to convey, from the Native point **of** view, **is** the way the technology fits into the culture, not the product itself.

#### The Inter-Ethnic Character of the Study Area

As the information on the population structure of the study area has made clear in the chapter dealing with social systems, the number **of** non-Natives in the study area has dramatically increased in the past **10** years. That increase has occurred primarily in Bethel, where the Native/non-Native mix is fast approaching **50/50**. However, the **impact** of the **influx of** non-Natives into the study area is not a foregone conclusion, but is dependent on the individuals' motivation **for** moving **into** the study area, their intentions to remain, and finally their willingness **and** ability to understand **the sociocultural** configurations

that they find in place on their **arrival**. Although the attitude that Bethel is a good place to make a lot of money before moving back to the real world is still typical of many newcomers, more and more **non-Natives** are moving **into** the study area, primarily Bethel, with the **in-**tention of remaining on a long-term, if not permanent, basis. But not only are people coming into the area with a desire to stay, they are also coming into the area with a desire to learn about the region and its people. As one indication, **more** non-Natives than at any time since the early **Moravian** mission period are presently trying to learn the **Yup'ik** language. This unprecedented spurt in the active pursuit of communication skills has been greatly encouraged by the availability, for the first time in the history of the study area, of a well-developed **Yup'ik** language program at the local community college. Moreover, the support given to the development of this program is in itself indicative of the increasing commitment of residents of the study area to cross-cultural understanding.

A number of annual events that currently take place in Bethel and the surrounding villages exemplify this increasing commitment to the education of the incoming non-Natives into **local** practices over against the previous exclusive emphasis on westernizing or acculturating Natives:

- 1) The annual Kusko 300 Dog **Sled** Race, run from **Bethel** upriver to **Aniak** and back. This race draws entries from **all** over the state. But, as the coverage of the event in the local **Tundra Drums** indicated,

all entries, including **locals**, were impressed **with the** neighborly **spirit of the race**. Both years that **it** has been held, trail conditions have been rough **with** temperatures reaching 100° **below** zero. **Yet** **local** residents have worked **hard to break trail**, provide food **and** shelter **for the** mushers, and generally **turn** a grueling **ordeal** into a test of community, as well **as** individual, strength. And the villages involved, including **Bethel**, have come through with flying colors! The event is neither traditionally Native nor pure import. Attorneys from **Bethel** mush their dogs beside villagers from the coast. During the summer, these same Native and non-native mushers fish together in the Kuskokwim River and tundra lakes to provide food for their dogs. Dogs are traded and **sold** in the want. ads **of** the Tundra Drums. Increasing in popularity **all** over the state, dog racing is an important mechanism of cultural integration, and is cited **by** many **Bethel** residents as one of the reasons they enjoy **living** in the study area.

2) The **annual Yukon-Kuskokwim** State Fair, **held** in **Bethel** in late January or **early** February, after the **Kusko 300**. This event features prizes for everything from traditional basketry and skin sewing to a prize for the best-tasting jam. Traditional dancers are also featured, with groups flown in from coastal and Yukon River communities where the dances are **still** commonly performed. Differences in style are commented on by the old-timers who obviously enjoy the chance to perform for the enthusiastic **Bethel** audiences. **It** is particularly interesting to note that **while** the **Moravians** effectively discouraged dancing by their converts, **Moravian** audiences are no **less** enthusiastic and responsive.

3) The annual Fourth of July celebration, which draws one of the largest crowds of the year to Bethel, and also provides the opportunity for celebrations in all of the villages and fish camps in the region. Traditional contests with modern prizes, bingo games, raffles, and traditional dancing all grace the occasion.

4) **Slavik**, or Russian Orthodox Christmas, is an important event in Bethel as well as many of the adjacent Kuskokwim River communities. Not at all the culturally impoverished event that McGinniss (1980) indicates, **Slavik** is the occasion for elaborate gift exchanges between both members and non-members of the Orthodox community. The **Yup'ik** have developed their own particular variation of this religious holiday. It involves an exhausting round of singing and feasting in each of the houses of the community, taking several days and nights to accomplish. Bethel residents both Native and non-Native are often invited to attend the celebration in a nearby village.

5) Christmas in the coastal communities, like Russian Christmas on the river, involves community-wide gift giving and feasting at the community hall, a modern variation of traditional mid-winter **intracommunity** celebrations. For example, in several communities that no longer practice the annual men's and women's exchange dance, at Christmas time the community will take the opportunity to divide along sexual lines. Each man will draw from a hat the name of a woman, and vice versa. Then he will surreptitiously inquire into what his "partner" would like for Christmas. Besides the requested gift, people

often "clothe" their partners, as **in** the traditional Feast for the Dead.

6) **The Annual Feast for the First Graders**, which is **also held** in many of the smaller coastal communities **of the study area**. This relatively minor occasion is one of the most interesting from an anthropological point of view. As "firsts" were traditionally celebrated by the feasting of a **small** group of children on the occasion of their first berries, first eggs, etc., now, on the first day of **school** every fall, the families of the children entering the first grade host the community at large to a feast in their honor.

7) The Eskimo Olympics, held annually in the Bethel Regional High **School** and **also** in Anchorage, where high school students compete in the performance of traditional and modern events such as the stick **pull**, **seal crawl**, one-foot high kick, toe kick and kneel jump.

8) The **Yugtarvik**, the regional museum in Bethel, has a beautiful collection of traditional masks, dolls, children's toys, and **tools**. Besides permanent displays, the work of **local** craftsmen and artists is also presented. One section of the recently rebuilt museum also houses a crafts shop. Other crafts shops in town include **Lucy's** Cache at the airport, the **Moravian** Bookstore, the crafts shop at the hospital, and Martha's Cache in the Larson home on Airport Road. **Bethel** residents, as **well** as many villagers, **sell** their wares through these outlets, which receive the patronage of area residents and visitors **alike**.

9) The school cultural heritage programs employ the elders of the community to teach the students traditional skills such as ivory carving, basketry, skin sewing, and boat building. Tremendously popular throughout the study area, they provide the non-Native students as well as the Native students with an increasing knowledge of the traditional technology of the region.

10) Closely allied to the cultural heritage programs was the annual publication of Kaliikaq Yugnek from 1974 to 1979 by the students of Bethel Regional High School. This high school cultural magazine included articles describing traditional subsistence techniques, **reminis-** cences on life in the past by regional elders, traditional tales and legends, as well as local explications of such subjects as shamanism, traditional healing, naming practices, cooking, etc. It is impossible to overemphasize the value of these publications, both the finished product as well as the process that was involved in their production. During the last two years the Lower **Kuskokwim** School District staff has also worked on the professional translation of many of the tapes collected by the students, publishing the collection in both English translations and **Yup'ik** transcriptions in a volume entitled Yup'ik Lore. Together, these publications represent the best collection of published material on the study area presently available.

11) The **Yup'ik** Language Workshop which, besides handling the instruction of both Natives and non-Natives in the grammar and conversational style of the **Yup'ik** language, devotes a great deal of time and effort



to the development of teaching materials for use in bilingual education programs as well as the translation of traditional texts. A recent issue of the Tundra Drums, for instance, featured a translation into Yup'ik of the description of several traditional Yup'ik celebrations as recorded originally in English by Edward Nelson (1899) and John Henry Kilbuck (1900).

12) Numerous conferences sponsored by such organizations as the Kuskokwim Community College, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation and the Tundra Women's Coalition lay increasing stress on cultural awareness. For example, the Helping Hands Yup'ik Teacher Training Workshop held in Bethel in November 1980 focused on setting up a more permanent organization in order to influence bilingual/bicultural programs in the schools.

13) Finally, even the newly opened branch of United Bank Alaska in Bethel featured a display of the photographs of James Barker, an artist particularly sensitive to the changing face of the study area.

Problems of Cross-Cultural Communication and  
Cultural Transmission

As the preceding catalogue indicates (and it is not exhaustive), even admitting a fundamental reluctance on the part of many Yup'ik to overtly analyze behavior or discuss motivation for action, there is an increasing commitment on the part of many residents of the study area

toward a better understanding of traditional and contemporary **Yup'ik** social and cultural manifestations. Just as the **Moravian** John Henry **Kilbuck** was able to better satisfy the felt needs of his converts because of his willingness to learn their language and his fundamental acceptance of many of their traditional patterns, so non-Native businessmen, teachers, administrators, and social service personnel are increasingly trying to come to grips with those aspects of the communication style or cultural mode of being of residents of the study area in order to better accomplish their goals. Also, Native residents are increasingly interested in their cultural foundations. Out of this renewed interest in **Yup'ik ethnicity** several interesting observations have been made which it is certainly worthwhile to relate here. Although explication as a replacement for direct experience goes against the **Yup'ik** grain, a brief introduction to the problems of **Yup'ik/non-Yup'ik** communication problems can, **I** hope, make this **socio-cultural** inventory into a mechanism for better cross-cultural communication.

The major communication problem that has faced residents of the study area is, simply stated, that talking is not communicating (cf. **Scollen and Scollen, 1979**). Examples of miscommunication resulting from the assumption that a literal translation was somehow sufficient abound, including missionary mistranslation, consequent **Yup'ik** misunderstanding, negative stereotyping, etc. A **small** sampling of the negative comments by white teachers in the study area would read as follows: "Oh,

those **Yup'ik** kids! They have no ambition. They **are** lazy and **unmotivated**. They are shifty-eyed, won't look **you** straight in the face. They never say **much, and** you can't get them involved in the classroom. They're **dumb**, and if they say anything, it takes them a **long** time to **say it**. They won't give **you** a straight answer, **etc., etc.**" The fact is that communication **styles** are very different for Natives and non-Natives. **To** clarify the differences, I **will** focus on the problem of cross-cultural communication as it has affected cultural transmissions especially formal **education**, and within the **field** of formal education, language instruction, as this **still** is the biggest single obstacle to adequate communication between Natives and non-Natives in the study area.

Up until very recently, the major emphasis in instruction, especially language instruction in the study area, was on the structure of language, **e.g.**, the difference in structure between English and **Yup'ik**. While structural differences certainly do exist, the real area of cultural difference is in the functional **use** of language. **It** is here that the true message is often hidden, and that misunderstanding occurs, especially as tolerance for functional mistakes and misfiring seems to be much **less** than for structural ones. Although a thick **accent** provides a barrier to communication, and drilling **Yup'ik** students on **the** sound system of the English language can alleviate **the** problem, functional misunderstanding rarely results from mispronunciation. **Com-**prehension, however, does **rely** on an understanding of the real informational message being given and of **the meta** message conveyed by inflection and body language. **It** is in this functional dimension of

discourse that most cross-cultural misunderstanding originates. Specific cultural differences between **Yup'ik** speakers and **non-Yup'ik** speakers include:

1) Different speech rhythm and conversational cues. **Yup'ik** speakers are more comfortable with silence than **non-Yup'ik** speakers. Whereas the **non-Yup'ik** will fill an uncomfortable silence with small talk and **will** ask questions in order to draw a quiet person out, the **Yup'ik** speaker will clam up when nervous, and will remain silent until he feels ready to talk. **Yup'ik** speakers also speak more slowly, having an average pause length of 1.5 seconds between statements, as compared to the 3/8-second pause characteristic of **non-Yup'ik** speakers. This difference has the effect of making the **non-Yup'ik** feel that the **Yup'ik** speaker is slow, dumb, stupid, or uncooperative. On the other hand, the **Yup'ik** will feel that the **non-Yup'ik** does not allow time for response, but instead glibly jabbars on, showing no respect or consideration for what has been **said**.

2) Different display behavior. In **Yup'ik** culture, it is the powerful and knowledgeable person who gives the show and does the majority of talking, while the novice listens (see Fienup-Riordan, 1980b, p. 186 for example of didactic tales given as lessons). On the other hand, **non-Yup'ik** teachers expect students to participate, **inquire**, respond, emote, etc. The **non-Yup'ik** teacher's attempt to elicit response often results in embarrassment on the part of the **Yup'ik** student, who could rather sink into the ground than participate in the arm flailing necessary to attract the teacher's attention.

3) Taboo subjects. In the same way that silence is considered a sign of respect, **Yup'ik** speakers do not **talk of** their accomplishments, which would be considered impolite and boastful. This tendency obviously makes communication during job interviews and spontaneous displays of knowledge in **school** difficult.

4) Indirection vs. direction. Whereas **non-Yup'ik** speakers tend to be direct in their manner of speech, **Yup'ik** speakers are masters of indirection, and in fact interpret direct requests on the part of **non-Yup'ik** as hints. **Yup'ik** speakers **will** convey dissatisfaction through a third--person narrative **or** through allusion. Thus if a white social studies teacher alludes to leadership in a village as a classroom **example**, the message is that something is wrong with it. **Also** related to this **non-confrontative** approach is **the** obligation to agree verbally to any request, although the speaker may have **no** intention of following it up. The **rules** of conversation etiquette, however, dictate that the form, at **least** reflect affirmative action. This can be very frustrating to the **non-Yup'ik** who is more product oriented.

5) Body language. For the **Yup'ik** speaker, staring and direct eye contact are signs of disrespect and are avoided. The **non-Yup'ik**, on the other hand, interprets this **nonconfrontative** behavior as shifty and dishonest. **Also**, for the **Yup'ik** speaker, shrugging shoulders implies "I don't know," whereas the **non-Yup'ik** may **well** interpret it as meaning "I don't care."

6) Learning styles. The **Yup'ik** teaches **by** doing and **having** a child watch and copy a task, while the **non-Yup'ik** is more prone to teach through verbal direction. The **non-Yup'ik** student will scope out a situation through verbal inquiry before trying to do a task, while the **Yup'ik** will ask only after having attempted to do the task. In a classroom situation, the **non-Yup'ik** may thus appear inquisitive and interested while the **Yup'ik** appears disinterested, stupid and lazy.

The **Yup'ik** student traditionally learned through play acting and the dramatization of acute observation of natural processes in such cultural displays as the dance, story telling, or **story knife pictographs**. These cultural re-presentations of observed **reality** left nothing to the imagination, and were part and parcel of the training in memory, observation, and the use of tried and true methods of extracting oneself from dangerous situations necessary for success as hunters and gatherers.

Education for the **Yup'ik** was traditionally, and **still** is within the home and village, through the method of success approximation, emphasizing equality and autonomy. In the schools, however, the **Yup'ik** student is directly confronted (a faux pas in itself) by officials who can demand answers because of defined roles of power. But when asked how to do something, the most common **Yup'ik** response is "**Piciatun** (any way)." A frustrating and vague response from the **non-Yup'ik** point of view, it is the **Yup'ik** way of saying, as politely as possible, that each person has different ways of doing things, and will only learn by

making mistakes, **so** don't ask, try it! (Hensel et al., 1980). Choices cannot **be** made **by the** teacher, nor **will** the teacher take responsibility for the actions of the student. **Also, the** traditional, informal, **Yup'ik** classroom (the home and gasgiq) allowed minimal space between teacher and student, a far cry from the formal separation effected in most classrooms.

In sum, drastic differences emerge in the composition **of** the **Yup'ik** and **non-Yup'ik** cultural **ideal**, differences that are expressed in action as **well** as speech style (Hensel et al., 1980:5:18). The **Yup'ik**, on the one hand, is encouraged to be restrained and to show reserve and humility. He is taught **to** blend in with others, to be generally helpful and cooperative, and to refrain from showing anger or annoyance easily. Direct confrontation and conflict are avoided, and each person is encouraged to mind his own business. The **Kass'aq** ideal, on the other hand, encourages competition as opposed to cooperation, and the attainment of success, which for the **non-Yup'ik** is defined as **differentiating** oneself from the common herd, standing out, and showing oneself **to** be No. **1**. Verbal fluency and self-assertion are both **encouraged** as culturally appropriate. The **Yup'ik**, on the other hand, although no less interested in success, define success differently. Success for the **Yup'ik** involves proficiency without standing out **or** bragging. Here direct self-assertion is **altogether** inappropriate.

**Finally**, then, differences **in** culturally appropriate presentation of **self**, conversational cues, content of conversation, etc. **are** dramatic

between **Yup'ik** and **non-Yup'ik** individuals. Ironically, the fact that the **Yup'ik** is often bilingual will only compound the problem, as then the **non-Yup'ik** will assume that because he is able to understand the literal meaning of the conversation he is really getting the message. Sadly enough, this is often far from the case. However, increased awareness of the cultural differences that affect communicative styles can in the future help to alleviate some of the more severe ethnocentric stereotyping and miscommunication that even with the best of intentions on both sides still occurs in the study area today.

Formal Education and the Advent of Institutionalized  
**Bilingualism/Biculturalism**

Related directly to the problem of cultural transmission and socialization is the effect in the study area of formal education. This can be divided into two parts: the use of formal education as an instrument of cultural amalgamation of the **Yup'ik**, and the present emphasis on **bilingual/bicultural** education. The beginnings of formal education during the early missionary period were covered in the section of this report dealing with the history of the study area. Social, economic and political effects of the introduction of formal education have also been cursorily dealt with (i.e., weakening of traditional authority networks, need to stabilize populations around the new schools). What I would like to emphasize here is the present cultural impact of formal education, and the ways in which this key implement of **cultural** replacement (the original solution to the "Indian problem") presently shapes the **lives** of the residents of the study area.



To review briefly, federal education in Alaska has historically been **assimilationist in intent**, while exhibiting **little** knowledge or application of the processes of cultural and **social** change (Ellanna, 1972: 73).<sup>2</sup> Although **only** a **small** percentage of youngsters actually went to school, **the** overt racism that the system both fostered and grew **out** of spread well beyond the classroom. **Not only** was conversational use of **Yup'ik** discouraged, but villages and individuals were given new **Kass'aq** names. **Yup'ik** delicacies such as fermented fish heads were dubbed "**stinkin'** heads," **while** the language itself is **still** today often allowed **only** the status of a dialect. The net effect was that both students and their parents were sometimes subtly and often not so subtly made to feel ashamed of being **Yup'ik**.

By the **1960s** the impact of **formal** education was spreading. Ninety-five percent of the children of the study area were receiving primary **education** in their villages. However, **if** they wanted to continue their **education** they were forced to **leave** the region to attend high **school** outside the state in Washington and Kansas, at the **BIA** boarding **school** at Mt. **Edgecumbe**, or at **St. Mary's mission**, staying away for the entire school **year**.

Immediately following **statehood**, Alaskan educators set two objectives: to provide **public** secondary education **to rural Alaska** and to **consolidate** the now state schools and the **BIA** schools into a single system. Even now, **20 years later**, neither objective has been **fully** achieved. **In the mid-1960's** the state started the state boarding home program,

which allowed students from the study area to board in private homes in Alaskan urban areas and attend local high schools or to attend a "closer to home" regional high school in Bethel and live in dormitories (Hootch, **1975:810-811**).

The issue of rural high school education is plagued by two conflicting philosophies of education. . According to the traditionally held theory, adolescents should attend large schools away from home, which can provide a wide choice of subjects, specialized teachers, and vocational educational facilities. These schools provide additional out-of-school experiences, allowing the student to learn about western culture and make informed choices about life in the village or the city. The second theory supports high school education at home, because separation from family and traditional culture along with abrupt transition to western culture produces severe social and emotional problems as well as cultural confusion. <sup>3</sup>The limited curriculum of village schools would be overshadowed by the psychological benefits. The high drop-out rate, high incidence of drinking, violence and the suicide rate that occur in urban and regional settings have increased support for the second alternative (**Kleinfeld, 1973, pp. 1-2**). Boarding school **education** for countless village young people drained vitality by taking them away from home and family (Collier, **1973:46**). **Yup'ik** parents place real value on family unity and separation from children is a painful experience compounded by continual worry about the children's safety and welfare while away from home (**Krauss, 1973**).

Village students, for the most part, felt that the pressures of town living rather than the school experience itself resulted in problems. Bethel Regional High School was located in a community experiencing rapid social change, with an expanding population and high rate of social problems. Here students contacted the transient elements of the community who were involved in drugs and drinking (Bethel was then wet). The free atmosphere and lack of close personal relationships for students in both boarding homes and the high school dormitory compounded the problems in the town. Within the school curriculum itself there was little awareness of cross-cultural education and with the introduction of innovative open programs with modular scheduling and no-fail grade systems, the free atmosphere invaded the school as well (Kleinfeld, 1973, pp. 10-31, 34-53).

Kleinfeld found the same emotional strain caused by leaving one's family and resultant retardation of learning, lowered self-esteem, and poor mental health in the urban boarding home program. She did indicate that urban boarding was a viable alternative for some students -- especially the bright ones -- because the exposure to an urban lifestyle provided a second arena for learning, an opportunity to experiment in this urban environment, and the increased chance to improve English usage. However, this experience had to be closely related to the student's personal goals to be successful. Another prime factor in urban school success was the interpersonal relationship developed with the boarding family. The relationship had to be viewed as worthwhile and positive on both the students' and parents' parts to be

successful (Kleinfeld, 1972, pp. 9-10, 47-48). Warm demonstrative boarding parents helped village students overcome fears, provided guidance in resolving cultural conflicts by emphasizing the fundamental values similar in both cultures, and helped the student understand the **world** around him (Kleinfeld, 1973, pp. 63-65, 69).

Mention must be made of the third type of boarding school affecting the population of the study area. This is the small, private Catholic school of St. Mary's. Research has consistently shown that graduates of St. Mary's have done **better** than graduates of other rural schools in the college setting, specifically the University of Alaska. These students were usually more self-confident, outspoken, and displayed leadership qualities in and out of the village. The success of St. Mary's can perhaps be attributed to the fact that: 1) the older school had limited equipment and therefore the living situation was closer to home situations in the village; 2) classes were highly traditional and structured; 3) students were close with teachers and the emotional atmosphere was warm and caring; and 4) the school fused traditional **Yup'ik** and western cultural ideals into a **value** system the students could accept without alienating themselves from their family and culture (Kleinfeld, 1979, pp. 1-24). **St. Mary's was a total society** where the teachers, young Catholic lay volunteers, lived with the students in the dormitory where close relationships developed **allowing** a sharing of values and extending the learning situation. Also, the town of St. Mary's is a small, isolated **community. Thus, it was easier** for this private school to effectively create an atmosphere supportive

of academic goals and uphold a distinctive value system (Kleinfeld, 1979, pp. 139-140). One other difference between St. Mary's students and those who attended public boarding schools was that they came from the **small** coastal Catholic communities detailed in **this** report, that were more traditional and less westernized than the **Moravian riverine** communities that sent students into Bethel. **Their** families were **also** very religious and stable. The key, apparently, was that moving from a **small** Catholic **village to a small** Catholic school with a highly personal atmosphere and close relations between teachers and students was not the great cultural break represented by attending a private boarding school. The emphasis on personal values was also important.<sup>4</sup>

Related to the renovation and rethinking of boarding programs in the **1960s**, questions began to be asked about how **formal** education programs at every **level** had been conceived and applied. **It** became evident that **the** more "effective" programs were deemed such because of their ability to erase and replace the Native past. This soul-searching was part **of the** general recognition of **the** rights to self-determination by Native Americans, **One** immediate **result** was that the study area (**partly** because of its linguistic vitality) became **the** testing ground for bilingual education in the state. **In 1970** the **BIA**, together with the State-Operated **School** System, was persuaded to experiment with bilingual education in four central **Yup'ik** schools. For the first time **in** over **60** years, Alaskan Native children were taught in school in **their** **Native** language, and learned how to read **first** through **their** own **language**. Largely because **of the** dramatic success of this experiment.,

the state legislature enacted in 1972 a pair of bills on behalf of Native languages, the first requiring (an almost unprecedented measure in this country at the time) that children be introduced to education in their native language, and the second establishing the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, which had the responsibility for the development and maintenance of the Native language programs in the schools. This responsibility has since been taken over in the study area by the **Yup'ik** Language Workshop.

As important as the rebirth of bilingual education in the study area and related to the same general reaffirmation of Native rights was the Molly Hootch decision in 1976, which mandated the establishment of local high schools in the **smaller** communities of the study area which had until that time sent their children to boarding school in Bethel, St. Mary's or outside of the region as has been indicated (see also Chapter IX: Political Systems).<sup>5</sup> What the students who stayed in their villages lost in terms of varied curriculum and exposure to modern America was balanced by the social, cultural and psychological benefit of being at home. Parental authority structure remained intact and students continued to speak their Native language and participate in village affairs throughout their school years.

After all that has been said both for and against the village high schools in the state, specific information on the high schools of the study area will prove useful. One of the first schools to be **established** was the Nelson Island Regional High School in **Toksook Bay**. For

**the first two** years of its operation **it served all** five Nelson Island villages, with the 40 or so students who came from villages other than Toksook Bay boarding in the homes of relatives **or** friends of their parents (mostly relatives). **Even** with these bonds of relationship providing a door **into** the community **for** the out-of-town students, they **tended** to be homesick and unhappy, perhaps less so than they had been in Bethel and **Mt. Edgecumbe**, but homesick nonetheless. **While** their cousin had the use of **his** father's snow-go and **rifle** for weekend hunting, the boarding youngster had to sit and drink tea with the women as his own father's equipment was not available to him. Likewise, **girls** could **be** found **at** their boarding homes doing the same chores as at home (washing dishes, doing laundry, etc.), but they said it wasn't the same. By the end of the first year, absenteeism through "extended" weekend visits home had become an increasing problem.

Now, five years **later**, the new high schools that have been built in each of the **Nelson Island** villages have done away with Toksook's boarding program and the related problems. As far as villagers are **concerned** (some administrators and teachers disagree), the trade-off between the more developed curriculum available in the Nelson Island Regional High School and having their children in **their** own villages attending the smaller "**one-room**" high schools, such as those as now exist in **Chefornak** and **Newtok**, has been worth **it**. **Also, the** high school at Toksook Bay is presently doing remarkably **well**, in spite of, and some **feel** because of, the cutback **in** the student **body**. Other **factors** contributing to its success include: **1)** a popular principal who

came as a Catholic volunteer and has spent five years in the school, 2) enthusiastic teachers who have provided continuity by staying year after year, 3) courses that lean on local culture, particularly art, language and subsistence, but teach basic skills for functioning in the modern world, like taking the women's basketball team to Bethel and having them order from a restaurant menu. Also, the high school traditional dance group, complete with student drummers, comes to Anchorage for a week each March to perform as part of Native Emphasis Week, and at the same time gets a taste of urban living. 4) **Intervillage** sports exchanges (basketball tournaments, wrestling meets, cheer-leading competitions, etc.) which spark the enthusiasm of both parents and students. 5) Parents who protect close family ties among their children within a small village. 6) Elders who provide strong **authority** figures and keep discipline a family, rather than a school, prerogative. These **elders** also actively support school curriculum through teaching dancing and traditional skills to the students as part of the cultural heritage program. In fact, many of the same community strengths that contributed to the high success rate of Nelson Island students at St. Mary's continue to make their own high school a good one. Paralleling the philosophy of lay volunteers at St. Mary's, the principal of **Toksook Bay High School**, Jim **Swartz**, maintains: "It's possible to come here with romantic notions of being missionaries to these kids, but that doesn't work. . . . What I hope to do is something good every day, helping children who really have no goals (and) **no** way to get ahead, become better people" (Daily News interview).



Not **all of the** village high **school** programs in the study area are going as **well** as the one **in Toksook Bay.**<sup>6</sup> However, it must be **remem-bered** that **Toksook** Bay's program is **going** on its sixth year, **while** " many of the high schools opened their doors much more recently. **In** fact, Toksook High School's first two years were stormy ones, with the first principal teacher imported straight from Hawaii, and the second preoccupied with peddling dope to students. Right now many **of** the **smaller** schools have only one teacher and a 40% turnover rate. But as the schools stay longer and the district administration becomes more experienced, the programs are bound **to** improve, barring any drastic funding cutbacks that would **leave** the new high school facilities as incredible white elephants in the hands of communities with no tax base capable of supporting **them.**

But **while** the economics of a high **school** in every **village** may appear outlandish at first glance, as one Daily News writer put it, education may be expensive but not as expensive as ignorance. And the **educa-**tion that the new high schools in the study area can provide is strong in the right places. Remember that up until recently **the** poor social adjustment of **rural** graduates was a greater **cause** of dropping out of college than poor academic preparation (Ray, 1959).<sup>7</sup> Again, what the new schools lose in their ability **to** initiate the students of the study area into the white man's **world,** they **are** gaining in **their** ability to **enable** students **to live** productive and happy lives at home in their villages, both **while** they are attending school and after **their** graduation. Although the predominant **local** control of **village schools**

may be a myth (see **Roye, 1981**),<sup>8</sup> just by virtue of education taking place in **the** village parents are able to reclaim the right to pass on their values, knowledge, history and language to their children. The goal of education in the study area has become effective transmission of two cultures: literacy, ability to speak and reason like whites and an in-depth knowledge of Native skills and culture. Students are being equipped to **cope with** the daily problems of life in the **village**, survival in the arctic and the stress of multi-cultural living (Collier, 1973, pp. 120-122). These are far more realistic goals than merely learning to fit into mainstream America.

**It** is significant to note how many college students, both those attending school at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks and **Kuskokwim** Community College (**KCC**)<sup>9</sup> in Bethel, intend to return to their villages to practice the skills that they acquire. Also, **Yup'ik para-professionals** (teacher aides, associate teachers, bilingual teachers, early childhood aides, etc.) enrolled in the **Yup'ik** Teacher Training Project work full time in their **local** schools and at the same time take two courses each semester as well as attend summer school. Formal education, both at the high school and college level, is no longer seen primarily as a means of outward mobility (out of the village and into urban centers). Whereas in the **1950s** and 1960s returning graduates had no part to play " in their communities, now they have jobs waiting for them in the new schools, city offices, corporations, etc. Ironically, with the **Yup'ik** Teacher Training Program, Cross-Cultural Education Development Program (**XCED**) and expanded village instruction presently offered through KCC

in 30 delta villages, students **will** not even have **to leave** their homes to attend classes. Even the long-awaited **village** library program is **finally** becoming a reality.<sup>10</sup>

Although ending **on** a positive note would be preferable, and although undeniable strides have been made in bilingual and culturally relevant education in the study **area**, a vast improvement over the institutionalized repression of **Yup'ik** culture and language which preceded it, the educational system as it is presently organized, wherever **it** is delivered, is still a destructive influence on **Yup'ik sociocultural** systems. For example, almost everywhere in the study area, the bilingual programs are transitional rather than maintenance, both in their intent and practice. In other words, English is not being taught as a second language for communication with the rest of the world, with **Yup'ik** maintained in the school along with English. Rather, bilingual education as it is practiced is transitional, going from the Native language over to English in such a way that English totally replaces **Yup'ik** in the upper grades. The purpose of the transitional **first-language** bilingual program is **still** basically **assimilationist**, and not sincerely in the interest of the survival and development of **Yup'ik** language and culture. Moreover, **the** persons in authority, the administrators and certified teachers, are generally not bilingual, and are unable to speak the language of the children. **In** fact, the bilingual teachers can only be **subordinate** aides, not the **actual** authority figure in the classroom, which message is not **lost** on the children. **If** they become certified teachers, they are "overqualified for the position of

bilingual teacher, and may then teach only in the conventional English only way" (Krauss, 1980a:6-7).

Finally, although of all Alaskan Native Languages Central **Yup'ik** has by far the best chance of survival, because of the still large concentration of speakers of all generations in the study area, and because of the good beginnings, relative to the rest of the state, of educational programs and a written literature, a new major threat emerges with the spread of radio and TV. Again, according to Krauss, the cultural and linguistic battleground is now shifting from the classroom to the living room: "The battle of the living room has begun with this invasion by what I call 'cultural nerve gas' -- insidious, painless, and fatal" (Krauss, 1980b:1).

On the other hand, even more easily than the educational system, which requires time and effort for the development of an alphabet, literature and literacy, television and radio could quickly be adapted to the service of the **Yup'ik** language as well:

**Local** reporters or TV cameramen could tape **local** subjects and events to broadcast directly, or send the tapes to broadcast centers. . . . The importance of radio should not be underestimated; it is the sound and not the picture which carries the language; radio programming is cheaper and easier to produce; it is also easier to take in, . . . (Also) these media are a system with far fewer cultural strings attached than education has and . . . are at least **partly** available as empty systems, and at least many of those who bring them to the villages would in fact wish to see the system used for the local language

and culture. The ideological battle here will be far less difficult, but the stakes are just as great (Krauss, 1980b:6).

In fact, the Yup'ik page in the Tundra Drums, Yup'ik news as aired on KYUK (the local Bethel T.V. and radio station), as well as sporadic attempts at more creative programming,<sup>11</sup> are beginning to realize the potential of the media. KYUK has full production facilities for creating its own television and radio programs, and programs of local interest are often shown. Perhaps as important as this affirmative action is the generally positive attitude toward bilingualism in the study area, in Bethel as well as in the smaller villages. The schools and the media, no matter how influential they are, cannot take the knowledge of the Yup'ik language and culture away from residents of the study area, if parents continue to speak to their children in Yup'ik and to teach them the Yup'ik point of view. The most destructive impact of formal education and media has been in the negative attitude toward Native language and culture they have perpetrated. As this attitude changes, it is hoped that the redirection of traditionally assimilationist tools will follow.

## Endnotes

- 1 Adapted in part from Fienup-Riordan, 1982: Foreword.
- 2 This philosophy is best summarized by **Krauss**: "To complete the 'winning of the west' and the white man's 'manifest destiny,' the American Indian was to be converted to the white man's religion, assimilated to his culture, and forced to abandon his native language" (**Krauss, 1980:22**).
- 3 **Kleinfeld**, in her study of the effects of public boarding schools in Bethel and Nome on village children, states that going to school away from home makes it more difficult for students to deal with adolescence and the formation of a strong identity. Students are removed from home and its standards and placed in a confusing environment which provides contradictory messages about growing up and acceptable values. The academic difficulties and social problems faced by Native students do not gain the approval of western adults, and the change in values and moral disintegration displayed upon return to the village bring rejection from the people at home. Thus, confusion and lack of direction in life result for many students (**Kleinfeld, 1973, pp. 95-96**).
- 4  
The difference between St. Mary's and a public school could perhaps be summed up by posters **Kleinfeld** saw in possession of teachers. A public school teacher had a poster that said "If it feels good, do it." At St. Mary's, the poster said, "Do your own thing. Just be sure it's worth doing."  
(**Lenz, 7/17/1980:8**).
- 5 Bethel Regional High School closed its dormitory in spring 1980 and became a "local high school" as the student population was reduced from 400 to 290. Schools such as St. Mary's and Mt. Edgecumbe are also presently redirecting their programs.
- 6 **What** makes a program effective from the educator's point of view has been the focus of much research and discussion (see **Kleinfeld** and **Berry, 1978; Kleinfeld, 1972, 1973, 1979**). Recommendations include more Native teachers, more personal classroom interrelation, and more enlightened teaching style. As the section on cultural transmission indicated, programs that have been highly structured and impersonal have had a high degree of failure. A great deal of success, however, has been enjoyed by programs that are process, rather than product, oriented (see preceding section as an indication of how this emphasis on experience pervades other aspects of cultural transmission in the study area).

7 In 1978 Kleinfeld indicated that academic preparation and communication skills were a concern for new village high schools, but that **due** to new special personalized programs and improved social climate more **rural** students were succeeding in college. (Kahout and Kleinfeld, 1974, pp. 23, 41). The most recent research by the Institute of Social and Economic Research on graduates of new rural village schools indicates these students are more successful than students from boarding schools prior to 1974, although they are **still** far behind their non-Native classmates (Kossen, 1981). Reasons for this success include the University of Alaska's increased sensitivity and program adaptation **to** Native students **as** well as better student preparation.

8 With the new schools came the regional school districts which regulated programs and set curricula, often without consulting villagers who used the schools.

9 Programs offered through KCC in the spring of 1981 included a series of workshops for Yukon-Kuskokwim fishermen, an aviation program, as **well** as standard courses in accounting, business administration, **land** resource management, the humanities and the social sciences. The college was **also** plugging **art**, auto repair, and woodworking as feature attractions.

**It** is also worth mentioning that the recent resignation of KCC's president, George Irvin, was at least in part due to his mismanagement of the maintenance technology program. New facilities have recently been provided to make expansion of this highly popular program **possible**, but the administration's priorities were such that adequate instruction was not made available.

10 Beginning in November 1980, nine libraries were organized in the delta. They are located in **Aniak, Kwigillingok, Quinhagak, Chefornak, Chevak, Alakanuk**, Mountain Village, St. Mary's and **Pilot Station**.

11 The program, **Bethel-on-Air**, premiered on KYUK radio in **April 1981**. **It** is a new production designed to promote **local** talent as **well** as to create more live programming **on** the **radio**, and features artists singing and reading in both **Yup'ik** and English.

## CHAPTER IX. POLITICAL SYSTEMS

### The Changing Pattern of Community Leadership and Social Control

As indicated in Chapter IV, on the community level the introduction of formal authority networks and systems of self-government in the study area involved the adaptation of external organizational forms in accordance with traditional means of social control rather than the wholesale replacement of traditional patterns with their western counterparts. Community social and political systems remained fundamentally intact and essentially connected. The extended family continued to be the minimal social unit. It differed from the nuclear family in that it was multi-generational, including collaterals, adopted relatives, and fictive kin. There was a well-defined and rigid code for interpersonal behavior (cf. **Burch, 1975**), again constructed around kinship roles rather than personal preference. This code included a **well-**developed system of reciprocal exchange. Thus, ostensibly "economic" relationships were also often circumscribed within the realm of kinship relations. On the community level, social control was still vested in the older, respected heads of extended family households, who took over the new offices, such as city mayor and chief of the traditional council. In keeping with traditional consensus **decision-**making, and the fundamentally **egalitarian** and non-authoritarian social order, although men were favored for these leadership positions, older village matrons still retained considerable power, and in fact have become increasingly active in formal village government in the last 10



years. This is but one indication of **the** continued attempt to keep the new mechanisms of **social** control in line with **their** traditional counterparts.<sup>1</sup>

Thus since statehood community social **and** political **relations** have continued **to** be intimately bound together, although with the formation of a plethora of councils, **boards**, and corporations, the system was superficially transformed. This transposition of the traditional into the modern mode has by and **large** been a positive feature of contemporary political activity.

For example, traditionally there were no **formal** extra-familial institutions for political action. There was no word for **leader** or chief (**this** term was introduced by the Russians), but words only for "rich man" and "**great** hunter." Leadership has continued to be based on a man's ability to provide wealth for the group and to share rather than to amass **wealth** for his own immediate consumption. With such a requirement set down from the very beginning, the integrity of the newly elected board members and councilmen, **who** take their position in the same manner as they **would** the seat **of** honor in the traditional men's house, is perhaps more likely to be realized.

In the smaller coastal communities where community and extended **family** are closely **linked** community leadership dominated by heads of extended family households is very effective. Households work together **along** kinship lines, and working for the extended family and the community

are one and the same. However, where the community is large and community and extended family (or two extended families) are at **cross-** purposes, this integrity breaks down. A pointed example of the **impli-** cations of this conflict of interest is the suit presently being brought by several shareholders against the board of the Bethel Native Corporation (the profit corporation set up under **ANCSA** for the Native residents of Bethel). The "shareholders maintain that the degree to which the board of the Bethel Native Corporation continually bends to the interests of the powerful Hoffman family at the expense of the corporation represents a conflict of interest which undermines the local political process. The situation is complicated by the fact that family influence not only dominates the BNC, but spreads far into other organizations, with Chief Eddie Hoffman the president of **AVCP**, Lyman Hoffman the Bethel city manager, and Bobby Hoffman the general manager of **BNC**.

Related to this problem is the complication that regional organizations are beginning to be dominated by many forthright young advocates for the needs of the residents of the study area. **While** they may speak effectively for their constituency, that constituency does not feel secure in their representation, not having **immediate intrafamilial** control over their voice **or** actions. This frustration with the new, often younger, political elite was dramatically demonstrated this year when **Calista**, AVCP, AVCP Employment and Training, and the **Orutsararmiut** Native Council of Bethel (the nonprofit arm of **BNC**) **all** lost their respective titular heads in four separate top-level shake-ups. This

constant rearrangement **at** the managerial level **is** confusing for both the constituents of the different regional organizations and the outside observers of regional political organization. It is a direct outcome of the inability of the traditional relationship between leader and led, couched in kinship terms and based on the relation between age and authority to effectively extend beyond the **intrafamily**, community level. The fact **that the** growth of political influence beyond the community is often synonymous with the growth of suspicion and loss of prestige within the home village keeps many **able** young adults in their place, in the literal, traditional **Yup'ik** sense. In the end, this limitation is beginning to bear positive fruit, as these **communities**, most of which have retained coherent **intravillage** authority **networks**, are increasingly drawn into regional politics. For example, although there has been much **intra-agency** juggling for power within the Bethel office of **AVCP**, there has been remarkable continuity in the **57** village council presidents who make up the body of the association.

Another factor at work here is that the ability to act as an intermediary with the **non-Yup'ik** world and its agents is not a **highly** valued quality in the study **area**. Thus, regional organizations demand and in fact depend upon skill that is on the verge of reprehensible in the smaller coastal communities of the study area. The **Yup'ik** are happy to share their food and hospitality with an outsider, as **long** as he shows himself **to** be neither nosey nor intrusive. Just as directness is socially inappropriate, overt inquiry and explanation are also **suspect**. This regional characteristic was brought home at a recent

cross-cultural communications workshop in Anchorage attended by representatives from various Native groups throughout the state. When the issue of exposing sensitive areas of communication was broached, even for the laudable purpose of improving communication between groups, the **Yup'ik** delegation demurred. Not that they were against **communication**, but direct inquiry and **exposé** of their communication style was abhorrent to them. They do not want to do it themselves, and they do not want it done for them. They simply do not want it done. Needless to say, this attitude does not make area residents particularly receptive to agency personnel coming into their communities to direct or inquire. Such directness they find both offensive and suspicious (see Chapter VII: Cross-Cultural Communication). The result is what appears to be community apathy in meetings called by agency representatives or in making decisions on issues introduced from the outside. This silence definitely interferes with the formal political process, especially insofar as the resolution of an issue necessitates regional consensus.

As we shall see, proposed OCS exploration and development is a unifying issue only because each community can locally identify with its projected impacts and talk about these impacts in terms of specific community effects. Villagers are villagers first and members of the region second. It is a rare coastal community that does not view its life-style and subsistence base as unique and precious. The suspicion that outside agency personnel have come to spy upon them, and to steal their birthright is not simply a negative attitude, but reflects the

very positive **belief that** they have something eminently worth stealing that they must work very hard to protect.

Another feature of the traditional political system that has been retained with both positive **and** negative implications has been the **de-emphasis on formal** extrafamilial institutions for social control. Non-conformity was not traditionally dealt with by punishment. Rather, anti social or inappropriate behavior was the subject for gossip or ridicule which would indirectly reach the ears of the offender. This social ostracism **was usually** sufficient punishment as well as an effective corrective. With the introduction of formal institutions of **social control**, including the court system, magistrates, State Troopers, and village **public** safety officers, the traditional informal mechanisms of social control have been undercut. The teacher, State Trooper, or **Bethel** Superior Court judge has increasingly taken power from the extended family and the **elders** of the community and vested it in **external** organizational frameworks. This problem was exacerbated by the recruitment of **female** magistrates and young **male** village policemen. The fact that **older** men and women, the traditional authority figures, did not seek the **newly** created positions is an indication of **low local** evaluation of these external processes. **Until** very recently, making arrests was something **usually** associated with white persons, and **it** was difficult for a young Native officer to take that **role. Also, vil-**  
**lage** police officers were often put in the very uncomfortable position **of** having to directly confront their friends and relatives with their misdeeds. Direct confrontation was bad enough, but accusation of a relative was extremely disconcerting.

However, this initial distrust is gradually being replaced by a more active interest on the part of villagers in the efficacy of these formal authority networks. For example, the recently expanded village public safety program, involving longer terms of employment for village police officers, higher pay, increased network backup and more intense and diversified training, has been fairly successful in the study area and has won statewide recognition. Also, the **newly** created circuit judgeship, which allows cases to be heard in, or close to, the area where the crime was alleged to have taken place, has excited much interest on the part of area residents.

Finally, at the same time that villagers are becoming more aware of what formal authority networks entail, **law** enforcement and justice personnel from Bethel agencies as well as the outlying villages are attempting to meld the treatment aspects of criminal justice work with prosecution and enforcement. Although direct confrontation has not become any more culturally appropriate, the need for more direct enforcement is becoming evident. **In** fact, in some cases the new formal roles characterized by their directness are distanced from the individuals who occupy them in a **culturally** appropriate manner, **undercutting** the responsibility of the **individual** for his authoritative action.

A good example of this love/hate relationship with the **formal** authority structure can be given through an interesting and not atypical vignette involving the controversial regulatory function of the new

**city councils.** Given the traditionally fundamentally egalitarian and non-authoritarian **social** order, **it** should come as no **surprise** that many villagers resent **the** usurpation **by** the city councils, however well respected their members **might** be, **of** power that they feel **rightly** belongs **to** the individual, **if** anyone. In one coastal community the **village** council attempted **to** legislate against playing basketball by young married men during church services, and tried to get the Native man **living** adjacent to the basketball court who also worked at the BIA school, to help enforce the regulation by shooing the offenders off the court during evening services. The village basketball players were furious, and the proposed enforcement officer was not at **all** happy about being put in such a sensitive position. The **BIA** principal **also** worried that the issue would ultimately blow up in his face. However, the villager who had been asked to enforce the new **rule wisely** agreed to cooperate and then proceeded to go out hunting and so absent himself from his house each evening for the next week. The hint was taken and the city ordinance left to die. **The** issue had been resolved, but in a strikingly Yup'ik fashion.

#### Regional Government Systems

At the same time that community political organization has been undergoing change, political organization at the regional **level** has **also** been developing in the **last** dozen years. **The** passage of ANCSA in 1971 marked a fundamental watershed in the development of regional **political** systems, as it set up both profit and nonprofit corporations to

make land selections as well as plan for the use of the money received under the Act (see Chapter IV: Since Statehood: The Aftermath of ANCSA).

**Calista** (lit. the worker) is the profit corporation to which the Native population of the study area belongs. **Calista** is the state's second largest Native corporation and now numbers 13,311 members, spread throughout the 57 villages of the AVCP region. **Calista's** management history and present investment picture have recently been under sharp criticism by corporation shareholders. Last year the corporation dropped a record \$7.2 million, and another \$2.1 million during the last six months. These follow losses of \$4.2 million in 1979 and \$2.9 million in 1978. The corporation's biggest cash drain has been the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel, which opened in 1979 and lost \$4 million in its maiden year. Among the corporation's other problem investments are the Settler's Bay property, a proposed shopping development at Pier 48 in Seattle, the R&R Travel Agency, and **ESCA-Tech** Corporation.<sup>z</sup>

Faced with mounting financial losses and growing shareholder dissatisfaction, **Calista** Corporation fired its president and chief financial officer at the March 1981 meeting of the board of directors. This action was taken largely as a result of the efforts of a core group of Bethel shareholders. Calling themselves Concerned Shareholders of **Calista**, the group brought more than 100 people to **Calista's** annual meeting in November 1980 to demand an explanation for the corporation's extensive financial losses. The issue of a regularly scheduled



**financial review of Calista's** ventures by **an** outside auditing firm was at the center of the discussion. Continued losses and shareholder frustration **at** the apparent unwillingness **of** corporation officials to **listen** to **their** concerns resulted in the March firings. Shareholders were **also** concerned that many board members were **in** key management positions, and that too much power was being concentrated among too few shareholders.

Although financial losses connected to managerial ineptitude have **char-**acterized **Calista to date**, there is widespread optimism in the region that **the** March confrontation marked both the "coming of age" of the corporation shareholders as well as an increased sensitivity on the part **of** the corporation board to the interests and demands of the people they represent. The feeling was repeatedly expressed that **Calista** is again **alive** and **well** in the delta (Tundra Drums, 1981: 7(48):2). Also, although **Calista** has less community economic impact through cash **flow** through local employment than the nonprofit corporations, it continues to be perceived by **villagers** as an important addition to the economic opportunities of the study area. This is at **least** partly because **along** with the village corporations it is the first private-sector employer to overtly and willingly demonstrate Native and local hiring preferences.

A number of non-profit corporations set **up** under **ANCSA** **also** represent the interests of residents of the study area. These nonprofit corporations include:

The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), an organization created in 1964 to represent the causes and concerns of the 57 Yukon-Kuskokwim **delta** villages which at the present time do not have a regional government representing them. The **AVCP**, on behalf of the villages, lobbied for and approved the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act after its passage. The Association is named in the Settlement Act as the agent for the villages and acts in the same position today.

Nunam Kitlutsisti, the environmental arm of AVCP that is the regional spokesman on matters such as subsistence, d-2, fisheries development and OCS exploration and development.

Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC), which provides a wide range of health promotion, prevention, and primary health care services.

AVCP Housing Authority, which has enabled the region to apply for long-term, low-interest loans for the construction of public housing.

The Bethel Native Corporation (BNC), the profit corporation for the City of Bethel, also has its nonprofit arm, the Orutsararmiut Native Council, as do many of the coastal villages and village groups in the study area.

All of these associations conduct a variety of social programs supported by grants or contracts from government agencies or foundations. The social services that the nonprofit corporations of the study area

provide cannot be operated by **Calista** or any of the profit **corporations** whose main responsibility is **to turn** a profit. Besides **providing** important human **services**, the regional nonprofit corporations also **play** important advocacy **roles within their** respective areas. Nunam **Kitlutsisti** is concerned with land and resource management in the **delta** as a means of preserving the opportunity to pursue traditional subsistence activities. **It is** presently concerned with **gathering** subsistence data as well as increasing public, state and federal awareness of subsistence needs and **issues**, and thus influencing government policies in decisions affecting subsistence (see also Conflicts section of this chapter).

The question arises as to what degree the nonprofit are **really representative** of the study area. For example, **Nunam Kitlutsisti** advocates **delay** as the chief tactic in combatting hasty and potentially harmful OCS exploration and development (We Need Time, 1980). **Nunam Kitlutsisti** is intent on preservation of subsistence resources as well as the careful development of a small-scale **local** commercial fishery that **would** provide a stable economic base for the region and is opposed to **plans** for precipitous OCS development. They see themselves, and **are** increasingly perceived by **outsiders**, as cultural **brokers, i.e.**, the arbiters and interpreters of Native priorities, and advocates for the traditional **Yup'ik** subsistence lifestyle. But more important, there is evidence that they are increasingly perceived by their regional constituents **as** the defenders of the **Natives'** point of view and provide the **focal** point for **cultural** and political advocacy in the **region**,

as opposed to **Calista**, which is seen as potentially willing to support, for **the** purposes of making a profit, regional economic development that might prove disruptive to the population of the study area. Responding to this growing rift, the board of AVCP appealed to **Calista** in the summer of 1980 to hold its yearly stockholders meeting in Bethel rather than in Anchorage as it had originally planned. **Calista** cooperated. Also, AVCP and **Calista** held their first joint meeting in Bethel in January of 1981, at which time pressing issues facing the delta were addressed, including the implementation of d-2 legislation, with all that implies about subsistence hunting and fishing, Native allotments, and land conveyances.

#### Supra-Regional Government Influences

It can be seen from the above that the lack of formal government in the Unorganized Borough in the early 1960s was corrected during the late 1960s and early 1970s with organizations set up during the land claims movement and after the passage of **ANCSA**. Along with the creation of the regional profit and nonprofit corporations, in the **administration** of programs **affecting** the residents of the study area state and federal decentralization has brought about the creation of a profusion of "quasi governments," a multiplication of institutions at the local and regional levels, that have tended to enhance Native power (McBeath, 1980: 67).

The two most important developments in terms of the decentralization of government in the study area since the passage of **ANCSA** have been the formation of Regional Education Attendance Areas (**REAA**s) in the Unorganized Borough in **1976** and the **devolution** of federal Indian programs to regional and local Native associations. Both of these developments have helped to prepare the study area for more advanced forms of regional government in the future, specifically the formation of a borough, the advantages of which are presently being investigated.

#### THE FORMATION OF **REAA**s

Immediately following statehood, **little** concern was paid to Native education in the study area. However, in the **1960s** there was increasing concern over the **lack** of special educational programs for Natives and the need for a single distinctive educational structure for **rural** schools. **Up** until that time the responsibility for educating residents of the study area was split between the state and federal governments. But with the passage of **ANCSA**, and the setting up of regional and **village** Native corporations, the organizational impetus for decentralization of educational services was created. Native leaders pressured the state legislature, and by **1976** the State Operated Schools (SOS) had been decentralized into **21** Regional Educational Attendance Areas (**REAA**s) .

The new districts were formed within the boundaries of the regional corporations set up under **ANCSA**. They **lacked** plenary powers and

depended on the state for revenues that they were unable **to** supplement. REAAs were, however, given de facto control over budgets and personnel. Also, although they were never empowered to establish new schools, they did have broad curricular powers including the power "to adopt regulations governing organization, policies and procedures for the operation of the schools" and "to develop a philosophy of education, principles and goals for **its** schools" (McBeath, 1980:70). REAA boards can incur debts and contract independently, hire teachers and staff, set salaries and engage **in** purchasing and in disbursing of funds. The state provides virtually all of the funds for **operating** and capital costs, although some **assistance** is available through federal programs as well. There are no local financial contributions for their support.

In the study area, two REAAs became active, the Lower **Kuskokwim** School District (**LKSD**) and the Lower Yukon School District (**LYSD**). Within each of these school districts, the voters **elect** a board of from 5 to 11 members. In addition, every community with a school had, until they were made illegal in 1979, a community school committee (**CSC**). The **CSCs** have since been replaced by advisory school boards which are both active and effective tools of government in the study area.

The effects of the decentralization coincident with the formation of the REAAs upon the potential formation of new regional governments in the study area have been both positive and negative. REAAs have in principle increased **local** control of school programs.

Through the provisions of the original S635 as **well** as the local **participation** requirements of the **Hootch** case decree, an effort was made **to assure local** control and participation in the decision-making process. Residents wanted **to** be involved directly in decision-making at the **village** level. **Also**, it was **clearly** the perception of some Native leaders that **REAA** boards **would** be interim only, as the villages gained experience and the CSCS **could** be granted more power.

The issue of **local** control of regional schools is particularly important because, aside from the elected council of the City of Bethel, the only form of state-acknowledged political subdivision in the study area is the school district. In the Alaskan bush, **school** districts are the very basis of the **rural** political power structure, and their political import goes far beyond the educational process. "Yet procedurally, at least, there is no control by the intended beneficiaries of the decentralization **of** the one major form of organized political structure in the Bush. It may be **local** in some sense, but it's not Native in most" (Roye, 1981:28).

Residents of the study area were not at **all** happy when the CSCS were **cancelled** in 1979. They **felt**, and rightly so, that they had been denied the only meaningful say they had in how the flag-bearer of the white man's **world**, the schools, affected **their lives** (Roye, 1981). Residents fought hard to make the district take special steps **to** reinstate ongoing meaningful village participation in secondary **school** decision-making. During this period, the LKSD was the scene of bitter

feuds for control of the district board (the villain in the past year's July 4th melodrama was a school superintendent).

However, at present its board functions much the way the early proponents of SB35 had originally intended. It is significant that in the LKSD, the parent body responsible for the **Nunapitchuk** High School where the Hootch case plaintiff Anna **Tobeluk** took her degree in 1979, there are now 22 new schools affected by the local participation requirements (**Roye, 1981:28**). And the March 1981 board meeting which voted to support regulations giving villagers a greater say in district policies was held not at its district headquarters in Bethel, but in the village school in Tununak (**Roye, 1981:29**). Another indication of the positive character of district community relations, Bethel's Advisory School Board is active and effective both in making decisions that affect only Bethel schools and in providing input to the **LKSD** Board on matters of district-wide concern. Also, the district is presently piloting a village leadership curriculum that was originally requested by two village **CSCs**. Finally, the LKSD is the first district in the state to sponsor advisory school board training sessions.

Aside from the controversy as to whether or not the **REAA**s represent increased local control, the fact that they are property poor and cannot generate their own tax revenues makes it unlikely that they will provide the basis for the formation of new regional governments. One of the largest **REAA**s, the growth of the **LKSD**, as well as the **LYSD**, has been dramatic since 1979. The Hootch case settlement expanded their



empires overnight, as new facilities meant construction contracts, **programs** with more personnel, greater budgets and more students. With these high costs presently supported by state funding, there would seem **to be little** financial incentive for area residents to seek city or borough incorporation in order to acquire general government powers and to create independent school districts. Nevertheless, in the study area there is now a strong "interest in the formation of borough governments (see below).

#### THE IMPACT OF THE INDIAN **SELF-DETERMINATION** ACT AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

**In** 1975, federal Indian programs were effectively decentralized through the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (Public Law 93-638). This act **allowed** Native residents of the study area **to** contract the functions of the **BIA**. As stated in the act, the intent was to provide Native Americans with an "effective voice in the planning and implementation of programs for the benefit of Indians which are responsive to the true needs of Indian communities." The problem was that in the study area, as in other parts of the state, administration of the provisions of the act involved a number of **overlapping local** and regional Native organizations, including the traditional councils, IRA councils, Native municipalities, and village and regional profit and nonprofit corporations. **Any** of these organizations may contract for health, education, or **social** services with the Secretary of the Interior (through the **BIA**) or the Secretary of Health,

Education and **Welfare**. Needless to say, this has led to confusion as to which organization actually does contract the services.

For example, in the study area the chief mechanism for the application and administration of grants and contracts has been the regional non-profit corporations, including AVCP and YKHC, as well as village non-profit organizations. Several major programs, including realty, tribal operations, **college** assistance, employment assistance, social services, and credit and finance, were until recently administered by AVCP in 23 area villages. However, in a recent bid for power, the **Orutsararmiut** Native Council (**ONC**) of Bethel decided to cancel its contractual **ar-** rangement with **AVCP**, concerning the management of these programs and to assume their management, causing AVCP to **lose** approximately **one-** third of its working capital.

Equally destructive of the relationship between AVCP and its constituency has been the charge of mismanagement of the programs under its control. For example, the temporary collapse of **AVCP's** college assistance program due to overspending elicited irate accusations from students that they had unfairly been encouraged to attend college and then left in the lurch at the last moment.

On the positive side, the administrative staff of AVCP **also** provides general accounting and auditing services for the 57 villages in the region. . They conduct training for village accountants, auditing

finances and reconciling accounts. A **village** government specialist on **the AVCP** staff is responsible for the organic documents **of** the member **villages**, and is **also** engaged in the revitalization **of** moribund **traditional** councils. **Other AVCP** personnel assist **villages** in writing grant proposals and administering grant funds from federal and state agencies. Although the full impact **of** this decentralization on **Native** self-government has yet to **be** determined, it does seem to have revived traditional councils in villages and strengthened the **roles** of federally chartered IRA corporations (**McBeath, 1980:72**).

#### **THE ISSUE OF BOROUGH GOVERNMENT**

Since the passage of **ANCSA**, the formation **of REAAs** and the federal Indian programs noted above have been the two major processes of **de-**centralization that have continued the movement toward the development of regional self-government and service delivery. The proposal to give borough status to the study area has also been made. Last **year's bill** calling for the immediate organization of the Unorganized Borough originally met with stiff opposition in the study area. Calling the bill "premature," Chief Eddie Hoffman of **AVCP** testified that "we **all**, including the legislature, do not know what we are talking about." **Care-****ful** study of the issue was requested before any legislative action was taken.

A major obstacle to the formation of organized borough government in the study area, as in other rural regions of the state, has been the

Lack of an adequate tax base to support education and other local government programs. However, with the establishment by the state of REAAs and their increased commitment to provide for rural high school programs in rural villages, this obstacle may be evaporating. **In addition, state-municipal** revenue-sharing has grown, and it is likely that state funding for education and other **local** government activities will increase in the future as petroleum revenues flow into the state treasury. As a result, the study area faces progressively **lower** costs of incorporating as a borough. Also, the tax base of the study area continues to grow, although as we shall see (Chapter X: Economic Systems), not sufficiently to support its **full** share of the state's tax burden. There is also the problem that organization into a borough which may levy property taxes would potentially divest area residents and village corporations of their lands. However, the land bank provisions of the recently passed d-2 legislation provide a possible solution to this problem (see Conflicts section: Land Use Patterns).

At present AVCP is conducting a regional government feasibility study scheduled for completion by the close of 1981 to fully analyze the implications for the study area of the adoption of borough government.

A strong point in favor of **boroughization** is the fact that while **AVCP** has passed hundreds of resolutions dealing with health, education, transportation, communications, etc. since its creation, 95% or more of the resolutions have produced no results. Area residents feel that

a borough, on the other hand, **could** regulate by ordinance the handling **of** such issues. They feel that the federal government's free hand with regard to activities in the region could **also** be severely restrained by the existence of a borough. **While** at present the villages are **felt** by many area residents to be governed by federal and state agencies, **boroughization** means self-rule. Thus, as a political defense mechanism the advantages would **be** substantial, and many area residents now favor **boroughization** if the results of the study indicate that such a move is economically feasible. Alternative forms of regional government will also **be** considered. Although some area residents fear that through **boroughization** they would become the victim of another well-intentioned system, others agree with Harold Napoleon of **AVCP**:

**AVCP** cannot provide the answers because they are not responsible, nor is Community and **Regional** Affairs. . . . The advisory government that has existed since statehood is no longer adequate. . . . Money **should** be a secondary focus. . . the **question is: Do** we want self rule, or not? . . . Village people have compromised **all** the way down the line. A "no" to organization means the agencies **will** continue to run this area the **way they** do now. (Tundra Drums, **10/4/79: 10**).

#### **THE ISSUE OF BETHEL'S MUNICIPAL STATUS**

**The** same concerns that affect area residents' reception of the idea of borough government for the region also surface in their attitudes toward changing Bethel's status from a second-class to a first-class city. There can be no doubt that Bethel would have more flexibility in its ability to raise required revenues and provide expanded services if it

were a first-class city. Community attitudes, however, show that residents have a negative attitude about reclassification to first-class status and the assumption of the educational power (see Derbyshire and Associates, Vol. I: Community Attitude Survey, 1980). The question of whether the city could take on the education powers is the main roadblock in the move toward first-class city status. Under the present funding schedule the city would have to take on a greatly expanded budget and service responsibility. At the same time, the Lower Kuskokwim School District would be split almost in half, remaining responsible only for its outlying schools (Derbyshire and Associates, 1981:18).

There are two legislative actions that may affect Bethel's decision to reclassify. First, as of mid-1981, the state's school foundation program will pay 100 percent of its instructional unit grants to all school districts. Thus, the formation of a city school district would have less direct financial disincentives than currently exist. Another major change that could make Bethel's reclassification to first-class status easier would be the elimination of education as a mandatory function of first-class cities.

#### Conflicts Within and Between Political Systems

Several important areas of conflict exist between the different levels of political organization affecting the study area. The conflict within the region between community and regional nonprofit corporations

**over** the administration of federal and state funds has already been mentioned. The political implications of the issue of subsistence **will** be detailed further along (see Chapter X: Economic Systems: The Politics **of** Subsistence). **Here** regional organizations present a **united** front in opposition to outside interests **at** both the federal and state **level** perceived to represent a threat to the maintenance of subsistence hunting and fishing as priority **activities**. Regional interests sometimes join with state interests to oppose the federal government on subsistence issues, join with federal interests to oppose state policy on others, and on others make a bid for local control. However, the residents of the study area consistently back **policy** which is supportive of subsistence as a priority activity.

Until recently, although both the federal and state government systems were often perceived as out of touch with regional needs, federal systems were more likely to be placed in a favorable light. This was partly because **of** the considerable revenue derived from federal sources operating services in the region, and **partly** because the state government was seen as synonymous with special interest **groups, e.g.,** urban interests, sport hunters, **etc.,** whose goals and values are opposed to those of area residents. However, as a result **of** proposed **OCS** development and the recent federal cutbacks, the federal government is increasingly being cast as the bad guy. **Unless** federal agencies look seriously at **local** needs and priorities, their relationship with the population of the study area is bound to continue to deteriorate.

Numerous areas of conflict exist between the different levels of political organization affecting the study area. Although the following **list** is not exhaustive, all major areas of conflict are discussed.

### **INTRA-REGIONAL CONFLICT**

Although on the whole there is a strong sense of regional unity in the study area, conflict exists within the corporations on both the regional and local level. Not all area residents feel that they are fully informed about or participate in regional political decisions in either the profit or the nonprofit corporations. Geographical distance and communication barriers also exacerbate a sense of political disunity.

On the regional level, since the passage of **ANCSA, Calista** has provided effective governance in reviewing financial plans and land decisions for both the villages and the region. They have **also** been active in identifying resource potential within the region, providing technical assistance to village corporations, and working with BLM to assure that provisions of **ANCSA** are carried out. When the corporation was originally set up, it was predicted that conflict would spring up between the regional corporation and the villagers/shareholders due to the mandated profit motive of the corporation and the more traditional orientation of the population. It has also been projected that OCS development in the study area **will** focus this conflict, with the regional corporation looking to make a profit from such development,



while villagers seek to maintain their subsistence resource base. This conflict may be exacerbated as Calista gains economic and political power relative to the oil industry through future land conveyance by which it receives title to lands that the oil industry might need as staging areas for development within the region.

At present, the corporation shareholders are as concerned about how the "profits" (so far non-existent) will finally be allocated as they are as to how it will be made. According to one concerned shareholder:

The older generation are going to be gone before they get any type of benefits from Calista Corp. They should be considered and acted on -- they deserve something, (Tundra Drums, Letter to the Editor, 9/7/80).

Not only has Calista been under criticism for its failure to produce dividends, but it is under considerable pressure to begin to invest locally, in order to help the local economy. As one area resident put it, if they're going to lose 7 million dollars, why not at least lose it in the region.<sup>3</sup> Finally, shareholders are increasingly demanding more involvement, not less, in corporate affairs.

This past year has also seen considerable activity on the part of Bethel Native Corporation shareholders. Upon the receipt by the corporation in the summer of 1980 of over \$3.7 million from the state government as a portion of their ANCSA allotment, 500 BNC shareholders signed a petition asking that some of the money be given out in the form of a dividend payment. Arguments similar to that expressed by

the **Calista** shareholder were voiced in favor of such a dividend, e.g., that the older generation should see some direct benefit in their lifetime. Parenthetically, the emphasis on the privilege and respect due the region's elderly is not merely rhetorical, but reflects a culturally specific value hierarchy which places great emphasis on the merits of the elderly, as well as the need to distribute rather than accumulate profits.

In regard to the dividend demand, shareholders originally stated that the move was not a negative action or an expression of lack of confidence in the BNC board, but rather represented a positive call to action and involvement on the part of the shareholders. This was in marked contrast to the current feelings of some corporation shareholders toward **Calista**. Beverly Hoffman, a BNC shareholder, characterized that feeling as generally negative. "In comparison (with **Calista**) our BNC is doing really well. We **feel** 100% better about our corporation than about **Calista**" (Iundra Drums, 7/17/80, p. 1). However, as stated, that attitude toward **Calista** may also be turning around.

This commitment to the local community corporation (in this case, BNC) over the regional corporation is characteristic of many area communities. As has been mentioned, **Bethel** residents are presently seeking to change their municipal status in order to increase their maneuverability as well as to present a more unified front. They are also developing their own CZM plan separate from that being developed for

the region as a whole. This "village **first**" mentality of the residents of the regional **center** emphasizes the similarity between Bethel and village political consciousness. **Also**, although Bethel residents are in some respects more politically savvy than their village counterparts, and although there is a difference in **scale** in the **kinds** of decisions being made, there is wide variation between the villages themselves in their ability to **mobilize** for political action.

**To pursue** the issue of factionalism within one **community**, the initial request for dividend payments **by BNC** shareholders last summer was followed by a series of internal conflicts that are presently continuing to cause trouble between **BNC** management and the shareholders. Since that time, the general manager has come under increasing criticism for poor performance. A management review was promised **by** the board, but this has still not taken **place**. The promised **dividends** also remain unpaid. Finally, in May of **1981**, three BNC shareholders filed suit against the BNC directors. The plaintiffs maintain that the defendants refused to provide a full and fair disclosure to the entire board of directors of BNC of **all** the material information regarding the financial status of Elm Fisheries, before the BNC board voted to purchase **51%** of the company for half a million dollars at a hastily called meeting last December. Charges of conflict of interest have also been made against board members leading to a reshuffling of top-ranking personnel.

Not only are there conflicts internal to the profit corporations, but factionalism within the nonprofits, including AVCP, **YKHC**, and AVCP Employment and Training, has led **to** a substantial changing of the guard in 1981. Also, although AVCP is generally looked at favorably within the study area, and is felt to be fulfilling its mandate to administer to IRA councils and traditional tribal governments, there is the rising sentiment among area residents that rural municipalities need an organization specifically designed to address their particular problems. In order to provide an alternative, a mayor's conference was called in Bethel this past May as a political informational body focusing explicitly on municipal problems rather than tribal concerns. Although numerous resolutions were passed, it has yet to be seen whether or not periodic meetings of **this** sort will result in significant solutions for municipal problems.

#### THE RURAL/URBAN CONFLICT

This area of conflict is neither new to the state nor unique to the study area. Its most dramatic articulation is in the suggestion by **AVCP's** Chief Eddie Hoffman (among others) that western Alaska be designated as the independent state, **Alaskachak** (lit. piece of Alaska). The proposal is seen as an answer to bush Alaska's difficulty in dealing with the anti-rural feeling now being expressed by many urbanites. The principal reason for the move is the feeling that rural Alaska is continually short-changed by the state government, even though the bush holds most of the state's revenue-gaining resources, particularly

salmon and petroleum. The proponents of the new state listed several conditions that **led** them to suggest the change. Included were the subsistence repeal movement, the proposed capital move and a recently passed municipal aid bill intended to reduce statewide property taxes but which would mostly benefit urban areas. For Bethel and the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** delta villages, this urban bias has recently been exacerbated by the problem of **declining** influence due to short-counting in the census, as **well** as the lessening influence of its three-term senator, George **Hohman**, the target of a grand jury investigation and the subject of the Senator Hohman Defense Fund Committee, also chaired by AVCP Chief Eddie Hoffman.

#### LAND USE PATTERNS

The issue of present and future **land use** patterns is one of the chief areas of conflict between regional corporations, both profit and non-profit, and the federal and state governments. In developing d-2 legislation, regulatory control over **land** and sea resources was as big an issue as land ownership. Although the **bill** as passed is nearly 450 pages long, it **only** sets down the general **guideines** which the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to follow in managing the land. In the following months, **USFWS will** make specific regulations to implement the broad provisions of the **bill**, and it is these regulations which will determine the **bill's** success or failure. As they say on the **delta**, you **can't eat** a regulation, but what's worse, regulations can make it so you can't eat, period!

According to traditional patterns of land use, the land and sea have little intrinsic worth but are chiefly valued for the plant and animal resources that they provide. It is the fate of these renewable resources that chiefly concerns area residents. All Native communities were traditionally and continue to be located on the coast or riverbanks in order to allow exploitation of these resources. As we have seen, seasonal activities still require the movement of people to subsistence camps on coastal rivers and inland lakes and streams.

Restrictive regulatory controls could create a real hardship. It was for this reason that representatives of both AVCP and **Calista** lobbied in Washington before passage of the d-2 legislation. Areas of special concern were the change of status of the southern half of **Nunivak** Island as well as two volcanic areas near **Hooper** Bay from wilderness designation (the most restrictive of all designations in terms of development).

Along with the issue of regulation, land ownership becomes important in relation to proposed OCS development. Both exploration and development may well require coastal land for staging areas and for the location of onshore facilities. By virtue of their traditional patterns of land use, most of the land claimed and owned by area residents is coastal. Thus, the corporations and individual land owners will have a particularly intense vested interest in OCS activity that may impact the maritime environment utilized from their **coastally** located lands (see following section: OCS Exploration and Development).

A further problem **is** that **the** majority of **ANCSA** land has not yet been conveyed **or** in some cases even agreed upon. **In** fact, the **Calista** and **Doyon** regions have the two **lowest totals** of land conveyed to them by the Bureau of Land Management of any regional corporations in the state. <sup>4</sup>

Federal and state land selections are also still unsettled. Also, given the recent cutbacks in the budget of the Bureau of Land Management (**BLM**), **it** appears that BLM work **could** be delayed indefinitely. Speaking to this need, **AVCP** and **Calista** are jointly heading a campaign to organize volunteer efforts among the villages and village corporations to provide BLM with the information it needs to keep the allotment processing **going**. BLM has indicated a willingness to accept the information provided through this community effort and **will** provide technical assistance. Also, once it is conveyed, the problem of holding onto the land comes up, especially when it becomes taxable. The land bank amendment of the present d--2 legislation speaks to this issue.

Because of the limited amount of privately owned land, as **well** as the restrictive status of most potential federal land ownership in the study area (as refuges, wilderness area, national monuments, . etc.), **it** is **likely** that industry **will** find itself in a situation of having to deal with Native corporation land owners for coastal access. Already AMOCO Production Company has obtained a joint venture contractual agreement for exploratory **drilling** near the villages of **Emmonak** and

**Alakanuk.**<sup>5</sup> **Calista** has an interest in developing onshore oil and gas on the coast only under the strict provisions of exploration and extraction that could not possibly contaminate any of the drainage waterways of the coast. A major goal of **Calista** has been to gain title to and control of the coastal areas within the region and to select available coastal land between village corporations in order to achieve this goal. Both regional and village corporation officials stress that only through coastal land withdrawal and an effective role in management of coastal lands can they protect the resources they so highly value. The development of the economic potential of the coast cannot be ignored by **Calista** or the village profit corporations as they are mandated under **ANCSA** to turn a profit.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, careless development in this sensitive area **would** be disastrous.<sup>7</sup> Similarly,

The wilderness ring which circles **Nunivak Island** creates interesting problems for Mekoryuk villagers. There have been rumors floating around that, if oil and gas deposits are found in the **Navarin** Basin, the oil industry **plans** to build a landfall base somewhere on **Nunivak** Island. The oil industry had been looking at Nash harbor, on the eastern part of the Island's northern shore, as a potential location for this landfall. However, that area is now classified as wilderness and therefore such a base could not now be built there. Thus, if the industry **still** wants to **build** a landfall on Nunivak Island the only **place** they **could** do it **would** be on village selection land. Thus, the village might be able to negotiate for some benefits from the oil industry in exchange for the industry using their land. The Mekoryuk villagers might be facing some very difficult decisions about whether to allow development to occur on their lands and if so, what concessions they will want to obtain from the oil industry in exchange. (Harem, 1981:25).



Finally, **in** consideration of patterns of land use, **it** must be remembered that aside from the Native corporations, the next largest potential land owners **in** the study area are the state and federal governments. However, area residents often do not recognize, or, if they do, deeply resent, this legal ownership of what they consider their birthright. Their reaction to last **year's** exercise of executive powers through the Antiquities Act to withdraw and establish regulations over 10,600,000 acres of land within the study area designating them as the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge is a case in point. Forty-two of the **villages** in the AVCP region are either totally surrounded or adjacent to this newly created refuge. When the withdrawal was first announced, **Calista** Corporation, the village corporations, and AVCP all vowed to work closely together so that in the development of rules and regulations for the implementation of this Secretarial order, their rights and property would be **protected**. **It** is important to point out at this point the bitter irony that area residents felt at these withdrawals, which essentially protected onshore **lands** for customary and basically noncommercial human usage for purposes of "national interests," while the adjacent outer continental shelf was at the same time opened to oil exploration and development in the face of substantial environmental hazards, again in the name of national and state interests (Ellanna, 1980).

Finally, under the present d-2 legislation, **local** and regional advisory committees composed of **local** residents have been set up to ensure that **local** residents have a say in the management of the fish and wildlife

resources in the study area. The bill gives the state the responsibility to carry out this **organization**.<sup>8</sup>

#### OCS EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Proposed **OCS** exploration and development is a particularly sensitive issue in the study area because of the high stakes involved in both a positive and negative sense. OCS development in the study area is felt by many area residents to pose tremendous environmental risks as well as potentially high economic gain.

Village residents, learning of OCS from a special AVCP convention [in March 1980] in **Aḷukanuk** [sic], a Yukon Delta village merely 8 miles from the proposed offshore leasing area, were concerned that the coastal tundra, which supports the majority of Pacific Flyway's geese and ducks, and the marine **mammal** and salmon of the Yukon Delta, would suffer irreparable damage from premature oil development without proper safeguards established in testing cold water systems in less environmentally sensitive regions. (Tundra Drums, 1980).

Along with the issue of oil spills that would jeopardize both commercial fishing and subsistence resources (see Economic Systems: Subsistence), the other major concern expressed during the three-day meeting was the socioeconomic impact of onshore facilities built to support and maintain offshore drilling platforms. Although unemployment is, next to alcoholism, the biggest recognized problem in the region, delegates were doubtful as to whether villagers would qualify for technical positions if and when they became available. This concern is best expressed by Diane Carpenter of Bethel when she explained that "the

**region is** not against economic development, **but** we want that economic development to support and maintain the life-style. We don't want **it** to come in and make a **lot** of money for everybody **else** and destroy what is here for people who are making a **living here**" (Tundra Drums, 7(34):14).

The regional quandary is **captured** by Kenneth Marshall of Bethel: "I'd hate to see an **oil spill** but at the same time, **I'd** hate to see the price of gasoline go up to \$2.00/gallon, or **more**. What we need **to** do is **balance** it out" (Tundra Drums, 4/3/80).

If **local** employment (through vocational training programs or on-the-job training) and a **clean** environment (through adequate development and clean-up technology) **could** be guaranteed, the region might begin to favor **oil** exploration. However, at **present**

Only three percent of Bethel's residents favor the immediate development **of** Alaska's offshore **oil** potential, preferring to wait five to ten years, after communities have had time **to** prepare.

Asked about possible drilling for offshore oil in the **Bering** Sea, **fully** 78% . . . felt that **it would** harm their lifestyle, **while only** 13% felt that it **would** improve their lifestyle. (Tundra Drums, 7(49):8).

Responding to these concerns, a delegation consisting of representatives of the boards of Nunam Kitlutsisti, the **AVCP** Executive Committee, and the chairman of the newly elected Coastal Resource Service Area Board went to Congress **last** spring to present **a** resolution **to** have both the Norton and **Navarin** Basin **sales** delayed five **years** in order to **allow**

time for the following: 1) technology development for ice conditions; 2) protection for marine resources and Native subsistence; 3) time for the villages to prepare for development; and 4) time for the Coastal Resource Service Area Board to approve the coastal zone management plan for the Yukon delta.

Although many residents feel **that** no development would be best for the area at present, they are pessimistic that national interests and industry can be curbed. Planning for the inevitable is seen as critical. Although development cannot be stopped, it can and should be contained. For this reason **AVCP, Nunam Kitlutsisti**, and other regional organizations have emphasized delay of the pending lease sales in order to allow time for the development of such a plan. Although the pleas for delay have been virtually ignored, planning has continued. In order to facilitate this planning, **Nunam Kitlutsisti** has continued to hold meetings with **village** residents, as well as with industry representatives, and to provide support for village governments in responding to industry requests.

**Along** with facilitating village/industry communication, **Nunam Kitlutsisti** has also been active in initiating sea mammal and fisheries research, and, beginning in the fall of 1979, organizing the regional Coastal Resource Service Area (**CRSA**) Board under the Coastal Zone Management Act (**CZM**) which is responsible for effecting coastal zone planning in the study area. The aim of the coastal planning effort is to protect the shoreline and develop strategies for its use. Such

issues as designation of subsistence zones, public access, protection of areas of historical importance and wildlife habitats are also involved.

In the fall of 1980, the CRSA Board met jointly with Kawerak to plan strategy for future action and to coordinate the Seward Peninsula and AVCP stance with regard to Norton Sound OCS development. The CRSA Board has since developed a work plan which has allowed it to secure the needed funds appropriated by the state to go ahead with some of the detailed technical work slated by the plan.<sup>9</sup>

Nunam Kitlutsisti, working as staff for the seven-member CRSA board in conjunction with the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, will continue to work on the plan with Derbyshire and Associates through the remainder of the next two years until the final management plan is developed. Once the resource area has devised its CZM plan, it must submit it for approval first to the Alaska Coastal Policy Council (ACPC) which, in turn, submits the approved plan to the state legislature. Approval by the ACPC is not automatic. The only CZM plan submitted to it so far has been that from the North Slope Borough (NSB). The NSB met stiff resistance to a number of items included in its CZM plan, throwing serious doubts on the possibility of a local plan which goes against the desires of these bodies actually getting approved.

Another sore point is that although the study area's CZM plan is due to be completed by December of 1981, approval by the two state bodies

may take many months. The whole point of planning and zoning is to allow for the enactment of ordinances which **would** exempt whole areas from development. However, by the present schedule, by the time they have drawn up the **area's** CZM study plan, the federal environmental assessment process and the subsequent leasing of the OCS tracts will have already taken place.<sup>10</sup>

OCS exploration and development has continued as a critical area of concern in regional political action. The February 1981 mid-year convention of AVCP echoed the concerns of the convention **at Alakanuk.**<sup>11</sup> Ironically, all of **AVCP's** delegates to the convention had their transportation costs to and from Bethel (the site of the meeting) paid for by ARCO. When asked whether he felt there was some inconsistency about allowing an oil company to sponsor a meeting to discuss oil issues, Mr. Jack [then president of **AVCP**] responded that, "Even though it's ARCO money, it has been sanitized through **ANF,**" which had recently accepted funds to facilitate an "information exchange" between villagers and the oil industry. Needless to say, this justification failed to satisfy many area residents. At the same time, many Bethel residents were equally perturbed when a meeting between the Alaska Oil and Gas Association (**AOGA**) and Bethel residents, scheduled to take place in the spring of 1981, was **cancelled** by **AVCP's** Harold Napoleon and **AOGA** representatives were temporarily barred from the delta. This action was due to **AOGA's** failure to ask permission of AVCP before they made similar presentations in three area **villages (Toksook Bay, Hooper Bay, and Chevak)** earlier that year.<sup>12</sup>

Instead of the **local** presentation, the **AVCP** board traveled to Anchorage to review the OCS presentation and **to** visit two offshore production platforms located in Cook Inlet. **Mr.** Napoleon noted that **while** the trip to **Kenai** was informative, **AVCP's** position **vis-à-vis** the oil companies has not changed. **"We** asked for a five-year **delay** (in the five-year lease schedule) and that was not **done**. We don't want the **oil** companies in Norton Sound or the Navarin Basin." AOGA representatives will be allowed **to** travel **to** the villages in the **fall** after fishing, but only accompanied by the AVCP Task Force on OCS, in **order** to ensure that both sides of the issue are presented.

This action on the part of AVCP did not meet with area-wide approval. Bethel residents objected strongly **to AVCP's** canceling of the information meeting. However, their reaction does not reflect a bullish attitude toward **oil** development such as the one that characterizes the non-Native business **community** of Nome in opposition to village residents in that region. On the contrary, **Bethel** Native residents were as angry at **AVCP** as were non-Native residents, feeling that AVCP had usurped the prerogatives of the elected **governing** body of the City (the Council) without consulting the resident population.

In opposition to the Bering Straits/Norton Sound study area, the **AVCP** region **by** and **large** presents a much more united front in terms of area-wide concerns relative to future OCS exploration and development, and the pro-development business interest characteristic of Nome does not exist in nearly such **an** articulate or powerful form **in** Bethel. **In**

Bethel, the City Council is predominately Native (five Native members), none of whom would condone development in the region that would seriously jeopardize subsistence activities, and all of whom insist on being consulted and informed as to the issues before they are said to be for or against something **by AVCP.**

Finally, as mentioned in the foregoing section on **boroughization** of the study area, recent federal and state activities with regard to proposed oil development, among other things, have tipped the balance enough in favor of self-government that what was anathema several years ago is now a real alternative. Villagers feel that they will need a strong central government to represent them before federal and state governments and the oil industry when and if they begin developing the Norton and **Navarin** basins.<sup>13</sup> At the present time, although the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** CRSA board has been established to draft a coastal zone management plan for the AVCP region, it does not have the means to implement and enforce its plan. When and if it is ever approved by the state legislature, an organized borough would have the right, the power and the means to enforce any plan that is adopted by the state. Otherwise, area villages will have to depend on state government to look after their interests, and they are not optimistic over that alternative.

The opinion that non-local control is equivalent to no control is based in part on the study area's reading of the experience of the North Slope Borough. They are well aware of the fact that when local interest



on the North Slope was in conflict with the state interest, it was overridden. Yet, the advantages that **boroughization** has given the North Slope are also visible. Although younger in terms of political experience, through shrewd observation the **AVCP** region is quickly coming of age. **This** recent "modernization" in political activity, **evident** in the force and direction of the resolutions that came out of the **Atakanuk** meeting, as **well** as the recent plea for better information on which to make decisions in relation **to** the future economic growth of the region, comes none too soon. But the relative unity of the region in its defense of **subsistence** as well as planned **economic** growth bodes **well** for its ability to deal successfully with future development.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Access to higher education was initially used as an escape by women from joining the local political process, rather than as a means of effective participation. Increasingly, however, Native women in the study area are beginning to work to change the power structure in the village (e.g., the work of the Tundra Women's Coalition) rather than moving out of the village as a solution to their problems.

2

Settler's Bay Properties, a **Wasilla-area** development built in anticipation of **capital-move** efforts, which has lost \$2.4 million in the past two years;

A proposed shopping development **at** Pier 48 in Seattle, which has gone undeveloped and has cost **Calista** \$11,500 per month -- or about \$300,000 to date -- in lease payments since October 1978;

The R & R travel agency chain, which also has lost money consistently;

**ESCA-Tech** Corporation, which suffered a \$311,000 loss this past fiscal year. ESCA-Tech's Anchorage office will be closed, while offices in Seattle and Los Angeles will continue to operate.

The **Calista** Sea, Prospector, **Inc.'s** fishing vessel was damaged during last October's storm and missed half of the king crab season. The crew of the vessel also participated in the strike for higher crab prices, adding further to the decrease in Prospector's productivity. This venture lost \$70,184 in 1980.

Cal-Mar Company is not operating, and reported a loss of just over \$4,000. . . . Cal-Mar will be the prime contractor for construction of the Pier **48** project in Seattle, "if the project is completed as planned." (**Calista** Annual Report, 1980).

<sup>3</sup> Tundra Drums Letter to the Editor, **Quinhagak** fisherman, name **withheld, by request**, 6/29/80:

Fishing is our renewable resource. It will be around for many more years to come, and so is the most important resource of **Calista** region, its people. And why is **Calista** turned the other way and concentrating on interests outside of the region to stimulate the economy elsewhere, when they **could** have started at home first?

Only six **Calista-area** villages have received patents and conveyances for the estimated 6,214,931 acres due them under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. These villages have received about **11** percent of the total amount due in the region. Meanwhile, **Calista** itself has not received any land.

. . . [T]he problem with both **Calista** and **Doyon** is the navigability issue. . . The corporations and the state are having to determine what water courses in the region the state is entitled to.

. . . [A]s draft documents are drawn up, the **state** objects to decisions made on navigability and the corporations have to back off. He said in some instances the parties are having to go through a lengthy, formal, appeal process. So far, **Alakanak** has received 124,805 acres; Bethel, 138,328 acres; Emmonak, **121,368** acres; **Kwethluk, 131,049** acres; **Quinhagak, 103,052** acres; and **St. Mary's 107,541** acres. (Tundra Drums, 1980).

Begun in 1978, AMOCO pays **Calista** \$150,000 a year for three years, receiving exclusive exploration rights. Following that, **Calista** will receive \$100,000 a year, extended on a year-to-year basis.

If AMOCO does find and begins to produce oil and gas, **Calista** will receive one-twelfth of the net profits in addition to a one-sixth royalty share. (Tundra Drums, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> In the summer of 1980, Nunam **Kitlutsisti** was charged with misrepresenting the villages on issues relating to oil development by

St. Mary's Village Corporation, which was at that time interested in entering into a development contract with the oil companies. The confusion was that while St. Mary's felt that Nunam Kitlutsisti was contesting its right to give permission for an oil explorer to go on the corporation land to make a survey, Nunam Kitlutsisti was only insisting that such permission be sought before exploration began. In fact, villages have repeatedly objected to Calista entering into development contracts with oil companies influencing lands owned by village corporations without getting approval of the village corporations or consulting them.

7 Contracts negotiated between the villages on the one hand and the AMOCO-Calista joint venture on the other are not always sound from the villages' point of view, with little evidence that the villages will benefit from any oil or gas discovery. Subsequent control or use of any discovered resources will be decided by AMOCO-Calista.

According to the joint venture contract between Amoco and Calista entered into on August 1, 1978, Amoco has agreed to pay Calista \$150,000 a year for the first three years for the right to explore on the corporation's land. After October 1, 1981, Calista will receive \$100,000 a year as the contract is renewed on a year to year basis.

If oil or gas production does begin, Calista will receive one-twelfth of the net profits, in addition to a one-sixth royalty share.

As to the distribution of any profits resulting from oil and gas development, Mr. Angapak [chairman of the board of Calista] said that "If there is any oil and gas found in our area, we'll all benefit." (Goldstein, 1980:17).

8

[I]t is anticipated that the State's presently existing fish and game advisory committees will be used to satisfy this requirement. Only if the State fails to satisfactorily organize and utilize these committees will the federal government take over these responsibilities. (Tundra Drums, 1980).

9

The overall purpose of the work program, . . . is "to accomplish, through self-determination,

a coastal management program that gives first priority to the maintenance and enhancement of the region's existing subsistence lifestyle. The development of the cash economy is **to be** given second priority as a program objective, different **alternatives** that **should** be explored for developing of renewable resources, the development of non-renewable resources, and work/subsistence job sharing" (Derbyshire and Associates, 1980a).

10

That we are now forced to cope with a **lease** sale in the Norton Sound and **Navarin** Basin' before our coastal zone management plan is written or implemented is totally unreasonable, and frustrates the goal of orderly coastal development as required by both the federal and state coastal zone management legislation.

Be advised that this is a major concern of my Board. We will join with others in continuing attempts **to** post-pone [sic] the lease schedule, and in examining courses of action which may still be open to us. (Letter to the Editor, Peter Black, Chairman, **Yukon-Kuskokwim** Coastal Resource Service Area Board. Tundra Drums, 6/26/80, p. **32**).

11 At the February convention,

[A] list of over 70 concerns were drawn up, including the threat of **oil** spills to both commercial and subsistence fishing, and the threat that development might have on the subsistence way of life still enjoyed by the area's villages. Several delegates pointed out that events were moving too fast and that they were not being kept up to date on **oil** and gas development issues. Another delegate wanted to know what plans the oil companies had **to** hire and train local residents.

[A third] delegate feared that **oil** development in the area would be temporary, would **create a false** economic boom and would disappear when the **oil** dried up, leaving the villages with the pieces to pick up.

With the announcement [in May] that 130 million acres of Alaskan land will now be opened for possible oil and gas exploration, Mr. Napoleon explained that area villagers are still lacking sufficient information to deal with the rapidly changing technology. "The oil industry is ready, the government is ready, but we are not," he said. (Tundra Drums, 6/1/80).

<sup>13</sup> AVCP'S Carl Jack told the Tundra Times, "No more can we enjoy the luxury of serving on advisory **committees while** letting others make the hard decisions. We must become true participants in our government is [sic] all of the issues" (Tundra Times, 4/2/80, p. 16).

x. ECONOMIC SYSTEMS: SYSTEMS OF  
PRODUCTION, EXCHANGE, AND DISTRIBUTION

Introduction

The term "economic system" used here involves the modes of production, distribution and exchange of material goods engaged in by a particular group of people. In the following discussion, two major kinds of activity within this system will be distinguished: subsistence and commercial. Although these may be isolated for analytical purposes, in real life they are inseparable.

Subsistence economic activity involves modes of production by the immediate family or local group for consumption, distribution and exchange within that local group. Accordingly, the exchange of goods and services is not accompanied by monetary payment. In commercial economic activity, on the other hand, labor is given a monetary value, and the cash payment received for **labor** is then used by the individual to purchase goods and services needed by the household and **local** group. **The** two modes of economic activity can also be distinguished by the fact that the goal of subsistence economic activity was traditionally, and is still to some extent, the accumulation of goods by the individual household in order that those goods might be given away. Only through the distribution of the products of labor was status attainable. The commercial or market economic system does not in itself emphasize the moral necessity of the distribution of the products of individual

labor. By this system, status is achieved through the accumulation of the goods that money can buy. The emphasis on the cycling rather than the accumulation of goods, touches on a key feature **of the** value system and social organization of which subsistence hunting and gathering activities form an integral part. This value system has been detailed and must always be kept in mind, for besides the economic function of subsistence activity (i.e., the actual use of resources for supplying food), it also serves to bring families together, express degrees of social relation, and perhaps most importantly, confirm the continuity in the relation between man and the natural world on which the traditional **Yup'ik** value system is founded.

Subsistence and cash economic activity are not two mutually exclusive modes of production, distribution and exchange. Thus, in the following discussion they will be treated as alternate and interrelated occupations rather than as separate systems. The degree of interrelation and mutual interdependence of these two modes of activity is a matter of much debate. After giving the parameters of the different domains, this interrelation **will** comprise the burden of the concluding sections of the discussion.

#### Subsistence Resource Availability by Village Group

As an introduction to the implications of the extensive use of subsistence resources within the study area, the subsistence utilization patterns will be described by village group. Although there is a definite



overlap in the kinds of resources harvested (see Table IV) and **the timing** of the harvest (see Figure III ), each village group, and in fact each village, has its own unique pattern of resource use, including differences in **types, numbers** and locations of fish and game species which are potentially harvestable. **As** if this were not complicated enough, a particular household may harvest any or none of the resources available in its particular area. Also, the use a particular family makes of the resources available to it may vary from year to year. In any event, a broad outline is necessary before the details of the situation can be understood.

The following **will** be a general discussion without attempting to **attach** cash value to takes or to do more than approximate the amount of each species taken. Problems in the tabulation of subsistence utilization patterns and the subsequent attempts to estimate the cash value of products of subsistence activity necessitate this **generality.**<sup>1</sup>

TABLE IV

SUBSISTENCE RESOURCES UTILIZED BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE  
NAVARIN BASIN STUDY AREA<sup>1</sup>

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>
<u>Sea Mammals</u>	<u>Genus</u> <u>Species</u>
Bearded seal	<b>Erignathus</b> barbatus
Ringed seal	Phoca hispida beafortania
Spotted seal	Phoca vitulina richardii
Ribbon seal	Phoca fasciata
Pacific walrus	<b>Odobenus</b> rosmarus
<b>Beluga</b> whale	<b>Delphinapterus</b> leucas
Sea lion	<b>Eumetopia</b> jubatas
 <u>Waterfowl</u>	
King eider	Somateria
Spectacle eider	<b>Somateria</b> spectabilis
<b>Steller's</b> eider	<b>Polysticta</b> stelleri
Common eider	<b>Somateria</b> mollissima
Old-squaw	<b>Clanqula</b> hyemalis
Pintail	Anas acuta
Black brant	Branta nigricans
Snow goose	Chen hyperborea
White-fronted goose	<b>Anser</b> albifrons
Canada goose	<b>Branta</b> canadensis
Emperor goose	<b>Pilacte</b> canagica
<b>Sandhill</b> crane	Grus canadensis
<b>Common murre</b>	Uris aalge
Willow ptarmigan	Lagopus lagopus
Mallard	Anas platyrhncos
 <u>Fish</u>	
Pacific herri ng	<b>Clupea</b> pallasii
King salmon	<b>Oncorhynchus</b> tshawytscha
Silver salmon	Oncorhyncus kisutch
Chum salmon	Oncorhyncus keta
Humpback salmon	<b>Oncorhyncus</b> gorbuscha
Sockeye salmon	<b>Oncorhyncus</b> nerka
Broad whi tefi sh	<b>Coregonus</b> nasus
Humpback whi tefi sh	<b>Coregonus</b> pi dschi an
Arctic cisco	<b>Coregonus</b> autumnalis
Least cisco	<b>Coregonus</b> albul a
Sheefi sh	Stenodus leucichthys

TABLE IV (cont'd.)

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>
<b>Caplin</b>	<b>Mallotus villosus</b>
Boreal smelt	<b>Osmerus eperlamus</b>
<b>Blackfish</b>	<b>Dallia pectoralis</b>
<b>Cod</b>	(several species)
Northern pike	<b>Esox lucius</b>
Arctic flounder	<b>Liopsetta glacialis</b>
Starry flounder	<b>Pleuronectes stellatus</b>
<b>Grayling</b>	<b>Thymallus arcticus</b>
Pacific halibut	<b>Hippoglossus stenolepis</b>
Slimy sculpin	<b>Cottus cognatus</b>
<b>Burbot/loche</b> fish	Lotsiota
Arctic char	<b>Salvelinus alpinus</b>
Lake trout	<b>Salvelinus namaycush</b>
<b>Dolly Varden</b>	<b>Salvelinus malma</b>
Rainbow trout	<b>Salmo gairdneri</b>
<b>Needlefish/stickleback</b>	<b>Pungitius pungitius</b>
Mussels	(several species)
Clams	<b>Macoma calcearia</b>
 <u>Land Mammals</u>	
Moose	<b>Alces alces</b>
Reindeer/caribou	<b>Rangifer tarandus</b>
Musk Ox	
Beaver	Castor canadensis
Mink	<b>Mustela vison</b>
Red fox	<b>Vulpes fulva</b>
White fox	
<b>Otter</b>	
Arctic hare	Lepus americana
Muskrat	Ondatra zibethica
Arctic ground squirrel	<b>Citellus parryi</b>
 <u>Plants</u>	
<b>Willow</b> leaves	<b>Salix</b> species
Sourdock	Rumex archius
<b>Salmonberry</b>	<b>Rubus chamaemorus</b>
Crowberry	<b>Empetrum nigrum</b>
Blueberry	<b>Vaccinium uliginosum</b>
<b>Whortleberry</b>	<b>Vaccinium uliginosum</b>
Driftwood	
<b>Alder</b>	
<b>Spruce</b>	
<b>Birch</b>	

TABLE IV (cont'd.)

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>
Seaweed	
Mousefood	
Greens, unspecified	
Marsh marigold	<b>Caltha palustris</b>
Wild parsnip	Ligusticum <b>huttonis</b>
Rye grass	<b>Elymus mollis</b>
Wild celery	<b>Angelica lucida</b>
Rhubarb	
<b>Yarrow</b>	
Wild spinach	

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**1** Not all of the resources listed above are used in each of the villages and village groups of the study area. However, enough overlap exists to make a comprehensive list useful.

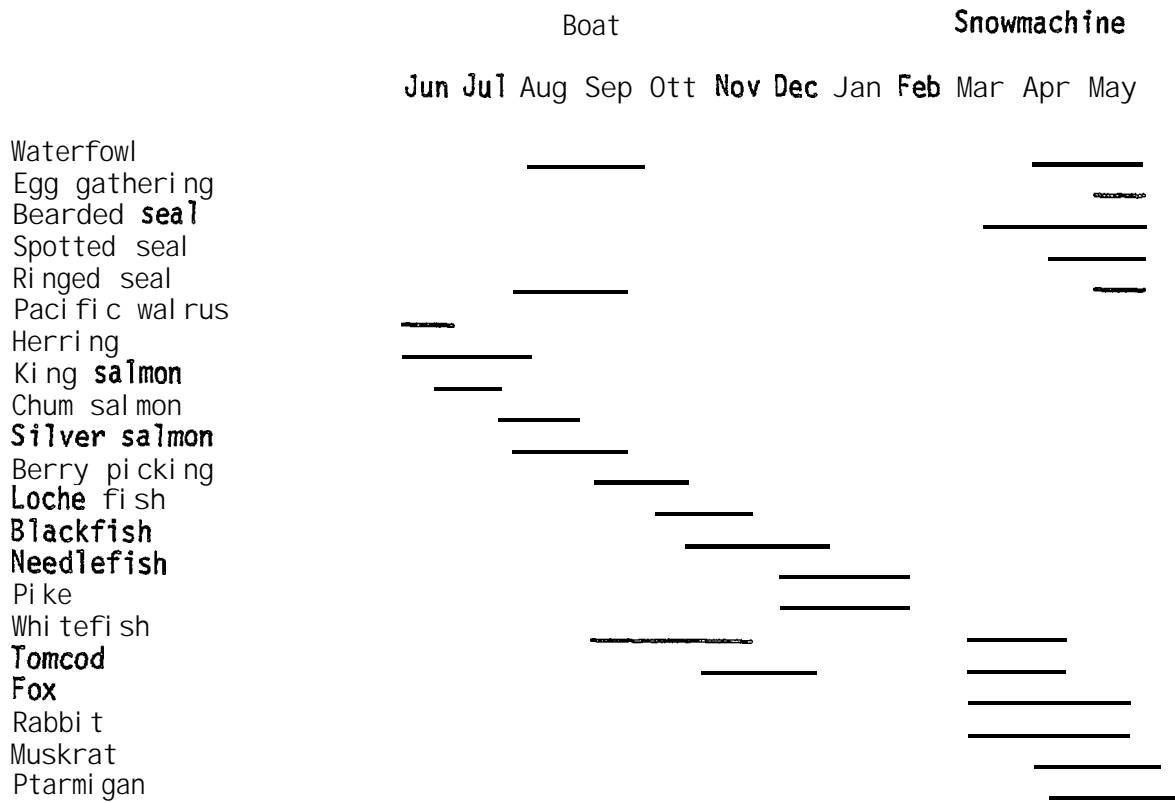


FIGURE 3. SEASONAL ROUND IN THE COASTAL VILLAGES OF THE NAVARIN BASIN STUDY AREA.

## HOOPER BAY/CHEVAK<sup>2</sup>

The spring begins in Hooper Bay and **Chevak** with the return of the seals. Both bearded seals and smaller hair seals are hunted from wooden or aluminum skiffs first in the open water off the coast to the south of the Bay, following the drift ice when the tide goes out, and eventually in the Bay itself and in the river mouths, where they come to feed as the ice recedes. Walrus, and occasionally **beluga**, are also available in the late spring and are hunted in the open water beyond the bay.

Both seals and **beluga** are hunted again in the fall as they return down the coast on their way south for the winter. During this season, however, seals are usually harvested when they are following fish upriver, and are taken sporadically, like the **beluga**, when men are out fishing.

Following the seals, flocks of waterfowl return from their winter nesting grounds for a **summer's** east on the open tundra. In the area around Hooper Bay, thousands of geese congregate and lay their eggs.

The mud flats and low surroundings directly north of **Hooper** Bay, around Manayagavik Slough, provide nourishment for the Canadian geese, emperor geese, and black brant, as well as various species of ducks. The higher peninsula to the south attracts white-fronted geese, swans and cranes. Geese and ducks no longer nest east of the village by the airport.

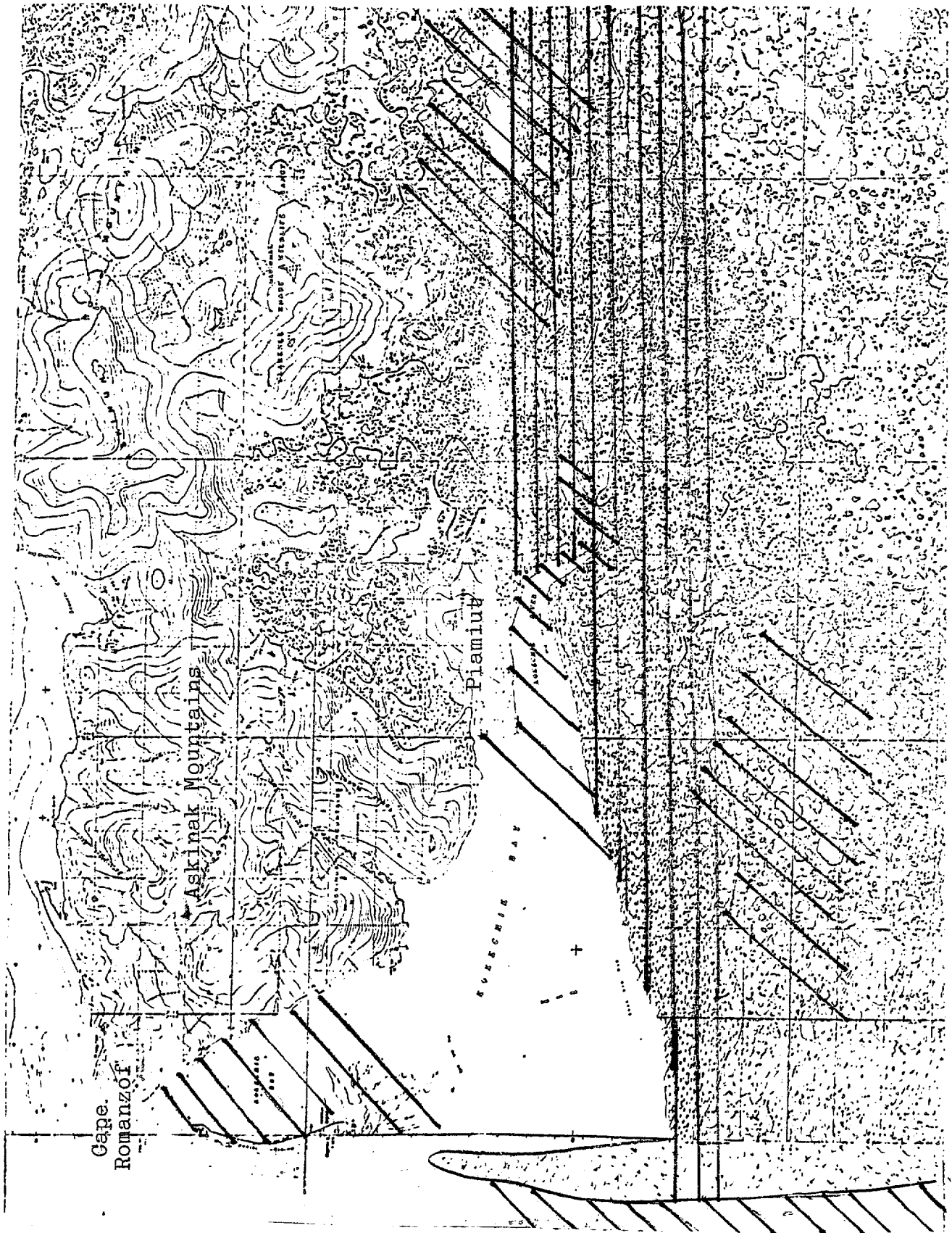


FIGURE 4. HOOPER BAY/CHEVAK\*

\*Figure does not represent full extent of area used for subsistence harvest by named village group.

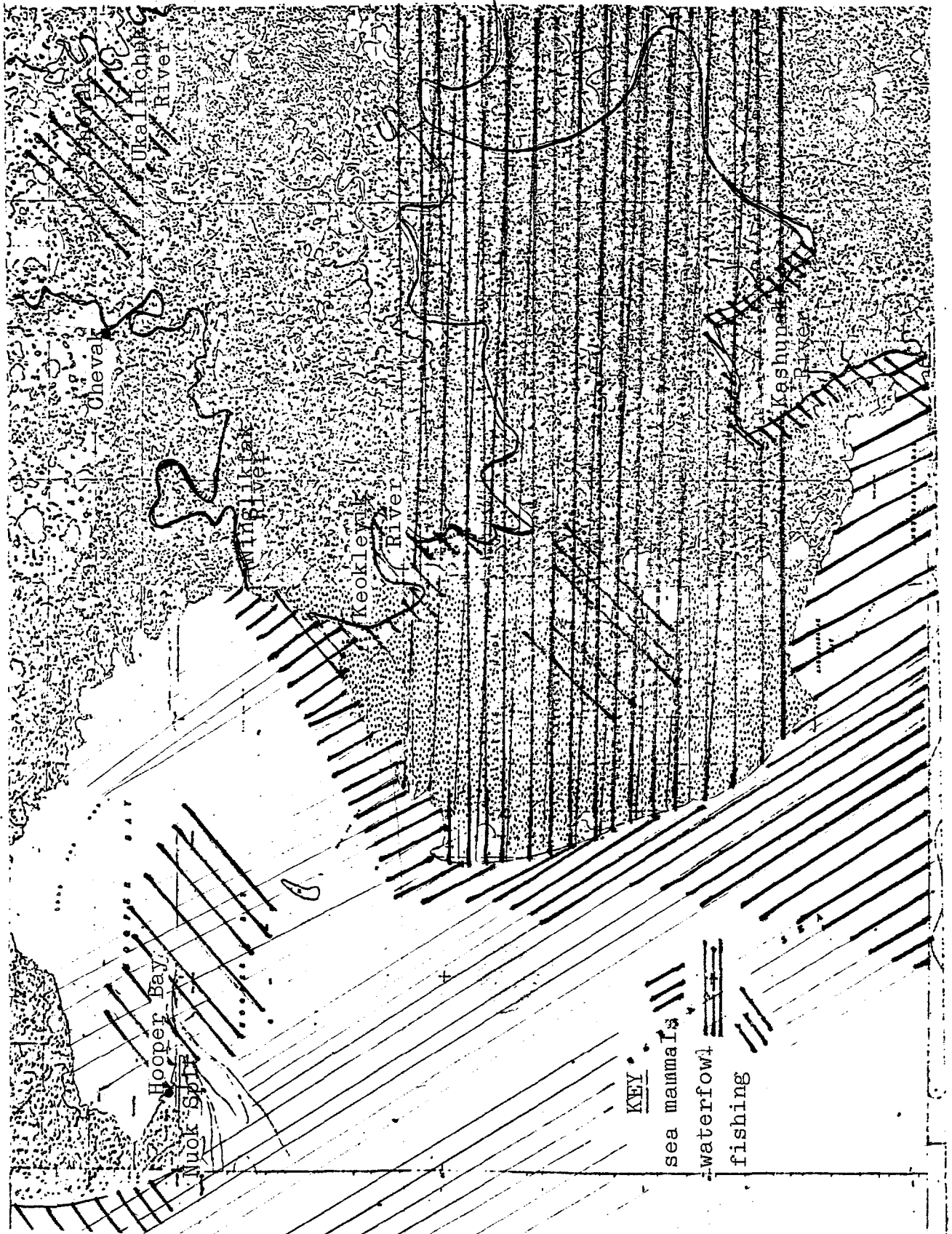


FIGURE 4 (cent' d.)\*

\*Figure does not represent full extent of area used for subsistence harvest by named village group.



After the spring floods and during the summer, driftwood is gathered along the beach on the seaward side of the spit to the east of the **village** of **Hooper Bay**, by the **Napariarmiut** (residents of **Hooper Bay**) and on the western edge of **Hooper Bay** by the residents of **Chevak**. This wood is used for winter **fuel** as well as for the recreational steam bath still in use in both communities.<sup>3</sup>

Breakup also means fresh clams which are gathered at low tide all along the edge of **Hooper Bay** as well as on the southern edge of **Kokechik Bay**.

Although few families move away from **Hooper Bay** for fish camps, from breakup in the spring until **late** June the western part of the bay is occupied by men who pursue herring and whitefish during the early part of the fishing season. The residents of **Hooper Bay** and **Chevak** fish for herring near **Nuok Spit**, **Panowat Spit** and the north shore of **Kokechik Bay**. Availability of salmon in this area reduces dependence on herring (Hemming, 1978, p. 78), but it still an important resource, as prevailing wind conditions put definite constraints on the quality of **salmon** fishing in **Hooper Bay**. Herring roe on **kelp** is also gathered on the northern shore of **Kokechik Bay**. In 1980 for the first time the narrow mouth of **Kokechik Bay** was also the site of commercial herring fishing by some 10 men from **Hooper Bay**, another six men from **Chevak**, and several men from **Scammon Bay** united in the **Stoknavik** Fishermen's Cooperative. About 500 tons of herring were caught in the **Cape Romanzov** herring fishery **last** year, with **slightly less** than **half**, about 240 tons, taken by **local fishermen**.<sup>4</sup> **Later, during** the summer, king

salmon, chum salmon, humpies and some silvers are caught for subsistence purposes as they rest in Hooper Bay and in the river mouths feeding into it.

The villagers of **Chevak** also fish in the mud flats in the western portion of the bay, adjacent to **Hooper** Bay. When the weather is bad and the wind comes from the south, the men fish instead in the eastern part of the bay at the mouth of **Keoklevik** River.

A number of Chevak families still move to fish camp in the summer, within a 20-mile radius of the village, as well as to berry camp in August and early September on the banks of the **Kashunak** and **Keoklevik** rivers.

The residents of **Hooper** Bay also go out berry picking in late summer and early **fall**, harvesting in the lowlands surrounding the village or traveling northeast to the foothills of the **Askinuk** Mountains. Some go extensive distances to berry camp areas and spend up to several weeks there.

Greens are gathered in the vicinity of the village during the course of the spring and summer, including wild spinach, **wild** celery and willow leaves. The majority are eaten fresh, but a small percentage is cooked and frozen for use during the winter when fish is the only fresh food available. Grass for making baskets is also gathered on the dunes to the east of Hooper Bay.

In the early fall, sea-going Dollies are available in the small rivers leading into the bay. From September until freeze-up, whitefish and **sculpin** are abundant in the smaller rivers in the lowlands between the mouth of the **Kashunak** and **Keoklevik** rivers (for the residents of **Chevak**) and in the area just north of the Kokechik River (for fishermen of I-looper Bay). The Naparearpak Slough just below Hooper Bay is a particularly good site for fall fishing, and is generally occupied by women hooking for flounder and **tomcod** from late summer until freeze-up, which is in the early or **middle** part of October. **Tomcod** may comprise as much as 60% of the winter harvest of the coastal village fishery (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1976**), and are extremely important, especially in years of salmon **deprivation**.<sup>5</sup> **Blackfish** and **needlefish** are also abundant in a number of **small** sloughs in the lowlands to the north of Hooper Bay and in the area to the east of **Chevak**. Later in the **fall**, men from **Chevak** head southeast to the Manokanuk and the Aipren rivers for birds, **seals** and whitefish. They may go as far as the volcanic **hills** near Newtok in search of pike, although another closer source is the upper **Ukalikchik** River.

In the fall, men set traps for muskrat, otter and marten, staying away from the village at camps in the vicinity of **Paimiut**, where a hunting cabin is kept supplied with tea and sugar for all visitors. In the **late** winter when the fur is prime, the men of both **Hooper** Bay and **Chevak** hunt white and red fox. Another source of pike utilized by the fishermen of **Hooper** Bay in the spring is the **Kusilivak** River. This area is also good for **spring** trapping of muskrat and **mink**.

During the winter months **sheefish** and loche fish are sought by fishermen from Hooper Bay at the mouth of the Kokechik River. Ptarmigan and rabbits range freely throughout the area, although today they are harder to find in the vicinity of Hooper Bay. Ironically, abundance does not correlate with the variety of resources available in the vicinity of **Hooper** Bay and Chevak, and periodic starvation has characterized this area since the early 1900s (**Heller** and Scott, 1967:28; Sparck, 1980),

## **SCAMMON BAY**

Although **Scammon** Bay shares access to many of the same species of fish and game as Hooper Bay and Chevak, both the timing and the content of their subsistence harvest is substantially different due to their location and Yukon River connection. Spring at **Scammon** Bay, as at **Hooper** Bay and Chevak, begins with the harvest of seals, birds and herring. In fact, their access to all three of these resources is superior, and a number of Hooper Bay families have moved to **Scammon** Bay in the last 20 years ostensibly for this reason. The subsistence herring fishing at **Scammon** Bay, however, is somewhat abbreviated as the families are in a hurry to make the move to fish camp at Black River by the first of June. There they engage in both commercial and subsistence salmon fishing. The salmon that are not sold are either dried and smoked or salted and put up in large barrels for winter use. The successful subsistence harvest of salmon on the Black River is as important to the residents of **Scammon** Bay as the herring harvest is to the Nelson Islanders.

But, **like** the **Nelson** Islanders, the residents have a wide variety of resources available **to them**. Besides salmon, women put up dried herring, flounder, herring egg sacks and egg-covered seaweed, and **small** barrels of greens **to last** through the winter. Families also move east up the Kun River in **late** summer for fish and berry camps, harvesting tremendous amounts of **salmonberries** on the lowlands that spread from the base of the Askinak Mountains.

Black **crowberries** are gathered on the hill in back of the village. In the **fall**, **taiyarut** is gathered from the ponds after the first frost, and small caches of **mouse** food are **still** sought on the open tundra. **Blackfish** and whitefish are plentiful throughout the **late fall** and early winter **in** inland ponds and streams, and tundra camps are also visited as men check their traps for **fox**, mink, otter, and muskrat. Needlefish are abundant in the frozen ponds to the north and east of the village. **Tomcod** also run down the Kun River in the winter and are hooked through the ice. Later in the winter **loche** fish move from tundra creeks to the freshwater streams **along** the **hills**. Only during the frigid months of January and February are men village bound, and even then a clear day will find them gathering **willow** branches for fuel or checking the leads on the shore-fast ice for the return of the seals and the return of spring.

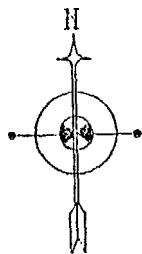
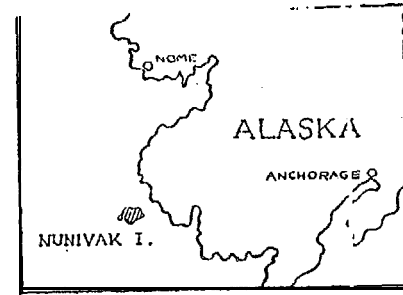


FIGURE 5. NUNIVAK ISLAND.<sup>1</sup>

J. GIFFEN.

<sup>1</sup>From Lantis (1946).

MAP 1. Nunivak Island, showing locations of villages.

## MEKORYUK

Because of the shallow sea with its muddy bottom bordering the island on the northeast, **Nunivak** does not have the large whales available farther north, nor are **the beluga** driven into the mainland bays by the **killer** whales. Also, the salmon runs are not significant. In the 1880s caribou and wolves **were** both present on the island but have since disappeared. Of the other animals familiar to the mainland communities, only the red fox, white fox and mink are available on Nunivak, which has no muskrat, squirrel, land otter, or beaver. Yet, when asked to list what is available, a **Nunivagimiut** matron loudly proclaimed, "**Lots!**" This bounty begins to show itself in the early spring with the return of geese and ducks (including the pintails, mallards, **old-squaw** and eider ducks) to the nesting grounds on the south side of the island. Nunivak is **also** the home of various sea birds, including **murre**s, puffins, **auklets**, guillemots and **kittiwakes**, which arrive in the spring to nest and breed **at** rookeries on the high cliffs on the west side **of** the island. Varieties **of** gulls also abound, and although they are not eaten, their eggs are **still** a valued source of food.

The spring also brings the seals, which traditionally were netted on the south side of the island, where families moved to spring camp as the offshore winds began to drive the pack ice away from the island. Now seals are chiefly hunted just offshore from Mekoryuk, and few families **relocate**.<sup>6</sup> **Also in late April** and early May, **walrus** are taken, along with the clams that fill their stomachs. But as on Nelson

Island, hunting is peculiarly biased. Today as in the past, birds, reindeer and walrus actually contribute food and other essential materials (Lantis, 1946:158). But seals, and especially bearded seals, rank highest in value.<sup>7</sup>

As the spring progresses, women and children comb the coast and nearby tundra for eggs, the roots of wild parsnip, wild celery stalks, shellfish, and last year's grass and berries. The men travel farther down the coast in search of driftwood, seaweed and mussels.

In May the herring arrive, although the run is usually smaller, later and of shorter duration than the one experienced on Nelson Island. In fact, it is not unusual for the weather to be such that during the few days when they are present the men are unable to go fishing. The kelp is also longer off Nunivak than along the mainland coast and prevents the harvesting of herring eggs.

During the latter part of May, a few Dolly Varden trout and codfish may be available. More important at this time of year is the job of processing the seal catch of the previous months. The amount a family is able to put by for winter is as limited by the capabilities of the women in the household as by the prowess of the hunters originally responsible for bringing it to the village.

During June fishing improves, with large red salmon available in the rivers, as well as herring and sculpin. Codfish and halibut can also



be secured by hooking for them off Cape **Etolin**. All of these fish of early summer are either eaten fresh or dried.

Also during **June**, families begin to move to fish camp on the southeast side of the island. There they set nets **for** dog salmon, salmon trout or steelhead, and **humpies** at the mouths of small rivers, as well as for flounder, **sculpin** and **tomcod**. These families will return to **Mekoryuk** in August when the salmon run in the river, and more greens and mussels are available within easy range of the village. Also in August fish traps are set upriver, and **whole** families go off for days of **berry** picking.

In September the rivers host silver salmon and flounder. As important as the fall fishing is the southward migration of **Nunivak's** summer residents (cackling geese, **pintails**, old-squaws and eider ducks). Flocks of geese can **also** be seen overhead as they travel south from the Arctic feeding grounds over the northeast part of the island. And, at this time, the tundra is speckled with ptarmigan, fat and juicy from eating berries.

Sealing also recommences in the fall. Traditionally this was done by the younger men and women using nets and working from a **fall** camp. Now, however, few families leave the traditional winter **village** site of **Mekoryuk at** this time of year. This is the season when tomcod are spawning **in** the **river** adjacent to the village. Plentiful through the **fall**, they will be taken through the ice **all** during the winter, although their size gradually decreases as the winter wears on.

December also sees the advent of fox trapping. Red fox are taken primarily in the early part of the season, while later on the preferred white fox make their appearance. More important, both monetarily and as a source of food, however, is the large musk ox herd that has grown from the herd introduced onto the island from Greenland in 1934-35. The number has risen to some 600 animals, and since the carrying capacity of the island is estimated at 450 animals, permits have been issued since 1975 for the sport hunting of a limited number of bulls. Until recently all the guides for the sportsmen came from outside of the island, as did the hunters themselves. Native assistants have always been used, however, to aid in the guiding. These men received a "wage" of up to \$3,000 per hunter per kill as well as the meat of the kill if the hunter came from outside of the State of Alaska and did not want to transport the meat home. This relatively easy money was, however, the only reward for the job, as guiding conferred no traditional status, and attracted a combination of envy and disdain from the other members of the community. Although the trend may be reversing itself, with the registration of the island's first Native guide this year, it is too early to say. At any rate, at present, guiding a white hunter is no replacement for a man being a good hunter himself and sharing his catch, a thing few assistant guides do with their money.

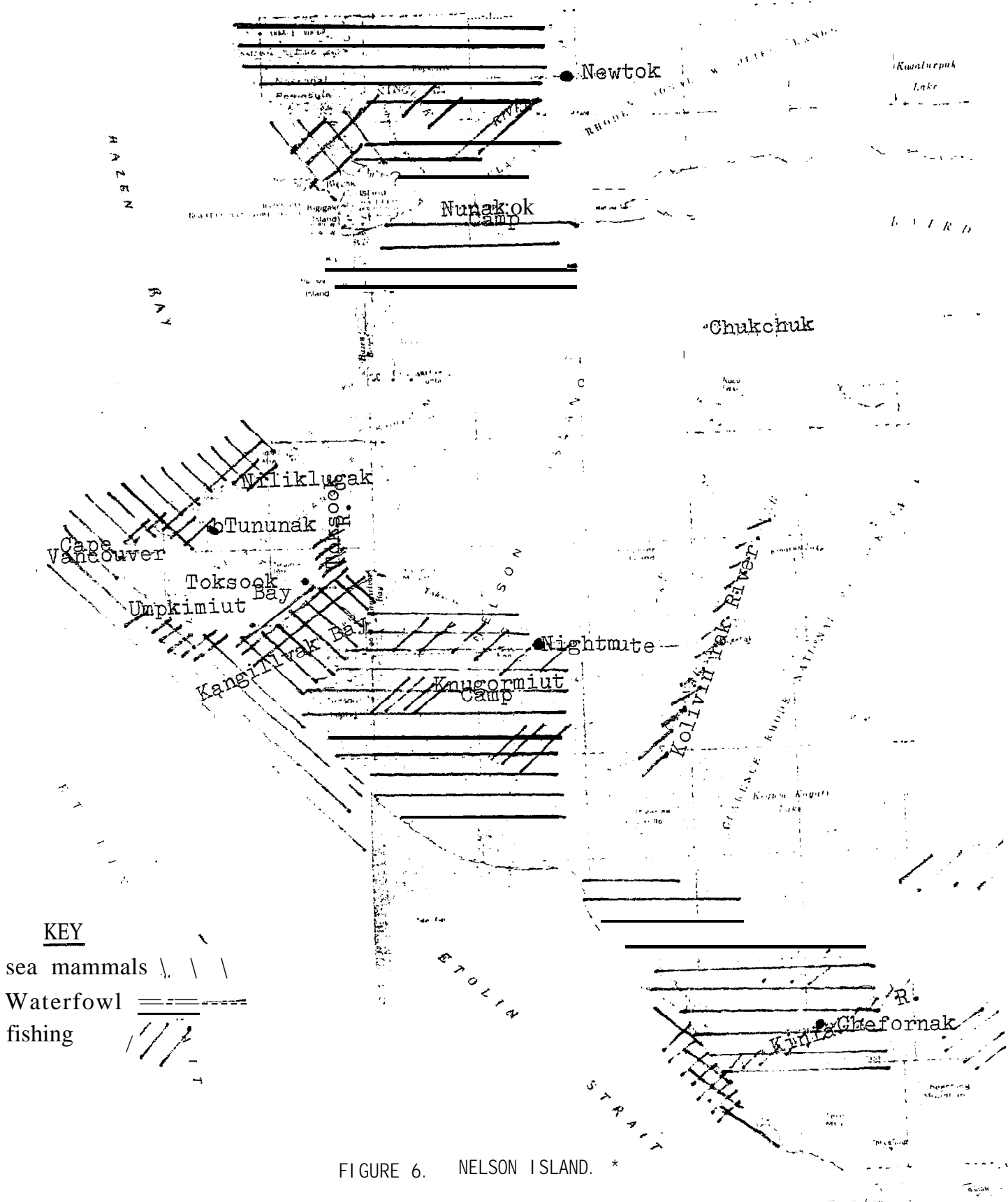
Along with the sports hunting of musk ox, limited exploitation of the **Nunivak** reindeer herd is an important source of both meat and money.

THE NELSON ISLAND VILLAGES OF NEWTOK, TUNUNAK, TOKSOOK BAY AND NIGHT-MUTE, AND CHEFORNAK

**Spring** begins on **Nelson Island** with **the return** of the seals. **First** come the bearded **seals**, followed by the spotted **seals** and ringed seals which **are** hunted in both Hazen and **Kangiklvak** bays as well as in the open ocean in **Etolin Strait**. Weather **permitting**,<sup>8</sup> intensive seal hunting does not cease until the herring arrive, usually in **late** May or early June, at which time the seals are said to stink with the fish. Seal hunting recommences in the **fall** and may continue well into December and January, if the winter is mild and the bay does not freeze over.

As the butchering and sea **mammal** hunting continues, fresh meat is **boiled** and eaten **daily**, supplemented by oil and dried fish. **Assaliaq**, a multi-holed doughnut, **is** fried in seal oil on the porches in the open air. By the middle of May, this rich diet is supplemented with the **greens** of marsh marigold, which grows abundantly **in** the ponds. The roots and shoots of **Ranunculus** are **also** eaten, **and**, by the end of May, wild parsnip roots are ripe for gathering.

Also the **gulls** and cranes, as **well** as the geese and eider ducks, that arrived in the first part of May, have laid their eggs. **Men** take their **families** across the bay for from one to three days to hunt these eggs, or, if the nesting grounds are nearer, as in **Chefornak**, women and children simply **walk** toward the ponds and stands of dead grasses, checking



KEY

sea mammals \ / \ /

Waterfowl ————

fishing // //

FIGURE 6. NELSON ISLAND. \*

\*Figure does not represent full extent of area used for subsistence harvest by named village group.

for nests. All sizes and varieties of eggs are obtained, from the **small**, speckled eggs of the songbirds (including warblers and redpolls) **to** the large, bone-colored gull eggs. Eggs were traditionally buried in the mud and preserved for winter **use**. Now they are boiled and eaten immediately.

Another delicacy is gathered from the coast. Elquat is the name given to herring eggs attached to seaweed. Jokingly dubbed "Japanese food," the entire crunchy morsel is eaten raw, dipped in seal oil. In a single afternoon, one man can gather several bushels of elquat, weighing up to **75** lbs., enough for immediate consumption and storage by three or four separate but related households.

**Along** with the seal, herring is the most important resource of the Nelson Islanders. In the **1920s** the average family harvest was as high as **6,000 lbs.** compared with the **2,500-lb.** average today (Hemming, 1978: 67). Tununak men gill-net for herring along the coast just north of the village, **while Toksook** fishermen fish just to the west of their **village**, as well as in the shallows at the mouth of the Toksook River. As with seal hunting, the weather is a definite limiting factor in what can be taken during the herring runs and whether or not the catch will be able to be dried **successfully**.<sup>9</sup> Bad weather and an onshore wind not only make fishing difficult, but also prevent the herring from coming into the bays and spawning (Hemming, 1978:51) and make it difficult for the residents of **Newtok** and **Nightmute** to get to the fishing grounds. The size and quality of the herring catch is of

particular importance to the residents of **Toksook** Bay and Tununak, as both villages are built at sites that were traditionally spring hunting sites. They are therefore located at a fair distance from productive winter fisheries. The fall camp of **Chukchuk** is 75 miles by boat to the northeast of Tununak, and Toksook Bay is 35 miles by boat from fall fishing camps along the **Kolivinarak** River on the east side of the island. These fall and winter fisheries traditionally provided the Qaluyaarmiut with an ample supply of whitefish, needlefish, tomcod, **loche** fish, pike, and **blackfish**. Although these resources are still exploited, the expense in terms of both time and money needed to acquire them has turned them into veritable luxury items compared to the herring. Tununak residents claim it now costs \$100 to make the trip to their traditional winter fishing grounds (Hemming, 1978:53). Still these resources are available when the herring are not plentiful. This wide range of resources is available to no other village group, and marks Nelson Island as the most resource rich of the coastal areas.

Both Newtok and Nightmute are in the opposite situation. Both are located at viable winter campsites with relatively easy access to **blackfish**, needlefish and pike. In the spring the people now resident in Newtok traditionally relocated to **Niliklugak** on the north side of Nelson Island up the coast from Tununak. During the early 1970s this move was rarely made, but more recently families have resumed coming to **Niliklugak**, Tununak or even Toksook Bay to exploit the herring runs. As has already been mentioned, the residents of Nightmute **traditionally** moved to spring camp at Umpkimiut, and although not all the

villagers **relocate** each spring, many still do move to either Umpki mi ut or to **Toksook** Bay. Even those families that do not relocate have access to the bay for both sea **mammal** hunting and fishing as **Nightmute** is located **only 15** miles upriver from **Toksook** Bay, whereas Newtok is twice that distance from Hazen Bay.

When the herring fishing has ceased, but before the herring processing has **fully** abated, over half of the village men leave for **Dillingham** and **Clarks** Point for six to eight weeks of commercial salmon fishing. Those who remain will take some king salmon and red salmon by drifting just off Cape Vancouver, although these fish are so fatty at this **point** that they do not **dry well** and are not, and were not **traditional-ly**, sought in abundance. For both men and women the work is continuous **until** mid-July, broken only **by** bad weather.

Although there is some hooking during the first half of the summer, most of the fishing is by net. Aside from **the** herring, nets also detain whi tefish **and tomcod**. Two varieties of **flatfish**, smooth flounder and starry flounder, are also taken, although in much **smaller** quantities than in the fall. Halibut, running up to 100 pounds, were traditionally caught by jigging a four-pronged ivory hook. In the late **1970s** they were rarely taken, and then usually by accident in the salmon nets. They are, however, apparently making a comeback. The meat is dried or put by in the freezer, and the heads turned into fresh soup.

As the men begin to filter home from commercial fishing in the middle of July, the tundra begins to bear fruit, and families turn from fishing to berry gathering, spending days at a time at small makeshift camps across the **Kangillvak** Bay at **Knugormiut** summer camp to the west of **Nightmute** or in the vicinity of Nunakok Camp to the south of Newtok. In one day a **single** family group, including half a dozen children, can sometimes fill a ten-gallon trash can with **salmonberries**, enough to fill the freezer at home as well as to supply fresh **agutak** mixtures for the next several weeks.

Fishing continues throughout the late summer and early fall. The nets are moved out of the bay and into the rivers and streams. Some families set nets in the **Toksook** River for pink salmon or "**humpies**." The nets are checked every two days with an average take of **15** ten-pound fish during the three-week season. As with the smelt, **blackfish**, and needlefish, everyone does not set nets for pink salmon, and each catch provides fresh meat for three to five closely related families, give or take a hungry friend. No rule is as rigid in the **Qaluyaarmiut** system of food sharing as the provision for the needy. But whom among the needy you provide for depends upon degree of relation.

Also during late July and August fishermen go to **Kolavinarak** on the east side of the island for several days' fishing, bringing home northern pike for drying and whitefish which will be frozen and eaten later in the fall and winter as frozen fish. Nets are also put up on the other side of the bay for smooth flounder, which run in sufficient



quantities to produce five to ten ropes of fish per family, each rope containing approximately 80 fish. Both flounder and pike are also boiled for **immediate** consumption.

**In** August the diet is various and rich, consisting of fresh greens and berries, shellfish and boiled salmon, the newly dried herring and the ever-present oil, freshly rendered. Not until the end of the month do subsistence-gathering activities slow down. **Women** and children finish harvesting the crowberries in the hills in back of the village. Other tundra vegetation gathered in late August includes dock **leaves** and various medicinal plants.

**In late** August and September men leave on fishing trips going for a night across the bay **for** flounder, or for several days of whitefish fishing on the **Kolavinarak** River. Today the freezer replaces the underground cache, and it is no longer necessary to bury the **fall** catch for storage and protection against the rainy autumn weather. Although the workload has been made easier with the introduction of such conveniences, there are **also** fewer hands **to help**, as the children are back in school and, in the two larger villages, one adult in every two households is employed by the high school, grade school, city or corporation.

Salmon are gone by mid-September, **but** the flounder are **still** running. Snow and **the** first frost may come by the first of October, or earlier. **But all** through the month **tomcod** and **smelt are** taken with set nets by

the men in the channels on the flats at the southwest corner of the island, as well as with dip nets by the children, fishing **along** the riverbanks outside the villages of **Nightmute** and Chefornak.

With November comes freeze-up and ice fishing on the river with **barbless** hooks and **galu** (dip net, whence **Qaluyaarmiut**). By this method **the** fishermen procure **tomcod**, which continue to run upstream until late November, when the ice is too thick for cutting holes. Again, Toksook men must travel a fair distance to harvest the tomcod, while in **Chefornak** and **Nightmute** ice fishing is a job for women and children.

**Needlefish** are also netted from the rivers. These tiny sticklebacks were traditionally gathered in tremendous quantities for dog food, as the rivers flowing into the Bering Sea support them in abundance. In the summer they are caught in small dip nets along the tiny creeks that cut up the tundra. In the winter, men and women cut holes four feet wide into the ice and fish for them with big dip nets similar to those used for **tomcod**.

**When** the rivers have frozen and the first snow **is** on the ground, the men ready themselves for trapping. **In** the past, movement to fall camps was necessary to utilize these resources. Now, except in the fall trapping for muskrat and mink in the vicinity of **Nightmute** and **Chefornak**, men move out daily from the villages. Later in the **fall**, trap lines may be set within snowmobile distance from the villages and checked every four to five days. Winter trapping for red fox in

January, and in February for white fox, is generally done in this manner. Lines of from 5 to 15 metal spring **steel** traps may be set near a man's fish traps and checked irregularly. Not everyone engages in trapping. **In the winter of 1978**, 21 of the adult men in Toksook Bay did some fox trapping, averaging six fox each, netting under \$300 total at the **local co-op** store, which sold the entire village catch to a fur buyer in late March. **None of** the animals trapped are eaten, and the men do **all** the skinning and most of the tanning, except for the processing of those skins that a family keeps for its own use, in which case the women will do the final tanning and preparation.

Sea? hunting continues on clear days as long as the bay remains open. In an average year, December sees the bay frozen and the sea freezing. Several of the traditional single-man kayaks are **still** used in Tununak for this late **fall** sealing. By December, however, the weather ranges to -20° F., and is too severe to allow much ocean hunting.

**Winter** famine was traditionally, and is **still** to some extent, staved off by the continued pursuit of **needlefish, blackfish** and tomcod. Food is scarce from February to April, as the ice is too thick for ordinary fishing. Also during this time of the year the ice on the sea is usually too far from **land** to allow for seal hunting.

Like **Nunivak**, there is also a musk ox herd **on Nelson Island**. **The** herd is now over the estimated carrying capacity of the **island** and is ready

to harvest on a limited basis according to Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Unlike the **Nunivagimiut**, however, the **Qaluyaarmiut** are not interested in opening the island to sport hunters, although this activity would bring money into the island by means of guiding fees and the services that the outsiders would be expected to pay for. Rather than be thus invaded, the **Qaluyaarmiut** requested the right to harvest the animals themselves, and in the winter of 1980-81 a low-cost, local preference permit system was worked out to make this possible.

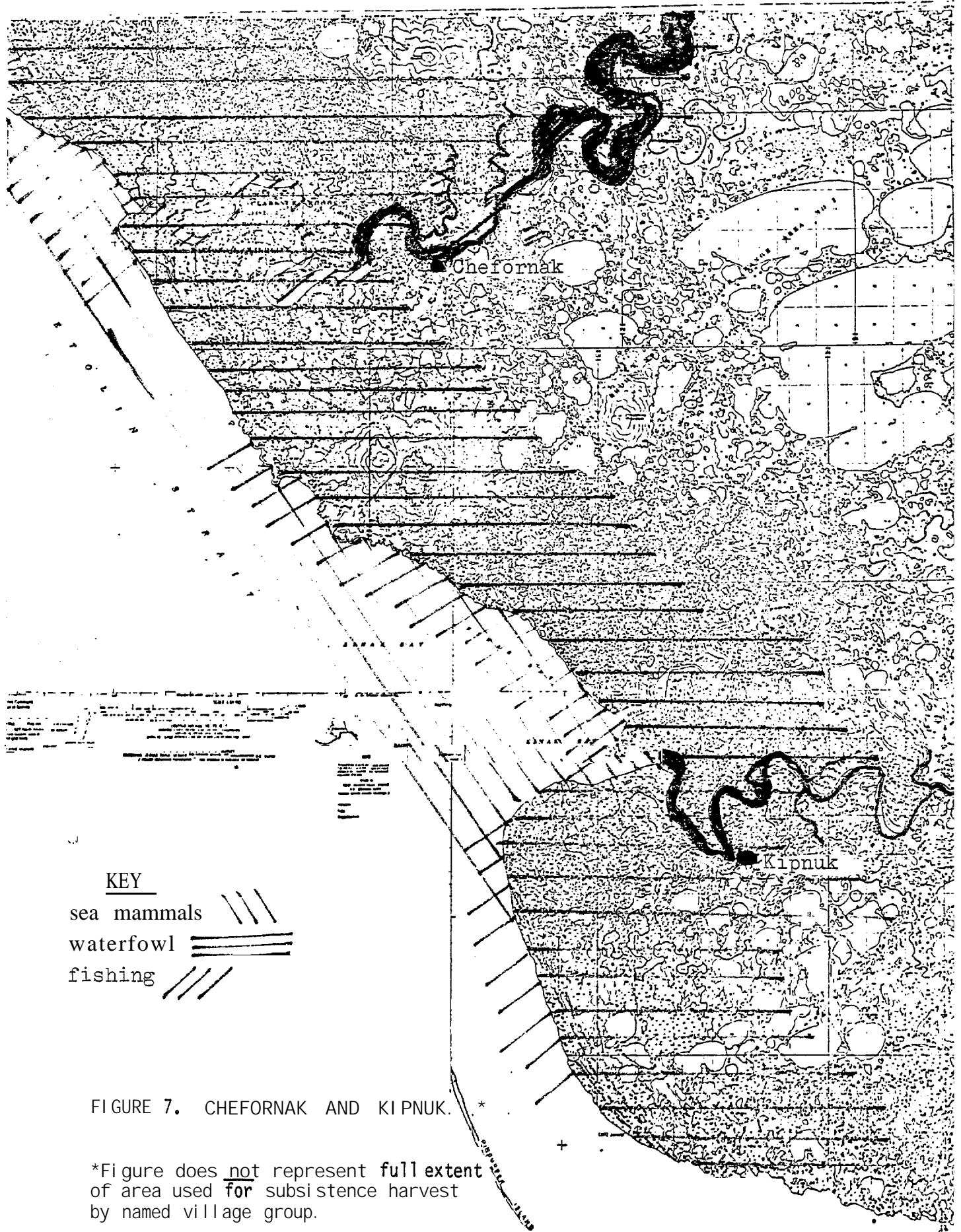
It is also worth mentioning here that this decision not to use a **subsistence** resource for commercial purposes characterizes other resource use patterns of the **Qaluyaarmiut**. Whereas there has been some interest on the part of the residents of Mekoryuk in the opening of a local commercial herring fishery, and in fact such a fishery has begun on a limited basis in the vicinity of **Hooper Bay**, the Nelson Islanders are adamantly opposed to the commercial exploitation of herring in their area. They were also against the Japanese fishing their waters before the 200-mile limit was set and are less than enthusiastic about a recent joint venture proposed between Japanese processors and the Nelson Island fishermen.

#### KIPNUK, KWIGILLINGOK AND KONGIGINAK

These three lower coastal villages rely on the same resources as the Nelson Island villages to their north, varying chiefly in the amount of certain resources that are available. As for the **Qaluyaarmiut**, bird

hunting, sea mammal hunting and herring fishing are the most important subsistence activities from the first of **April** until the end of June. However, because each village is located slightly inland, and none is perched advantageously on the edge of a bay as are **Toksook** and **Tununak**, sea mammal hunting **is** slightly more difficult for the residents of these communities. Whereas the residents of Nelson **Island** as **well** as those of Hooper Bay and Chevak can hunt in the relative shelter of a bay when the open water of **Etolin** Strait and the Bering Sea is too treacherous, the hunters of the lower coastal communities must either wait for calm weather in the open ocean or wait for the **seals** to venture into the river mouths.

The straight line of **the** coast also makes herring fishing more **diffi-**  
**Cult**. **In** fact, heavy reliance on the herring fishery is a relatively recent phenomenon for the lower coastal communities. Even the **vil-**  
**lagers** of **Chefornak** traditionally traveled north for their herring, as only recently have herring been available in abundance at the mouth of the **Kinia** River. Similarly, the residents of Kipnuk **traditionally** traveled north for herring. Presently, however, the herring are harvested on the south side of the mouth of the **Kuguklik** River (Hemming, **1978:56**). Although both villages presently rely on the herring, their utilization of this resource is probably somewhat below the **2,500** pounds per year per **family** currently harvested on Nelson Island (Hemming, **1978:67**). They make **up** for this, however, by an increased reliance **on blackfish, needlefish and tomcod, all** three of which are available **in** abundance in **their** areas. **The blackfish** are taken in



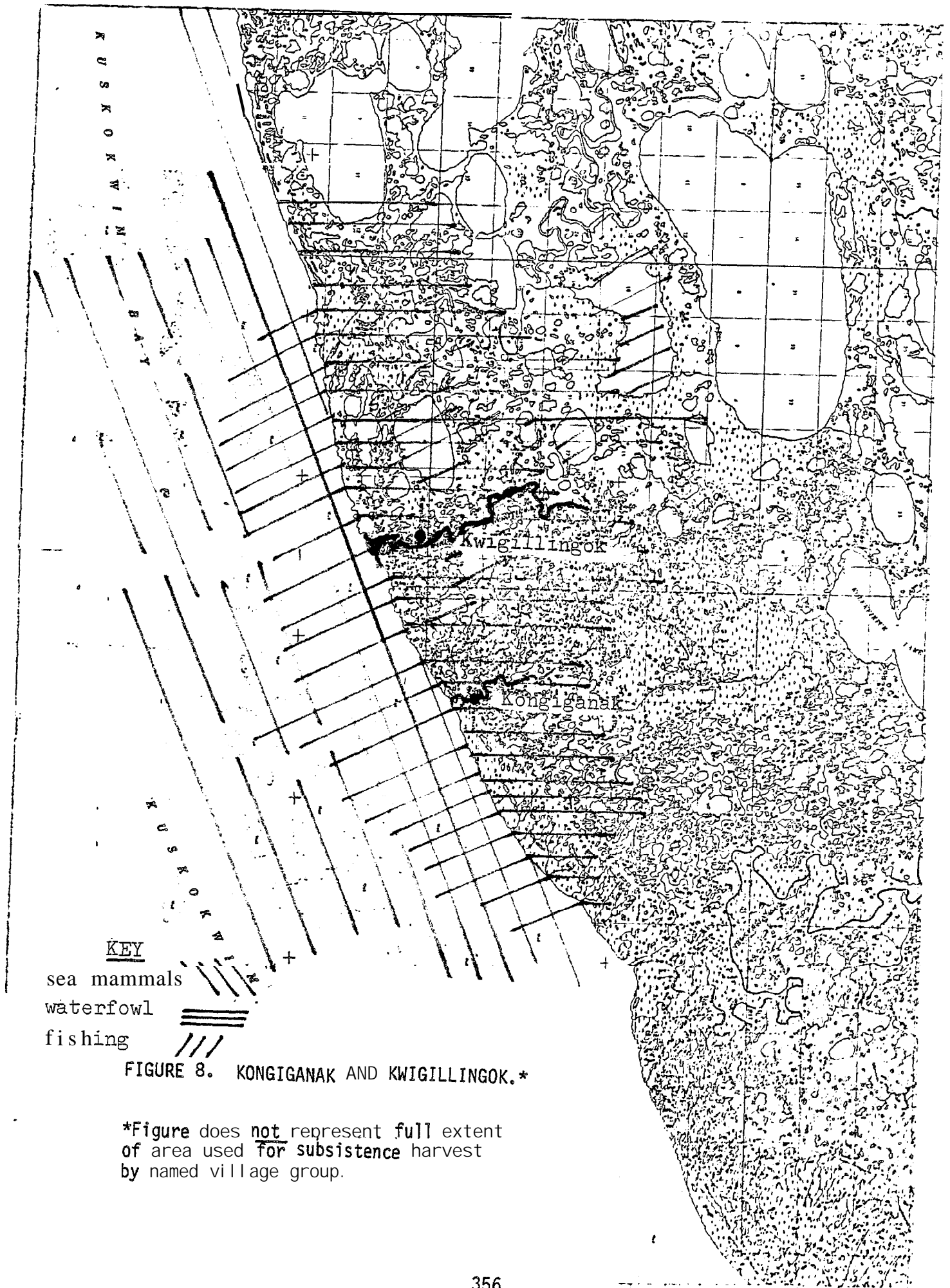


FIGURE 8. KONGIGANAK AND KWIGILLINGOK.\*

\*Figure does not represent full extent of area used for subsistence harvest by named village group.

traps as they move into small ponds in the spring and out at freeze-up, while the tomcod, as well as **sculpin** and smelt, are netted and hooked through the ice in the river from early fall until well into the winter. The puddle-pocked tundra is incredibly rich in the summer, but from December until May most of the tundra streams and lakes do not contain any free oxygen and thus all fish except for **blackfish**, which can tolerate low oxygen conditions, migrate to water with oxygen in it (Baxter, 1978:18). Now that dog teams are no longer used, the **needlefish**<sup>iü</sup> are not as heavily harvested, but they, too, are **available** by the thousands and still serve to vary the winter diet of **dried fish**.

The villagers of **Kwigillingok** and **Kongiganak** also rely heavily on the herring fishery. Not only are they often restricted by onshore winds in the amount of sea **mammal** hunting that they can do, but also **needlefish** and **blackfish** are not as readily available in their area as they are around **Chefornak** and **Kipnuk**. Herring spawn at the mouth of the **Kwigillingok** River, and the fishermen from **Kongiganak** travel up the coast to exploit this resource. The herring fishery is particularly important for the villages of **Kwigillingok** and **Kongiganak**, as not only do they lack the rich winter and fall **river** and pond fishery available farther north, they also do not have easy access to the salmon that are available to the people living farther upriver as well as farther down the coast. Some few families (an estimated four from **Kongiganak** in 1980) still travel as far upriver as **Napaskiak** to take advantage of the **Kuskokwim** salmon runs for both commercial and subsistence purposes. Residents with steady cash incomes may also charter planes and travel



northwest **of** Bethel in order **to** hunt moose and to bring the meat back to their village. However, by and large, the villagers **of** these communities do not move away to a spring, summer or fall camp as they did traditionally, and so **rely** heavily on the herring and sea **mammals available** in the vicinity of **their** villages.

Also important in these **lower** coastal communities are the occasional runs of **beluga**, each whale weighing up to two tons. **Beluga** infrequently follow small fish into coastal sloughs and rivers. Once sighted, their exit is cut off by a net run across the river mouth and they are beached at **low tide**. As many as 42 **beluga** were reported to have been caught at once in the early **1900s (Drebert, 1959:111)**. Tomcod also run upriver with the tides in the **fall** after freeze-up. In the fall **muskrats**, otter and mink are hunted in the tundra lakes. Fox and rabbit are also taken, as **well** as the perennial ptarmigan.

#### **TUNTUTULIAK, QUINHAGAK, AND EEK**

There is a considerable difference between the subsistence resource utilization patterns of these lower coastal communities and those to the **north**. Sea mammals are heavily harvested in the spring, as they are to the north. However, these villages lie to the south of herring spawning grounds and the herring runs, so important for the winter food supply of the upper coastal villages, bypass the **area**. **In** their stead, **however**, the fishermen of this area are **able** to take advantage of **salmon** runs for both commercial and subsistence purposes. **All** five

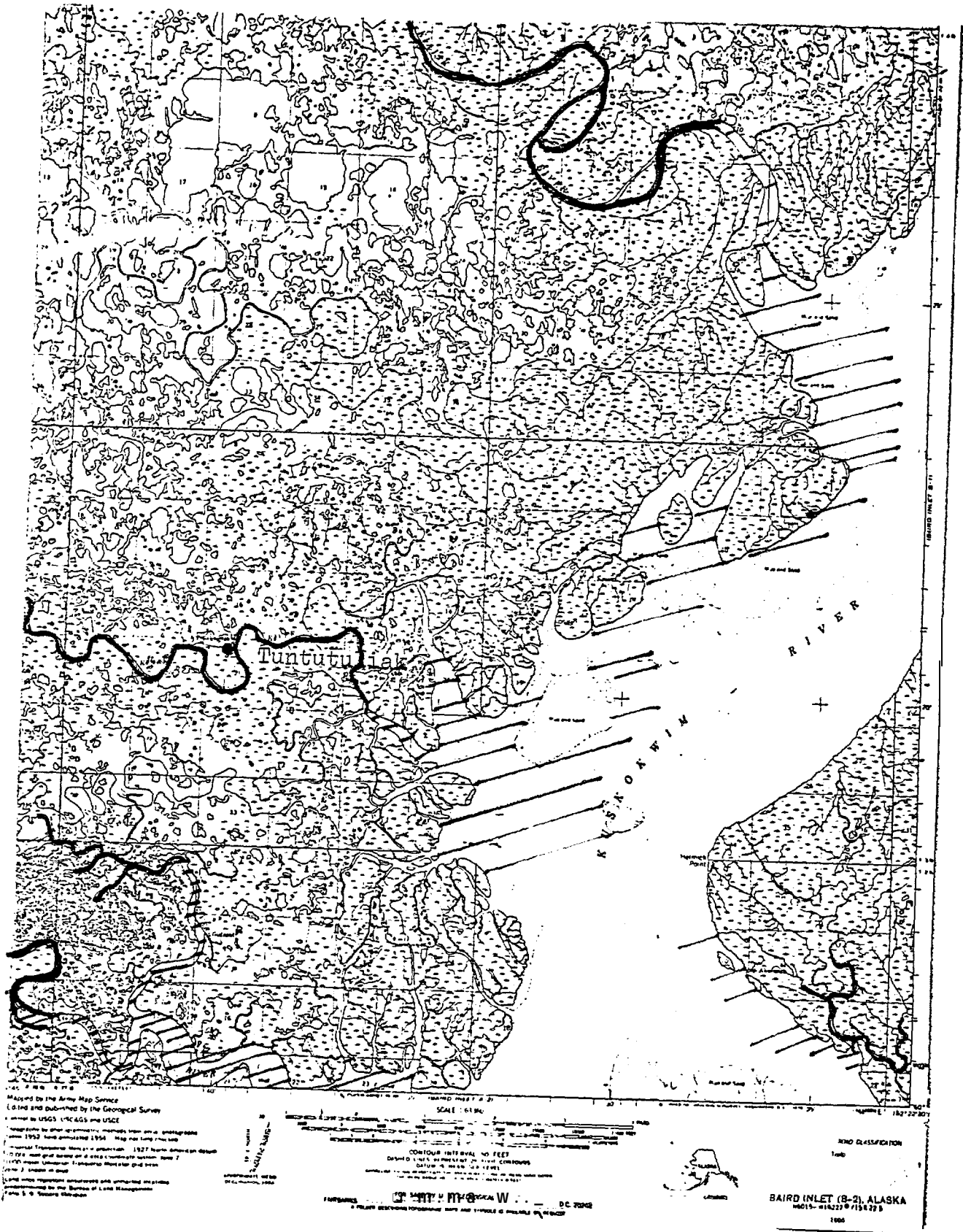



FIGURE 9. TUNTUTULIAK. \*

Key: fishing 

\*Figure does not represent full extent of area used for subsistence harvest by named village group.

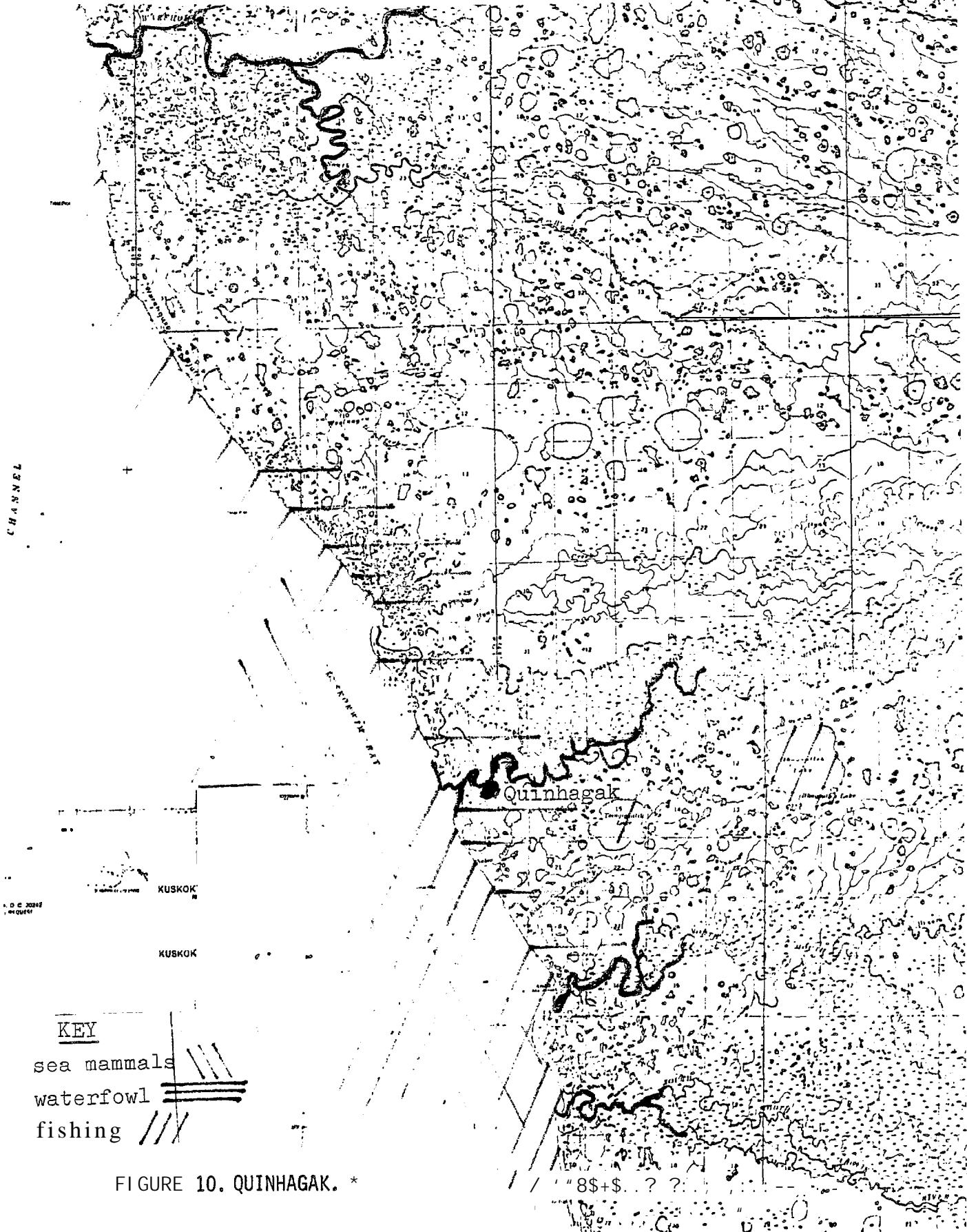


FIGURE 10. QUINHAGAK. \*

\*Figure does not represent full extent of area used for subsistence harvest by named village group.

varieties common to the Kuskokwim River (king, red, pink, silver and chum), are taken from June through August and September. Up until recently the commercial salmon fishery in this area has been very sporadic due to unreliable processing facilities. However, the commercial fishery has stabilized during the past few seasons (Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, **1979:11**). AVCP estimates that salmon are 30-40% of the diet in this region, and the commercial catch provides 70-85% of the cash needed for subsistence equipment. Although chum harvests (previously used for dog food) had declined (Davidson, 1974), now a commercial fishery is encouraging a renewed exploitation of this resource.

As occurs farther north, seals are hunted in the spring as well as in the fall, along with walrus and an occasional **beluga**. Some families still go to the **Kilbuck** Mountains in the early spring before breakup for squirrel hunting, a pattern more common in the upriver villages above Bethel. Geese and waterfowl generally are available **all** down the coast as well as along the larger creek beds. Some men from **Quinhagak** travel as far north as Kongiganak for goose hunting. There is not much egg hunting, however, because of the lower concentration of the nesting area, and thus the need to search over a larger territory to find eggs. Shellfish are not generally available to the **lower** coastal communities, and clamming only begins again at Jack Smith Bay.

The Kanektok River, at the mouth of which **Quinhagak** is located, is an especially rich area, providing both subsistence and sport fishing for

arctic **char**, **Dolly Varden**, rainbow trout and **grayling**. Here also the greatest amount of subsistence salmon fishing occurs after the commercial fishing season during which mostly coho salmon are taken. **Smelt** run in the river in the spring, and trout in the **fall**. **Although** the trout are easy to obtain in the summer as well, the villagers are too preoccupied with the salmon harvest, and jigging for trout is left for the winter when it is more-difficult although still productive.

Like the presence of salmon, the availability of whitefish distinguishes these villages from their northern neighbors. Subsistence exploitation of the whitefish fishery is common from **Quinhagak** all the way up the river, and especially in the tundra villages, where not only **sea mammals** but salmon are unavailable. Five species of whitefish move upriver in winter into the tundra lakes of the **Yukon-Kuskokwim** delta, ranging from the **30-pound sheefish** to the half-pound least **cisco** (Baxter, 1978: 18). Of major importance are the broad whitefish, the humpback whitefish, and especially the Arctic cisco on the Bering Sea coast. These fish have been harvested by gill-net since aboriginal times, with the traditional seal skin netting and wooden floats only recently replaced by nylon twine and plastic floats. The annual subsistence harvest presently averages as much as 200 pounds per family in some villages (Baxter, **1978:19**).

Only the smaller arctic variety of whitefish, with an average weight of one pound, is available around **Quinhagak**, in the Kanektok River as **well** as Warehouse Creek, in the late **fall**. The larger broad and

humpback whitefish, averaging from between 4 to 15 pounds each, are found north of the **Cekakakik** River in the **larger** lakes. Pike are also taken in this area.

Beginning in the fall, after the berry picking, **blackfish** traps are set on the smaller lakes. Rabbits are also hunted in the fall, and by the middle of November trapping for mink, otter, fox and weasel begins. The area north of **Eek** (as well as a smaller region west of **Chevak**) was historically rich in mink. In the early 1950s, the mink harvest on the **Kuskokwim** ran to 40,000 pelts. By the early 1960s this had declined to a harvest of less than 10,000, and since the **mid-1970s** the harvest has been less than 1,000 annually. Ptarmigan are also hunted after the first snow, and from January until the end of March fox and beaver are trapped, the former available up the coast, but the latter a resource restricted to the **lower** coast and upriver. .

#### THE TUNDRA VILLAGES

Just as herring is the **staple** resource of the Nelson Island area, and salmon the staple of the lower coastal and **riverine** communities, whitefish (as well as some salmon and pike) provide the major harvestable resource in the tundra villages of **Nunapitchuk, Kasigluak, and Atmautluak**. The existence of whitefish and pike in the **lakes** and streams surrounding these communities and **at** the mouth of the Johnson River is in fact the reason for their existence. These fish are netted and dried or frozen in the spring before salmon season and taken again in

**late summer** after the salmon runs are done. Although at present many families exploit **the riverine** salmon fishery for both subsistence and commercial purposes, traditionally they did not rely as heavily on the summer **Kuskokwim** fishery, **taking at** most **15** or **20** king **salmon** early in the season. During June they would, however, come to the Kuskokwim for **logs**, making rafts of driftwood which they would take back to their villages for winter use. .

Sea mammal products were traditionally available to the tundra people only through trade. Major trade items available in the tundra region included muskrat, wolverine, beaver, squirrel and fish skins for parka construction, and all of these were exchanged for **seal** skin, seal **oil**, walrus ivory, birds' eggs, and punk for making chewing **ash**. Seal oil is still present in most tundra **village** households and is obtained through continued trade with the lower coastal communities. Often coastal residents will bring sea mammal products to Bethel, where they will exchange them with inland friends, acquaintances and relatives. These individuals will then sell, give, or trade a substantial share to their friends and relatives in both the **riverine** and tundra communities. Although trading relations were traditionally more formal, often involving partnerships kept through years and even generations, today trade between the inland and the coast is not exclusively tied **to** kinship or formal partnership relations. Free enterprise has affected traditional trading patterns, but the fact remains that substantial trade continues to occur between these two ecological **zones**,<sup>11</sup> extending and supporting kin ties as **well** as supplying material **goods**.

As sea mammal products were scarce in the tundra communities, muskrat sinew and willow bark were used traditionally to weave fish nets. The lamprey was also traditionally harvested to procure oil, especially in the fall when it had reached its maximum storage capacity in preparation for winter sleep and spring spawning. This fish is not **nearly as** important today but is still taken occasionally.

Because of their almost exclusive reliance on fish, as opposed to the vitamin-rich mixed meat/fish diet of the coastal communities, the tundra villages had a diet that was traditionally low in both iron and thiamine. Families could, however, engage in bird hunting as well as gathering berries and mouse food (underground roots and tubers) to make up for this deficiency. In the past, these resources were gathered up to several hundred pounds per **family** (Bell and Heller, 1978:154), and berries in particular are still gathered in abundance. Also the present proximity to Bethel of the tundra communities, as opposed to their western coastal neighbors, makes it somewhat easier for them to import commercial foodstuffs. Physical proximity should not, however, be deceptive, as these communities do not have large cash resources, being only marginal to the **Kuskokwim** salmon fishery and not participating at all in the Bristol Bay fishery.

#### BETHEL AND THE ADJACENT **RIVERINE** COMMUNITIES

The Native residents of Bethel, as **well** as the three **riverine** villages to the south (**Oscarville, Napaskiak,** and Napakiak) and three to the



north (**Kwethluk**, **Akiak**, and Akiachak) share the same subsistence base. More than any other village group, these communities, both because of proximity to commercially available foods and cash employment, no longer exploit the **full** range of subsistence products available to them. However, some resources, such as salmon, are as heavily utilized as ever, for both subsistence and commercial purposes. Also, although a lessened dependence on subsistence resources generally characterizes these communities, especially in comparison with the more isolated coastal communities previously discussed, this is not to say that a certain percentage of the residents in these communities are not **as** dependent on subsistence resources as any individual **family** group **living** in an area typified by generally higher subsistence resource utilization. Even in the regional center of Bethel, many Native families as **well** as some non-Native families dry and freeze the maximum **13,000-pound** per-annum per-household subsistence harvest typical of the region as a whole. However, in the case of the Bethel Native **fami-**lies, this poundage is a composite of a dozen different varieties of fish and game (including salmon, pike, sheefish and whitefish) as well as quantities of berries and tundra greens. Bethel non-Native families, however, tend to concentrate on salmon, waterfowl (ducks taken **30 miles** downriver) and moose. For example, one **Bethel** non-Native family harvested 2,000 pounds of salmon, most of which was **cut** into strips and smoked in the summer of **1978** in order to feed three people. They also put up another 5,000 pounds of salmon for their **15 sled** dogs. However, they took no other varieties of fish in significant numbers. Many **Bethel** residents, both Native and non-Native, also harvest

driftwood for winter fuel, going as far as 50 miles upriver where logs are large and relatively plentiful.

Bethel subsistence salmon fishermen usually set their nets within five miles of the city, and fish camps belonging to residents of the other **riverine** communities can be found up and down the length of the river. Also, as previously mentioned, exploitation of the commercial salmon fishery has increasingly drawn families from the tundra villages, who stay at river camps for subsistence fishing as well.

The use of the outboard motor and aluminum skiff allows families to remain in the villages and in Bethel while men come and go with the tides to check the nets and collect the fish. Also, a woman may cut and smoke salmon at her camp all day, returning to her home to sleep. However, many families in both Bethel and the adjacent **riverine** communities still do relocate to their traditional fish camps, and at the height of the salmon season fewer than half the residents of the upriver villages of **Kwethluk, Akiachak** and Akiak remain in the winter village. Tents are often used for the several-week to several-month stay at camp, and families **still** gather at traditional sites on the basis of kinship. Some camps have small frame houses where an older couple will camp with their married children, some of whom may live and work in Bethel during the winter but nevertheless come to camp with their parents each summer, to help provide for the old people as well as for themselves.

**While** Native residents of Bethel are still involved in subsistence resource utilization, they are **also** by and large increasingly committed to the cash economy. Most villagers in the **riverine** communities, on the other hand, are **still** principally subsistence oriented. Half a dozen families from **Kwethluk** **still** make the annual journey to spring camp in the mountains several hundred **miles** to the west. Traditionally they made this journey to spring camp by **sled**, coming back to their village in huge saucer-shaped **skin** boats after breakup. Now the initial journey is made by plane, and the return by outboard-powered aluminum skiff, sent upriver to recover the campers. At camp, the women and children fish and gather last **year's** berries while the men trap squirrel, beaver and muskrat. Back in the village women are also busy fishing for smelt in the early spring, while men go for whitefish and **blackfish**. Both are taken again in the fall after the major salmon runs (first kings, then dog or chum, then red and pink and silver). **In** the early winter, tomcod are taken through the ice. During the winter the tundra has few resident birds other than ptarmigan. Large land **mammals** are equally scarce, although **caribou**, and their predators, the wolves, were traditionally available on an irregular basis.

### The Structure of Production and Distribution<sup>12</sup>

The preceding section has, to a certain extent, broken the subsistence round down into species pursued by **the** different **village** groups, including information on the extent of the territory over which people range in subsistence pursuits. What the present section **will** try to

do is to put the picture back together again according to the activities of which the subsistence cycle is comprised. As indicated in the introduction, subsistence hunting and gathering is as much a social and cultural as an economic enterprise, and social as well as economic value is created.

During the early spring, with the stores of the previous year depleted and the seals and salmon yet to come, fish and game brought into the village by individual hunters are often informally distributed, especially in the smaller coastal communities. For example, a man may check his **needlefish** trap, coming away with 50 pounds of the tiny fish. Upon returning to the village, he may announce over the CB that anyone who wants some may come and fill their bowl from his sled.

In the coastal villages of the study area, this irregular, informal generalized sharing gives way to more elaborate and substantial distributions of meat and blubber as the seals begin to be taken in April and March. Although seal parties are no longer a pattern followed by all households in all the coastal villages, 99% of the Nelson Island families **still** routinely share their first caught bearded seal of the spring season with their nonrelatives. Relatives aid in the **distribu-**tion and take no shares. However, they may be invited to the home of the **successful** hunter for a meal of fresh innards following the distribution, and in their own homes consume the shares they receive in their turn from seal parties given by their own nonrelative.

▶

Days when the wind blows **landward** and the hunters are able to go out to the floes are followed by as many as seven seal parties on the **fol-**lowing morning. The rule **is** that a hunter's first large bearded seal **of** the season **is** brought home to his wife to be cut up and divided among everyone. This is required of every hunter throughout his **life**. Also when a young man catches his first **large** bearded seal, he must distribute the meat and **oil** to the older families of the village. This distribution, in which he will seek recognition as a hunter and "**re-**spect for his manliness," will be accomplished by his mother and will be structurally indistinguishable from the annual distributions sponsored for seasoned hunters by their wives. However, along with the normal markings carried by a seal party, it will have the added effect of placing him in the category of the marriageable.

In **Toksook** Bay, in May of 1977, **67 seal** parties were given. The seal party routine is thus obviously a fundamental **daily** experience of the spring. The duty of guest as well as hostess is still performed, **with-**out exception, by **all Qaluyaarmiut** women. Participation is taken as a matter **of** fact, and one of the facts of womanhood. If the seal party is generally described to the newcomer as a celebration by a wife for her husband, actually the majority of parties are given for successful sons, not just in the sense of parties by mothers for unmarried sons, but **also**, as we shall see, parties by wives for husbands, with the **hus-**band's mother doing the actual distribution as invited hostess.

Selkregg (1976a:199) indicates that the total poundage of fowl used is the lowest (5%) of total diet relative to other animal and even plant resources. Yet it comes at a time when family stores are low, and often makes the difference between a family's **full** stomachs and the need to rely on canned stew, if that.

Restricted, informal sharing holds true for several species of fish easily gathered by the men, including boreal smelt, tomcod, and **blackfish**. Informal sharing, distinguished from formal seal meat distribution to nonrelatives, village-wide distribution of larger **mammals** such as whale and kalukaq distribution (communal feasts), is the least ostentatious and most common means by which food circulates. This is payuggluni, or bringing food to a relative or close friend, and originally meant to take food to men in the qasgiq (men's house).

In the case of these plentiful species, none of which are considered "staples" like the seal and the herring, although they are all important nutritionally, the households of the hunter's and his wife's **consanguineals** (sisters, brothers and parents) share his catch, which configuration may either coincide with **or** go one step beyond the families who join together for herring processing and seal butchering. Also, these are precisely the families who are excluded from sharing in the seal party distribution of the hunter's first seal of the season. As needlefish, smelt and **blackfish** are more readily accessible in some villages than in others, hunters often **supply** their nonresident as well as resident kinsmen with their local specialty. By this sharing

pattern, households may receive from, and give to, the kinsmen of both the husband and wife. This overlapping framework also applies to regularly shared meals.

Spring seal hunting is known as amirkar(rsur)luni, as opposed to ans-siurluni, or hunting seals in open water, which is done in late summer and fall. On Nelson Island, seals were never watched for and harpooned through their breathing holes. Hunting in the bay was not a solitary affair. Single men in qayat (skin boats) would often group together in pursuit. They now hunt from wooden boats in pairs and threesomes, taking turns shooting the seals that surface.

Lantis (1946:173) estimates the seal harvest for the community of Mekoryuk with a population of 125 as 300 in the spring and 300 in the fall, with two-thirds of the 26 hunters bringing in one or more bearded seal (she does not distinguish between tungunqut and amirkat). These figures were equalled by the hunters of Toksook Bay in the spring of 1977, both in numbers of seals per hunter as well as in numbers of amirkat taken per capita. 1977 was a year in which amirkat were plentiful and stayed until late May. However, this abundance and ease of access, facilitated by modern equipment, did not mean that more amirkat were killed, but rather that they were killed by a different segment of the populations i.e., the young boys, aged 12 through 16. Fathers took the opportunity of a long season to teach their sons rather than to add to their own catch. Availability and ease of access do not seem to affect either what it takes culturally to define or biologically to maintain the community.

This logic applies to all forms of hunting and fishing, as social standing and ritual distribution of meat require both variety and abundance in hunters as well as hunted. Although hunting techniques have improved, residents of the study area only harvest as much of each species as they will use in a year.

Although the skinning and butchering of the smaller seals is done in the house, the real work begins in mid-May when the women adjourn to their storehouse to cut and prepare for drying the thousands of pounds of meat that have accumulated between the beginning of hunting and the time when the days are warm enough to defrost the stock of frozen carcasses.

A woman may work alone, or group together with other women to whom she is related by blood or marriage in the same way her husband may work alone or in company, and along the same **lines** of affiliation. In other words, a woman will butcher her husband's catch, joining with her son's wife or her sister, depending on whether or not her son or her sister's husband hunts with her husband, and whether their families share a common food supply.

Yet even when working in groups, each woman always works her own seals, i.e., those caught by her husband or son. In the case of a **mother-in-law/daughter-in-law** team, the work on an individual seal will be divided, so that the rough butchering is done by the younger woman, while the older woman works strictly on the delicate skinning operation.



During the last two weeks of May, each woman will process approximately 100 pounds of meat and oil a day. Everything is saved. The only parts **no longer** kept are the bladder, lungs, **claws, and** bones. The meat, dried as kinengyak on racks outside the storehouse, **will** be eaten during **the** late summer and **early fall, while** the oil rendered during the spring season accounts **for** 80% of that used during the year.

Walrus follow the seal in late spring. Although walrus utilization patterns differ **widely** from **village** to village, on Nelson Island most hunters **will** try to kill one walrus during a good season, when large herds and fine weather coincide. The successful hunter **will** retain the preferred parts: the head and tusks, heart and kidneys, the flippers (both hands and feet), and a broad patch of skin and meat from behind the head. The remainder of the **500-** to 800-pound carcass is divided among the other men participating in the **actual** kill (i.e., those sharing the boat of the successful hunter) and any men who join them on the ice to participate in the butchering process. Shares, sometimes greater than their own, are taken by men with **elder** parents in **the** village, so that over half the village **will** benefit from a successful **kill**. The random nature of these groupings of men on the ice equals in effect but opposes in principle the formal female distribution of **seal** meat within the village.

When sealing is late and herring come early, no **walrus** are taken. But in a good year one **walrus will** be taken **by** each **male householder**, even though many more are **available** and, given the new technology, accessible.

Traditionally, walrus bones and skin were as important as the ivory and meat. We might surmise that more walrus were traditionally taken, and indeed **Lantis** records (1946:173) that 35 walrus were killed in 1940 for a village population of 125. This is more per capita than are taken today on Nelson Island, but still one per adult male.

It is interesting to note that traditionally walrus were not relied upon because they were not dependable from year to year, were dangerous to pursue when available (as they travel in ominous herds), and were often obtained by luck, found washed up on the shore, having been killed farther north. Materially they were important, but culturally they were not taken seriously. We find that today, during a good year, when one day's walrus hunting could supply one-third of the protein produced through the toilsome herring season, the hunt is abandoned in order to ready fishing nets.

At the beginning of June, **along** with intermittent egg hunting, preparation for herring and salmon processing begins in earnest. Dried herring and salmon are important staples during the winter, and their preparation is a matter of concern. Of all the fish sought, they are the most important in terms of quantity, ease of storage, and nutritional value. They are relatively easy to obtain and labor productivity is high. The size of the salmon and herring runs means the difference between feast and famine in the late winter and early spring. As shall be shown, the social emphasis on **kalukaq** (communal feasting) requires large stores of food. Although herring and salmon are not

actually distributed, they are the foods that, maintain the family when other stores are depleted.

A man's mother, unmarried sisters, and wife are all necessary to process his **catch**. The same pits and **fish** racks are used year after year by the same configuration of females. Here are found together the **females** of an extended family who pair off and subdivide differently for smaller jobs involving the extended family, such as grass gathering and work in the storehouse. These are also the women who traditionally resided together in a common nepiaq (sod house), although they now maintain separate households. They are women who share meals as well as food stores, who may butcher seals together and who cook together when the village is to be feasted. Beyond the single-family household, this extended family is the next extension of practical affiliation, and 70% are comprised of a hunter's household **plus** the household of the hunter's parents. Yet the extended family is no more a discrete cultural unit than the **single** household. **Its** bounds are continually being crosscut by the demands and benefits of informal sharing of other products of the chase, both raw and cooked.

A goose roundup may also take place in **late** July, although it is no **longer an annual** event. This drive of the goslings was the only **formal** drive in the traditional **Yup'ik** subsistence **cycle**, although **beluga** were also driven into sloughs and beached at **irregular** intervals. **Also**, on the coast, only men participate, as distinct from the bird roundups of the **riverine Yup'ik**, in which everyone participates, and from the

reindeer roundup of **Nunivak** Island. Although each man may bring home three dozen small geese, the take is not as large as the camaraderie that the collective aspect of the event elicits.

In the first part of August, villagers begin to watch for the ripening **salmonberries**. Although **Yup'ik** society is purportedly family-centered, **iqvarluni**, or berry picking, is the only subsistence activity in which small family units work as solitary and **solidary** groups. Whether leaving the village to camp for a week or for a day's picking, a man and his wife, their children and possibly one of their parents work together and only pool the harvest within this unit. What they are gathering, however, is the requisite to good hospitality during a winter of entertaining and **feasting**. **Akutaq** (ice cream) is simultaneously the product of family **solidarity** and hard work, and produced for the expression of hospitality and generosity to strangers.

If the weather remains fine, **peluq**, or willow ash, is made during late August after the berry picking. This ash is used with tobacco to make the quid chewed by men and women alike. The ash is an important part of **Yup'ik** socializing, and its production is part and parcel of the cultural definition of grandmotherhood. Oil barrel stoves for rendering the willow spot the tundra around each village. The older women will monopolize these **kaminiat** (stoves) for days at a time, making ash enough to supply chewing material for several households.

This provision by the older **for** the younger is another important work configuration. These same women play the leading role in distribution of subsistence products, and decisions as **to** how much of each item is necessary for winter storage **for** the same unit she supplies with ash. An **isomorphism** exists between the **people** the older woman directs, receives from and distributes for in most instances, and those she provides for in this one. Sometimes both are at play in the process of making ash, as the grandmother directs her grandsons to gather willow for her oven. At the same time, she is working with **her** peers, on the basis of distant rather than close relation. The duties of age go hand in hand with the privilege of both working and distributing beyond the immediate family. Again, as in the berry picking, the duties toward the closest household unit are juxtaposed with sociability extended beyond it, yet conversely, in making **ash**, the duties toward the closest **solidary** unit are actuated through a larger social partnership.

In the **fall**, the seals return to the mouth of the rivers and are hunted in open water. Few **walrus** are taken, although schools of **beluga** are sometimes driven into the bay. As many as **10** may be taken in one day and no more may be sighted for several **years**. The prize is beached in front of the village, and the older men come down to the shore to divide it such that every **family** receives a share of meat and skin, according to the age and status of the head of the household.

September **also** finds men setting traps for **blackfish**, **loche** fish, and **burbot**. In the shallow **lakes** and the little creeks connecting them,

the men set their mink traps, in which the **blackfish** were caught as well. These traps are set in the same channels by the same fishermen **year** after year. Rights to the channels are recognized, and pass from father to son.

While they are across the bay setting their traps, men may also stop for the night on the tundra for geese hunting. Except for processing the daily catch of fish and fowl, the major gathering and butchering jobs end with the frost, and women retire into their houses. Yet the freezing of nature corresponds with an incredible social thaw. An elaborate exploitation of the social environment succeeds the subsistence bustle of the warmer months. Where food was produced and processed according to specific configurations, now its distribution makes comprehensible the cultural logic and particularity of the **Yup'ik** exploitation of the natural environment, as we have seen in the section on cultural systems (see also Appendix **II**: Social Structure and Ritual Distribution).

To summarize, the interface between the structure of production and distribution so far established, the village-wide distribution of whale meat, like the general distribution of needlefish, stands at one extreme in the disposal of an individual hunter's catch. It stands in marked opposition to the distribution of both walrus and seal, the former divided hierarchically among coparticipants in the hunt, and the latter, except in the case of the year's first bearded seal, which is hierarchically divided among nonrelatives, the exclusive property of the hunter and his immediate family.

Also, the more exclusive the unit in which the product **is** shared, the more appropriate it is as a feast food or gift in distribution. We have already seen this lateral tendency in berry-picking configurations and **the** designation of akutaq (ice cream) as appropriate feast food. **It** is interesting that fish (including herring, salmon, **blackfish**, and **tomcod**), the real staples of the coastal communities, are sought for, processed by, and stored for use by members of two or three associated households, the majority, but not the entirety, including hunter's household, hunter's parents' household, and hunters' siblings' **households**. In almost **all** cases where association with the hunter's parents is available, it is **relied** upon. This is the extended family unit in which equipment is shared, and in which borrowing, visiting and **informal** communal meals are frequent.,

Partnerships for both seal hunting and commercial fishing are most often framed within this same extended **family** unit, the majority between fathers and sons, and between brothers. The resulting meat and money is **always** the exclusive property of the individual household.

Thus, the tendency is toward equal treatment of all village members in the case of subsistence products brought in unusual quantity or infrequently (e.g., whale meat); allocation of an overlapping network of **consanguineal** relatives of seasonal and geographic specialties such as **smelt**; preferred allocation among and processing by co-located kinsmen **of** staples such as herring and salmon; and exclusive ownership and

processing by individual households of the products of activities such as sealing, berry picking, and commercial fishing, which activities are all critically linked to either cash or culture. Also, the more exclusive the ownership of subsistence products, the more appropriate such products are for extending formal hospitality within and beyond the minimal group.

Finally, an equation exists between the nonkin resident in the village and distant kin, as when a man distributes his catch generally within his village, he also sends shares to related households in adjacent villages. Note also that some species, notably needlefish and **black-fish**, may be either generally distributed within the community among the hunter's **consanguineals** or restricted to use within the individual household, and the household of the hunter's parents. How large the circle of distribution may in some cases depend on the amount of the product required. However, the majority of subsistence products exist in one-to-one relation to a particular distribution and production configuration.

This pattern of production and distribution remains basically intact in all of the coastal communities of the study **area**. In some cases, such as in the larger communities of **Quinhagak** and Hooper Bay, the traditional community-wide distributive mechanisms have broken down. Also Mekoryuk is unique in that a number of families move into the village during the summer from Bethel in order to take advantage of the summer



hunting and fishing and are not as tied in to the community as the year-round villagers. Yet even in these communities the **interfamily** configurations outlined above remain intact. In fact, the responsibility to help aging parents put up a winter's supply of **fish, as well as** to gather stores for themselves, is what motivates Bethel families to **return** to their home **village** in **June** and **July**. Also, even where individuals and individual **families** within the village are tied to **9:00 to 5:00** jobs which severely **limit** their ability to exploit subsistence resources, they are still the recipients of the largesse of their relatives. They may not eat fresh fish and game as often as their more subsistence-oriented neighbors, but they by no means go without. When a **seal** party is announced over the CB they may still attend.

The major point to be emphasized is the incredible interdependence of families in **the coastal** communities, and the numerous equalizing mechanisms that are at work to effectively redistribute the products of the hunt. These mechanisms **rarely** result in families becoming dependent on each other in any negative sense. Rather, they serve as **material** expressions of pride and well-being. Certainly everyone is the recipient in the redistribution of subsistence products, but more important, everyone has the opportunity to **give**. This is perhaps the **single** most important effect of village subsistence activity. Even if a substitute could be found for the nutritional **value** it supplies, its **social value** is irreplaceable.

TABLE V\*  
THE STRUCTURE OF PRODUCTION

Species	Work Configurations	Unit of Food Sharing and Distribution
Seal Hunting	Stable partnerships, the majority between <b>B-B, WB-ZH, and F-S, in that order. More temporary alliances between 1st cousins and between</b> uncles and nephews	Kill is property of the successful hunter, who gives it to his wife and mother for processing, Bearded seals may be divided between partners according to a hierarchy of parts.
Seal Butcher- ing	Hunter)s mother, wife, and/or unmarried sisters. Older, women separate seal fat from skin ( <u>nayugluni</u> ), while younger women do the preliminary butchering.	Fat and meat of the first seal of the season formally distributed among all resident nonrelatives ( <u>uqiqurluni</u> ). Rest of seals kept by individual household, with informal gifts of preferred parts or whole small seals to elderly relatives.
Walrus Hunting	Stable seal hunting partnerships, as well as many temporary alliances between cousins or friends for a day's hunting.	Kill butchered on the ice by the hunter, who receives the preferred parts. The remainder is divided equally between all men present during the butchering, with shares reserved for kinsmen of the hunters present during the butchering.
Salmon/ Herring Fishing	Father/son teams or several brothers while their father is commercial fishing.	Procured by and processed for use by extended family unit (unit of borrowing and informal visiting).
Salmon/ Herring Process- ing	Fisherman's mother, wife, sisters, and unmarried daughters. All females of the extended family work together.	
Herring Eggs/ Smelt/ Needlefish/ Blackfish	Individual fishermen, with or without son or partner	Restricted informal sharing ( <u>payuggluni</u> ) between three or four extended families, including both resident and non-resident kinsmen.

\*From Fienup-Riordan, 1980a; p. 133-134, Table IV.

TABLE V (cont'd.)

Species	Work Configurations	Unit of Food Sharing and Distribution
Commercial Fishing	Partnerships between F-S, B-B and <b>cousins</b> , in that order.	Money <b>reserved for use by individual household and/or fisherman.</b>
Goose Gathering	All men and boys in the village.	Geese equally divided among <b>all</b> families in the village.
Whale	Individual hunter with or without partner.	Village-wide distribution with preferred parts reserved for the successful hunter. After the <b>successful</b> hunter, <b>the elderly</b> receive the choicest portions.
Fishing/ Bird Hunting	Individual men-, or F-S, B-B, Cousin teams. No stable partnerships	Variable distributional configurations, depending on variety and amount, e.g.:  1) <b>Daily catch of red salmon usually reserved for individual family.</b>  2) <b>Sack of ducks, ptarmigan, halibut, smelt, or blackfish usually shared within the extended family.</b>  3) Sled full of pink salmon, needlefish, tom cods, or whitefish may be <b>shared with the entire village.</b>
Berry Picking	Husband-wife team with their parent(s) and small children.	Berries saved for use by individual household. Used as feast food and served to guests in informal and <b>ritual distributions.</b>
Ash Production	Pairs of elderly women, usually cousins; partnerships constant from year to year.	Woman's household, plus those of her married sons and daughters.
Gathering of Eggs/ Greens/ Grasses	Grandmother-grandchild/ Individual Woman/Mother-child/ Sisters/Cousins	Female gathering for use by individual household.

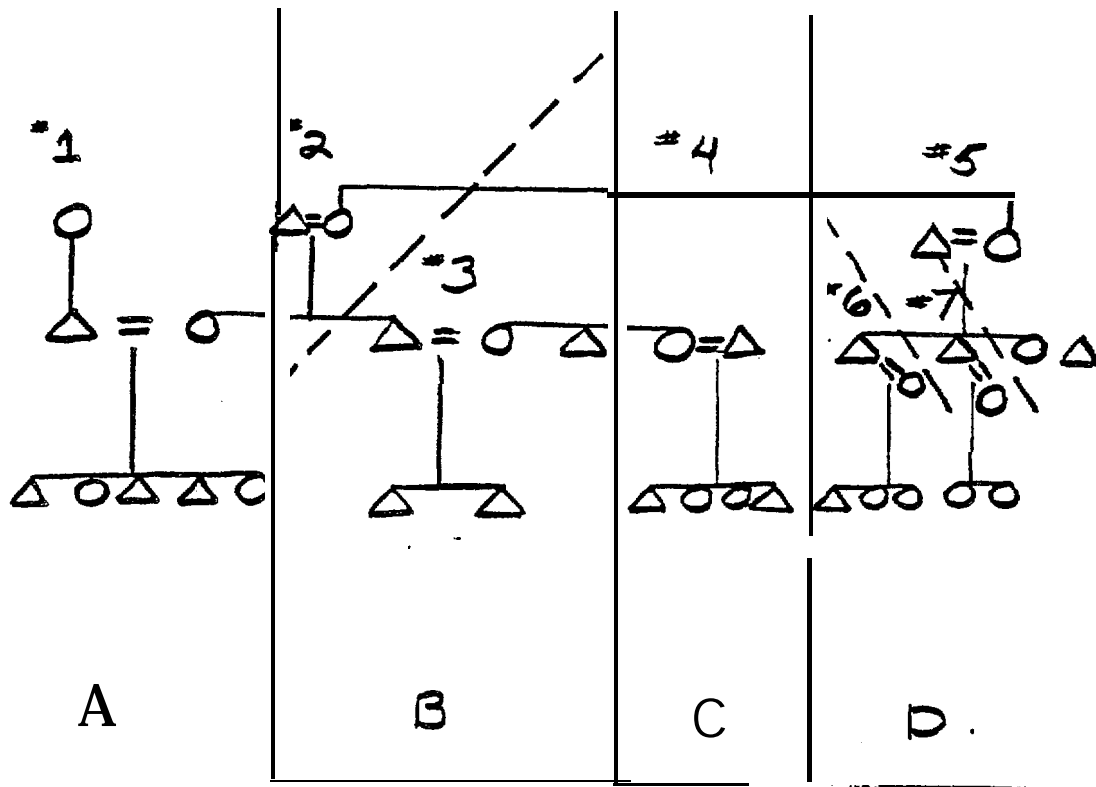


Figure 11. The Structure of Distribution\*

In Order of Decreasing Restrictiveness:

Households 1 through 7 separate for food storage, (maintain separate elagyaq), fall fishing, seal butchering, and berry picking.

Extended families A through D unite for herring fishing and processing (family of hunter and hunter's parents). Cooked food is shared on a daily basis within each extended family. Women of each extended family join as a group in preparation of feast food.

Informal sharing between A and B, A and D, and B and C consisting of regular (weekly) gifts of salmon, birds, smelt, etc., both raw and cooked.

Women of A, B and D are excluded from each others seal parties. Families of A, B and D will all receive shares of walrus killed by any male in either A, B or D, while members of C will be excluded unless present at the kill.

All Families receive portions based on age of head of household, in the event of a whale kill, musk ox hunt, or the occasional village-wide distribution of a sled full of frozen fish, or a net full of fresh ones.

\*From Fienup-Riordan, 1980a; p. 135, Figure 7.

## The Village Cash Economy

The foregoing section presented the round of subsistence activities available in **the** different coastal villages to those who can afford to engage in them. **The** need for cash **to** supplement, and indeed **to** make possible, the pursuit of the subsistence activities is a relatively new phenomenon, but one **that** is certainly **well** established in the coastal communities under consideration **here**. Depending on the means used to acquire the necessary cash, however, the effects on **sociocultural** systems of the integration of the subsistence and cash economies are quite different. Before the interface between the two can be dealt with, however, the components of the village cash economy must be specified in detail. **In** order to do this, both the availability of seasonal and full-time employment within each village must be specified, as well as the opportunities for wage labor that exist outside of the village.

It is worth mentioning at the outset that unemployment (meaning lack of a regular **9:00** to **5:00** job within the village) has been <sup>13</sup> and **still** is one **of** the most notorious and oft-quoted **ills** of village **life**. Yet, with the manpower requirements for the construction and operation of new village facilities, including village high **schools**, laundromats, and community centers, the last three years have seen a sharp **rise** in the jobs available within most of the villages. An example is the community of Toksook Bay, where the first Nelson Island Regional High School was opened **in 1976**. For the two years during which the high

school was under construction, as well as the first two years after its completion (at which point high school construction began in the other villages), it set **Toksook** apart as having almost twice as many full-time jobs as were available in the other Nelson Island villages (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:61-2). It is **also** worth noting the near doubling in the per capita income of the residents of **Toksook** Bay in the years between 1970 and 1977.<sup>14</sup> This increase was not only a product of the jobs related to the new high school, but to the high percentage of families with one or more members active in the Bristol Bay salmon fishery. However, the effects of inflation and the increase in the cost of subsistence equipment, particularly fuel, have taken the community back one step for every two advanced in terms of economic growth.

Table VI lists all regular employment currently available in the coastal villages under consideration here. As should be immediately apparent, the job per capita ratio remains fairly constant. In villages such as **Hooper** Bay and Chevak with relatively large populations, more individuals are employed in both the private and public sectors.

#### THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Most of the regular full-time positions in the villages are either directly or indirectly funded by the federal or state government. Four of these sources have been roughly quantified in Table VII.<sup>15</sup> Generally speaking, agency and governmental input is allocated as follows:

TABLE VI  
 OPPORTUNITIES FOR CASH INCOME IN NAVARIN BASIN COASTAL COMMUNITIES

	Hooper Bay	Chevak	Scammon Bay	Mekoryuk	Newtok	Tununak	Toksook Bay	Nightmute	Chefornak	Kipnuk	Kwigillingok	Kongiganak	Tuntutuliak	EEK	Quinhagak
<u>Village Jobs</u> <sup>1,2</sup>															
<u>Health Aides</u>															
Primaries	2	2	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1½	1	-	2
Alternates	½	½	1	-	1	1	-	1	½	1	1	-	½	1	-
Aides	½	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	½	-	-	-	-	1	-
Maintenance	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½
<u>Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)*</u>															
*supplied by Mary Ayers, Personnel Asst., BIA															
Title I Aides	-	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Regular Instruction	-	?	?	2	3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	4
Special Instruction	-	?	?	-	-	4	-	-	2	5	4	-	-	-	-
Maintenance/ Janitorial	-	?	?	1	1	-	1½	1	3	2	2	-	2	-	1½
General Support	-	1	?	½	½	-	-	1	1	-	½	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten	-	?	?	-	-	1½	1	1	1	½	-	-	2	-	1
									1	-	-	-	1	-	-

TABLE VI (cont'd.)

<u>Lower Kuskokwim School District/ Lower Yukon School District (LKSD/LYSD)</u>	Hooper Bay	Chevak	Scammon Bay	Mekoryuk	Newtok	Tununak	Toksook Bay	Nighmute	Chefornak	Kipnuk	Kwigillingok	Kongiganak	Tuntutuliak	EEK	Quinhagak
Regular	7	?	?	2	½	1	5	-	2	6	3	6	1	5½	2
Special	2	?	?	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	½	-	-	1	-
Maintenance/ Janitorial	5	?	?	-	-	1½	-	-	1	-	1	4	-	1	½
General Support	2	?	?	1	½	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-
	1	?	?	½	½	½	1½	-	½	½	½	3	1	1	½
<u>Kuskokwim Community College/ Adult Basic Education (KCC/ABE)</u>															
Instructor	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Headstart/Parent Child Program</u>															
Teacher	2	2	2	-	?	?	?	?	-	-	?	-	-	?	-
Janitor	½	½	-	-	?	?	?	?	-	-	?	-	-	?	-
Cook	½	½	-	-	?	?	?	?	-	-	?	-	-	?	-
<u>Public Safety</u>															
Policeman	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	1	2	1	3
Magistrate	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>AVEC Light Plant Operator</u> X = privately owned generator	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	X	X	X	X	1



TABLE VI (cont d.)

	Hooper Bay	Chevak	Scammon Bay	Mekoryuk	Newtok	Tununak	Toksook Bay	Nightmute	Chefornak	Kipnuk	Kwigillingok	Kongiganak	Tuntutuliak	Eek	Quinhagak
<u>City Offices</u>															
Administrator	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asst. Admin.	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	-
Clerk	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	1
Phone Operator	1	1	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	1	1
Land Planner	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Janitor	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{2}$
Laundromat/Seaf Water	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	3
Alcoholism	1	1	-	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	-	2
Food Stamp Fee Agent	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
<u>Private Business</u>															
Store Owner	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	6	1	1	2	2	3
Store Clerk	4	3	-	2	1	2	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	1	-
Show Hall/Pool Hall	2	1	1	-	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	-	1	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	1
<u>Transportation</u>															
Wien Agent	4	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
Sea-Air Agent	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Air Taxi	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Airport Maintenance	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
<u>Post Office</u>															
	2	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1

TABLE VI (cont'd.)

	Hooper Bay	Chevak	Scammon Bay	Mekoryuk	Newtok	Tununak	Toksook Bay	Nightmute	Chefornak	Kipnuk	Kwigillingok	Kongiganak	Tuntutuliak	EEK	Quinhagak
<u>City Offices</u>															
Administrator	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asst. Admin.	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1/2	-	-	-
Clerk	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1/2	1/2	-	-	1
Phone Operator	1	1	1	1	1/2	1	1	1/2	1	1	1/2	1	1	1	1
Land Planner	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Janitor	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1	1/2	-	1/2	1/2	-	-	-	1/2
Laundromat/Safe Water	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	3
Alcoholism	1	1	-	1	1/2	1	1	-	-	-	1/2	-	-	-	2
Food Stamp Fee Agent	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1/2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
<u>Private Business</u>															
Store Owner	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	6	1	1	2	2	3
Store Clerk	4	3	-	2	1	2	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	1	-
Show Hall/Pool Hall	2	1	1	-	1/2	1/2	2	-	1	-	-	-	1/2	-	1
<u>Transportation</u>															
Wien Agent	4	2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1
Sea-Air Agent	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2
Air Taxi	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Airport Maintenance	1	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2
<u>Post Office</u>															
	2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1

TABLE VII  
AGENCY INPUT<sup>1</sup>

<u>APPROX. INCOME</u> <u>MONTH</u> <u>PER VILLAGE FROM:</u>	YUKON- KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORP.	POSTAL SERVICE	CETA (5/80)	FOOD STAMPS (5/80)	STATE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (OAA, ABL, APU, AFDC, GRM, GRA)
Hooper Bay	\$3,789	1,500	3,500	16,382	18,340
Chevak	3,549	1,500	3,000	7,673	12,845
Mekoryuk	1,332	900	5,500	454	3,890
Newtok	1,395	600	3,500	3,548	2,216
Tununak	1,269	900	3,000	4,261	8,522
Toksook Bay	1,735	900	4,600	7,450	8,429
Nightmute	1,209	600	900	3,058	2,979
Chefornak	1,863	900	4,700	2,864	7,115
Kipnuk	1,952	1,500	4,500	4,856	7,637
Kwigillingok	1,863	600	2,300	3,534	3,122
Kongiganak	1,433	600	2,600	3,925	5,273
Tuntutuliak	1,260	600	4,300	3,443	6,200
Eek	1,863	600	4,300	3,045	4,625
Quinhagak	1,863	900	3,800	6,967	7,029

<sup>1</sup> Agency input does not include employee benefits such as free travel for airline agents, BIA retirement benefits (substantial), etc. Agency sources include: Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Assistance; Clifford Huffman, Bethel Postmaster; Gloria Simion, Manpower Coordinator, AVCP Employment & Training, Bethel, AK.

1) Health aides are paid by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) with the city councils paying weekend salaries in some instances.

2) Comprehensive Employment and Training Assistance (CETA) funds are made available to the villages of the AVCP region to supply economic input as well as on-the-job training for the unskilled. CETA monies are administered through AVCP employment and training, and cover positions such as village administrators, village police, maintenance workers, city clerks, janitors, light plant operators, recreation directors, **sanitarians**, telephone operators, social service **aides**, laundromat attendants, and laborers. CETA salaries range from \$6.50 to \$7.95 per hour. The amount of money spent by CETA and the number of positions **filled** in any particular village varies tremendously from month to month and from year to year. Presently approximately 300 jobs in the region are funded through CETA, which pumps \$64,000 a week into village economies. Obviously, CETA funding represents an important source of cash. <sup>16</sup>

3) Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association (ANICA) employs a store manager and assistants in most of the villages under consideration, and AVEC (Alaska Village Electric Corporation) employs a power plant operator, funded directly or indirectly by the federal government. Manager salaries in both instances range between \$1,500 and \$2,000 per month.

4) **Bureau** of Indian Affairs (BM) employment of villagers also varies considerably from village **to village**. Below are the positions which are currently filled in two coastal communities (**Ayers:1980**).

**Chefornak:**

Education Aide, <b>GS-4</b>	<b>\$11,389</b> per annum
Education Aide, <b>GS-2</b>	<b>\$ 8,670</b> per annum
Education Aide, <b>GS-2</b>	<b>\$ 8,902</b> per annum
Education Aide, <b>GS-3</b>	<b>\$ 9,250</b> per annum
Part-time Utility Systems Repairer Operator Helper, <b>WG-5</b>	<b>\$13.73</b> per hour
Part-time Cook, <b>WG-5</b>	<b>\$12.31</b> per hour
Food Service Worker ( <b>Inter- mittent</b> ), <b>WG-2</b>	<b>\$10.30</b> per hour
Part-time Custodial Worker, <b>WG-1</b>	<b>\$10.63</b> per hour

**Chevak:**

Maintenance Foreman, <b>WS-4</b>	<b>\$16.85</b> per hour
Utility Systems Repairer Operator Helper, <b>WG-5</b>	<b>\$11.84</b> per hour
Custodial Worker, <b>WG-1</b>	<b>\$11.45</b> per hour
Custodial Worker, <b>WG-1</b>	<b>\$10.63</b> per hour
Custodial Worker, <b>WG-1</b>	<b>\$10.22</b> per hour
Laborer (Intermittent), <b>WG-1</b>	<b>\$ 9.81</b> per hour

The IRA program director and president are **also BIA** funded. Finally, BIA funds a General Assistance (**GA**) program.<sup>17</sup> The need for general assistance **is** cyclical and most GA applications are received during the winter when people are **unable** to fish and cannot get work to meet high winter expenses. With unemployment running as high as 80% **during** the winter in 22 AVCP villages, GA **fills** a very genuine need which is not otherwise being met. **Just less** than 4,000 people **received GA** payments **last** year through AVCP.

5) The magistrate position is funded by the state. Each of the three magistrates in the study area receives a salary of \$760 per month.

6) Seasonal and part-time work that is federally funded includes Public Health Service (PHS) construction, Alaska State Housing Authority (ASHA) construction, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) funded firefighting, and board participation.

7) Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) and Lower Yukon School District (LYSD) salaries range from \$6,000 to \$12,500 per annum. Both the LKSD and LYSD also receive some aid through the Johnson-O'Malley (JOM) program. Information on salaries was not available for individual employees in individual villages. However, one example of the importance of LYSD and LKSD input to the villages is available. The Lower Yukon School District spent \$241,216 in FY80 to pay 17 full-time employees in Hooper Bay, averaging \$14,200 per employee.

8) State public assistance as a source of cash varies tremendously as do BIA and CETA funds. Far from the smug acceptance of a monthly check, many people in the study area are strongly opposed to direct support through food stamps and general public assistance (Fienup-Riordan, 1979).<sup>18</sup>

Yet at the same time that the regional leadership is striving to provide an alternative to welfare through controlled economic development, the case number has increased in recent years, as has the population,

as well **as the** total average income per month for each case. However, this assistance is **still** inadequate, as it is not proportionate to the rise in the cost of living, nor **is it** responsive to years of abnormal **fluctuations** such **as** years **of** bad fishing.

**As** can be seen from the above, money from the public sector reaches individual families both **directly** in the form of **BIA** and state public **assistance**<sup>19</sup> **as well** as indirectly, through programs such as **CETA** employment and training. This indirect support has the effect of supporting city administration and operation, as well as bringing cash into the village economy. With individual families dependent on seasonal employment and **welfare**,<sup>20</sup> no coastal community among those considered here has a tax base sufficient to support the services it provides. Indeed, according to **Lenz**, "Sometimes **it** seems like bingo, **CETA** workers and prayer are the only things that keep village governments from going under" (**Lenz, 10/9/80:14**), and even bingo funding is in jeopardy!<sup>21</sup> Although village maintenance and operational expenses are a continuing problem,<sup>22</sup> especially with the proposed federal budget cuts, money for capital improvement projects is intermittently available. Indeed, two major state-financed construction projects were almost solely responsible for bailing out Emmonak in 1980 (**Lenz, 10/9/80 b: 15**).<sup>23</sup>

When comparing the relative self-sufficiency **of** the **villages** in the **1940s** **with** the government-assisted village **lifestyle** of today, many questions arise concerning the value of the **village living** experience,

the resolve **of** the people to continue as villagers, and the issue of self-sufficiency versus the dole mentality. Government largess has changed the composition and structure of the village.<sup>24</sup>

Rather than seeking to void this reliance, many institutions (including AVCP, BIA and the State of Alaska) have sought to increase the efficiency of delivery of service. As these services have grown, so too have the villages, and in fact in the last 10 years, at least partly because of these improved services, regional population growth has been most acute in the villages, rather than in the regional center, as had been expected (Derbyshire and Associates, 1980). Now, with the proposed Reagan cuts, this scenario begins to fall apart. The growth in services that has been accomplished by and large without regional oversight, and without a rational plan **of** expansion, is reaching its limits. Again, according to Nunam **Kitlutsisti**, movement away from the current system requires a regional authority to address the continuation of village lifestyles and the development of a localized economy to support the cash demands of village residents.

Although the above information **plus** that contained in Tables **VI** and **VII** **is** extremely limited and can afford no complete picture of differential agency cash input into the coastal communities in the study area, it does clarify one point of community similarity. The average of available figures on monthly household agency income ranged between **\$300** and **\$500** in the different villages of the study **area**.<sup>25</sup> This is not to be confused with a total income picture. Some villages do have



a **higher** per capita income than do others. The point is that this is not due to differential agency input. Rather, as we shall see, variation in the success of the different village corporations, as well as the different levels of involvement **of** the villages in the commercial fisheries, accounts for the differences in village household and per capita income. Although the proposed Reagan cuts in **CETA** funding and public assistance **will** be felt acutely, as the safety margin is so **slim**,<sup>26</sup> income from the private sector is beginning, and **will** continue more markedly in the future, to be the determining factor in village economic viability.

#### THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Before beginning a discussion of the interface between the subsistence and cash economic activity, income sources other than those provided by the federal and state governments must be detailed, from the commercial fishery, of critical importance to all coastal communities, to sources such as trapping and reindeer herding, the importance of which have decreased considerably in the last decade. **Also**, the place of village profit-making corporations must be discussed.

#### Commercial Fishing

Aside from the money supplied to the village economy through the **public** sector, the commercial fisheries **of** Bristol Bay and the Lower

**Kuskokwim** provide the most substantial source of cash. Also, whereas growth in the public sector has a definite lid, the growth of the **commercial** fishing industry is looked to as the real hope of the future by many of the residents in the study area (Lenz, 8/14/80; 8/18/80). The development of the oil industry is viewed by residents of the study area as a potential threat to the present precarious balance between the subsistence and cash economies. Both the **long-** and short-range effects of an oil spill are given far more weight by the villagers than the perceived economic benefits of the development of the oil industry in the study area. The continued development of the commercial salmon fishery in both Bristol Bay and the Lower **Kuskokwim** as well as the relatively recent commercial herring fishery in the Cape **Romanzof** area are, on the other hand, seen in a much more positive light.

Yet as fisheries development involves the commercial exploitation of a traditional subsistence resource, it entails a direct confrontation between the cash and subsistence economies. The issue of fisheries development is electric, and the direction it will take by no means a foregone conclusion. For these reasons, it will receive rather extensive consideration here, especially as the regional socioeconomic study may ignore the relevance of the development of the commercial fishery to the village economy.

It is important to note at the outset that there is a marked double standard in the way commercial fishing is perceived. For instance, for the Nelson Islanders the exploitation of the Bristol Bay **salmon**

**fishery** provides a gross annual income of from \$15,000 to \$40,000 a year per permit holder (substantially less for crew members). The villagers of **Toksook Bay, Tununak and Nightmute**, however, are adamantly opposed to the development of a commercial herring fishery in the vicinity of Nelson Island, fearing that it **will** adversely affect their harvest of this critical subsistence resource.

As can be seen from Table **VIII**, the fishermen of the Hooper Bay/Chevak area are much less **involved** in the Bristol Bay **fishery**, and **consequently** have been looking around for a viable **local** alternative. Some members of both communities, including fishermen from **Scammon Bay**, think they have found it in the development of a commercial herring fishery, but one that is restricted to local use. <sup>27</sup> Their first season (1980) met with fair success, averaging a take of \$3,000 for each of the **15 local** fishermen. In this fishery it is expected that 700 **local fishermen** will eventually compete for the 350-ton harvest quota set for the Cape **Romanzov** area. <sup>28</sup> Many **Hooper Bay/Chevakers**, however, are **still** adamantly opposed to the development of this fishery and, like the Nelson Islanders, fear the effects of this commercial exploitation of their subsistence resource.

The village of Mekoryuk shares with **Hooper Bay and Chevak** the lack of heavy involvement in the Bristol Bay commercial **salmon** fishery. It is thus not surprising that in **1976** they seriously considered a **plan** to transform their **old** reindeer packing **plant** into a modern herring **processing** facility, **which** was to be supplied by a **local** commercial fishery.

TABLE VIII  
LIMITED ENTRY FISHING PERMIT HOLDERS\*

<u>Village</u>	Bristol Bay Drift Gill Net	Bristol Bay Set Gill Net	<b>Kuskokwim</b> Set Gill Net
<b>Hooper Bay</b>	3	4	
<b>Chevak</b>	2		
<b>Mekoryuk</b>	None		
Newtok	4		
<b>Tununak</b>	7	1	
Toksook	12		
Nightmute	5		
<b>Chefornak</b>	5		
Kipnuk	10		12
Kongiganak	2		20
<b>Kwigillingok</b>	5		13
<b>Tuntutuliak</b>			49
EEK	9		37
<b>Quinhagak</b>	7		82
Bethel			167

\* Dept. of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries (1979).

TABLE IX  
 TO KSOOK BAY PARTICIPATION IN BRISTOL BAY  
 COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERY<sup>1</sup>

% Adult males <sup>2</sup> (over 18)	1950	1960	1977
Working canneries	15	24	20
Salmon fishing with			
Own Boat	3	6	5
Rented Boat	12	18	<u>27</u>
Total % of Adult Males	30	48	62

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Fienup-Riordan (1980a:81-82).

<sup>2</sup> Nelson Island girls occasionally work in the cannery, but this is rare. Also, in the summer of 1978, one 26-year-old woman worked with her cousins on a Naknek gill-netter.

Before the **plan** could get off the ground, however, the packing plant burned down. But it is unlikely that even without this disaster they would have been able to get around the resistance of the Nelson Islanders, their proposed partners in the enterprise.

The six villages to the south of Nelson Island, as well as the **river-**ine villages in the vicinity of Bethel, differ from their northern neighbors in that all are involved in the Kuskokwim commercial salmon fishery. These villages average a higher permit per capita involvement in the **Kuskokwim** fishery than do the Nelson Islanders in the Bristol Bay fishery. However, this is a much less lucrative fishery, averaging less than \$1,000 per permit holder. **The Kuskokwim** fishery also falls well short of the profitable Yukon salmon fishery, the only other commercial **riverine salmon** fishery in the state. **Commercial** salmon fishing came later to the Kuskokwim than to the Yukon. The important commercial chum fishery was not started on the Kuskokwim until 1971, although there was minor exploitation of the resource as early as 1913 (Alaska Geographic, 1979:85).<sup>29</sup>

In 1977, 200 miles of the Kuskokwim were fished commercially by some 530 residents (Alaska Geographic, 1979:86). For the years between 1974 and 1979 the five-year averages for annual commercial and subsistence catches on the river were as follows (Lenz, 7/31/1980:6):

<b>annual</b>	commercial chum catch	205,794 fish
	subsistence "	205,159 "
	commercial king	<b>30,518 "</b>
	subsistence "	<b>44,818 "</b>
	commercial silver	<b>94,000 "</b>

In 1980, the chum season was **"phenomenal!"** (Tundra Drums, 7/17/80:4), with District I producing 463,278 chum, 163,000 more than the previous high. Generally high runs **typified** the mid- to late 1970s, because of simultaneous strong chum runs and the increasing number of commercial fishermen.

The one big advantage that the commercial fishermen of the Kuskokwim have over those who go to Bristol Bay is that they are **able** to exploit the **salmon** as a subsistence resource simultaneously with taking advantage of the commercial fishery. As the commercial periods are interspersed with periods open for subsistence exploitation, a family that has moved upriver to fish camp can alternate between commercial and subsistence fishing throughout the summer. The same equipment can be used for both commercial and subsistence fishing. Even in a poor year, the profits from the commercial fishery, although not immense,<sup>30</sup> are **enough** to help pay the way for the subsistence harvest. In fact, profits from the Kuskokwim commercial **salmon** fishery **could** not even pay for necessary equipment if that equipment were used exclusively for the commercial fishery,

Finally, **"As long** as the resource **is** healthy, the **people** here can **con-** tinue to have it both ways," says state fishery regional supervisor

Ronald Regnart of the Department of Fish and Game (Alaska Geographic, p. 87). Yet there is the problem that since subsistence is the highest priority (Tundra Drums, 7/31:18) and the Department of Fish and Game takes a conservative stance in relation to its disposition, with increases in population, more salmon will be necessary for food and less available for commercial exploitation.

This pattern of simultaneous commercial and subsistence exploitation is not possible for those fishermen in the Nelson Island area who must leave their homes from between one and two months in order to fish commercially in Bristol Bay. There, however, as has been mentioned, the local subsistence salmon harvest is not of major importance. In its place is the herring harvest, and as discussed previously, herring can be harvested by the younger men after the older men leave the village to fish commercially. Certainly families which send all of their men and boys to Bristol Bay lose something during the summer months. But the cash that this lucrative fishery provides helps them to make up for it in the winter, not so much in allowing them to purchase the best canned goods that money can buy, but in making it possible for them to forego the confining 9:00 to 5:00 village employment that interferes with spring sealing, bird hunting and fall fishing. The Bristol Bay permits are much preferred to CETA employment or the jobs in the local high school .

Also, even in the case of the exploitation of the lucrative Bristol Bay commercial fishery by the Nelson Islanders, the profits are poured



back **into** the subsistence economy, used to purchase new equipment such as guns, motors and aluminum **boats**, as **well** as fuel and ammunition. With the increase in income that a Bristol Bay permit makes possible, there is a comparable increase in subsistence resource utilization. Commercial fishing is **still** considered a support mechanism for the maintenance of a subsistence lifestyle rather than vice versa. Although there may be some exceptions (see Nowak, 1972), in the majority of coastal communities in the study area, subsistence resource exploitation rises in proportion to the increase in cash income.

Also important as a source of wage employment are the canneries and processing facilities which are located in Bethel, Bristol Bay, and Mountain Village on the Yukon, for the disposal of the commercial **catch**. As these operations depend on intensive labor for a relatively short period of **time**, they may bring laborers with them, e.g., Japanese **salmon** egg processing vessels anchored in front of Bethel, or they may import young people from the villages, as **well** as hiring Bethel residents. For example, one **Naknek** processing facility annually **flies in over** a dozen young **people** from **Chefornak** and just under 20 from **Kipnuk**. These villagers work 8- and **12-hour** shifts for a period ranging from two to four weeks from mid-June **until** mid-July and bring home from \$1,000 to \$3,000 **each**.<sup>31</sup>

A brief consideration of the potential **for** development of the **commercial Kuskokwim salmon** fishery is in order **as** it pertains to **the** potential economic growth of the coastal and **riverine** villages in the study

area. The **problems** that the proposed expansion of the industry must surmount include:

1) A fluctuating market, presently limited, underdeveloped, and consequently in 1980, saturated with overpriced fish.

2) Limited processing facilities, with only one **Kuskokwim** processor with freezer capacity and the rest flying the fish out. Thus, to date, the only large volume fish freezing storage in Bethel is on Japanese ships that anchor in front of town each summer, operating under contract with Kemp **Paulucci** Seafoods, Inc. (Lenz, 7/31:6). Inadequate facilities during the 1980 season caused **Kuskokwim** salmon buyers to turn fishermen away during a record chum run (Goldstein, 1980b:1), resulting in lost revenues by area fishermen ranging between \$24,000 and \$50,000. On the optimistic side, however, the federal Title XI fishing vessel loan program was recently expanded to include shoreside fish processing facilities.

4) Poor quality of fish due to poor handling and the practice of taking fish all along the river rather than restricting the fishery to the river mouth. ( "Some processors complain that waiting to catch salmon until they get upriver is like waiting **until** apples are partly rotten to harvest them" (Lenz, 7/31:18)).

5) Directly related to the quality of the commercial catch is the need for more capital investment as moving operations downriver will require more investment in boats and gear. Loan programs must be made

available to make investment in **capital** equipment possible. With improved equipment, the near-shore, day-boat commercial fishery for halibut, **flatfish**, flounder, sole, and **capelin** could be developed. But diversification with **all** these permits and different types of gear and different techniques requires full-time commitment to professional fishing, and "It would mean giving up a **lot** of the subsistence lifestyle. . . . I call this a **poverty** fishery. Nobody earns a living fishing along this river [the **Kuskokwim**]. But I think the potential for a professional fishery is here and people have begun to realize it" (Roye, quoted in Lenz, 8/14:16).<sup>32</sup>

6) An unreliable labor market.

" 7) The development of aquaculture programs along the western coast of the United States.

8) The increase in village population, putting a **lid** on the perceived benefits of the developing fisheries in both Bristol Bay and the **Kuskokwim**. As has already been mentioned, jobs in the public sector are increasing, but only slightly faster than the population. **Also**, under the limited entry system designed in 1973 to prevent over-fishing, the number of fishing permits is fixed. Commercial fishing is the **only** source **of** cash for many families and the primary source for **others**, depending on the intensity of effort expended on the fishery by the individual family, as **well** as household composition, other available sources of cash, **and** commitment to the subsistence fishery. Families

with four teenage sons can do extremely well at present, but in 10 years when the sons have families of their own, their father's single permit will prove altogether inadequate as an economic base.

9) Added **to** the problem of finite means is the even more insidious problem of the transferability of permits resulting in de facto discrimination (Tundra Drums, 8/21:13). To date this problem is not **near-****ly** so severe in the poorer Kuskokwim fishery as it is in the Yukon and Bristol Bay fisheries, especially the latter. But even so, the expansion of a "hobby fishery" (**Lenz, 8/21:12**) by people with year-round income from other sources is having its effect on the villagers of the study area, especially those involved in the Bristol Bay fishery. The gradual decline of the number of permits held by **rural** Alaskans in their traditional fishing areas threatens not only the rural Alaskan economic base but also village cohesion and the effective integration of the younger generation, who are faced with the prospect of **crewing** in a fishery in which they have lost the power to participate as boat owners and operators.

These problems notwithstanding, many **people** do see hope for the development of a professional fishery. In regard to the problem of an unreliable labor market, Mark Roye of the Bering Sea Fishermen's Association maintains that a more stable fishery where steady work is available will be able to get steady workers (Tundra Drums, 7/31:18).

Expansion of processing facilities **is also** hoped for, although there are problems of economic feasibility, communication between the bush and distant east coast or Asian markets as to how fish should be cut, and the problems of facility breakdown and maintenance in remote areas (Tundra Drums, 6/24: 20). Yet on the other hand, becoming the middle-man provides the real hope of the future, as the number of fishermen is already at its maximum. . In order **to** assume this position, Roye advises cooperation between state and federal agencies and local Native corporations (**Lenz, 8/14:16**). Although processing is a speculative industry, the frozen market is a broad one. What is needed, again according to **Roye**, is legislation to encourage processors to put their money back into the industry, rather than continuing with the **short-term** take-the-money-and-run mentality which typifies many present processors.

In regard to the development of the commercial herring fisheries along the coast of the study area, the big questions are whether or not and by whom they are to be developed. The villages of the **AVCP** region have adamantly and by and **large** effectively opposed the exploitation by foreign fleets of the mixed stocks **in** mid-winter on the high seas, especially in the **Pribilof** herring savings area (**AVCP** letter to Hammond, Tundra Drums Letters to the Editor, 5/1/80:20). They **main-**tain that the foreign exploitation **will** endanger the safe **local** harvest of the smaller stocks of herring, both commercially and for subsistence purposes (Tundra Drums, 2/14:3). Similarly, **Nunam Kitlutsisti**, among others, successfully sought the prohibition of the interception within

the FCZ by the Japanese trawlers (commonly known in the study area as foreign vacuum cleaners) of chinook salmon, a species "that is critical to the subsistence and financial well-being of every family north of the Nushagak, and a species in which no declared surplus exists" (Letter to Congressman Young from Harold **Sparck**, Director, Nunam **Kitlutsisti**, Tundra Drums, 10/4/80:22).

In 1977, due to the concern over the spawning stock of herring segments in the eastern Bering Sea, particularly those in the Nelson Island area, the Japanese **gillnet** fishery on western Alaska herring was eliminated. As a result, there has been a steady increase in herring in the last several years within the 200-mile limit, and an increased commercial market for herring and herring roe with consequent pressure to open the commercial fishery. However, Hemming et al. (1978) recommended that development of the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta herring fishery be postponed indefinitely.<sup>33</sup>

This conservative recommendation is based on the recognition of the importance of subsistence herring fishing and the adamant desire of the **Nelson** Islanders to preserve it.<sup>34</sup>

Not only is there a conflict between the commitment to a subsistence and commercial fishery, but within the commercial fishery there is the conflict between small-scale gill-netting and large-scale purse seining.

The Central Bering Sea Fish and Game Advisory Committee, made up of representatives from **all** of the coastal villages from Platinum to **Tununak**, including Nunivak Island, submitted a proposal in September of **1980** to the **Alaska** Board of Fisheries to change the **status** of both the herring fisheries in Security Cove and **Goodnews** Bay from "open" to "exclusive registration" fisheries in order to prevent non-local fishermen from exploiting the near-shore herring fishery, and thus guaranteeing maximum profits to coastal village fishermen. The Lower Yukon Fish and Game Advisory Committee has proposed the same thing for the Cape **Romanzof** herring fishery. Both boards are aware **of** and cite the success of the Norton Sound fishery during the 1980 season, where the State Board of Fisheries had restricted the fishery to local **gill-**netters for one year in order to see if small-scale gill-netting could meet the 1,000 metric ton limit to make the commercial market feasible. Protective limitations are also being sought.

Finally, as in the salmon fishery, the battle between harvester and processor is being fought in the commercial herring fishery. The **first** commercial herring fishing season (spring **1980**) at Security Cove was not successful largely because of the **lack** of processors early in the season when there was a major spawn (Tundra Drums, **7(9):1**).

In sum, the development of a **local** professional commercial fishery, including investment in and development of processing facilities and capital investment by local fishermen has unprecedented support in the study area. Programs in financing and education of **local** residents in

the demands and requirements of a professional fishery are presently underway (Tundra Drums, 6/12:16). Although there is certainly some skepticism as to whether or not the economic base of the study area can support immediate rapid development, most residents are optimistic that in the **Kuskokwim** fishery there is room for substantial growth and development. Finally, concern as to the possible effects of offshore **oil** development on this scenario are also well articulated within the region (Association of Village Council Presidents, 1980).<sup>35</sup>

Although commercial fishing is the chief source of income within the private sector of the study area, there are several other important money-making activities that the residents engage in. These include trapping, reindeer herding, arts and crafts production, and work in various capacities for village profit-making organizations ranging from clerking for a local general store to running a barge such as the one owned and operated by the Kipnuk Village Corporation.

#### Arts and Crafts Production

Although it may take a woman over two weeks to complete a basket that she then sells through a Bethel crafts shop for less than **\$100**, the total effect of the sale of local arts and crafts in the study area is considerable. When the city-run **Yugtarivik** Museum burned down in Bethel in the spring of 1980, it was estimated that \$40,000 a year in sales money was earned by the museum for village artists. Because of the economic ramifications of the museum shutdown, the city formally



allocated \$60,000 for **museum** restoration and operation. This is particularly noteworthy, as the **Yugtarivik** is only one of several important Bethel crafts outlets, not to mention the many shops and organizations through which residents in the study area **sell their** arts and **crafts in** Anchorage, Fairbanks and other population centers outside of the region.

Common products of the region include grass baskets and mats, carved **ivory**, knitted products (including articles made from musk ox yarn), dolls, and seal skin products such as boots and bags. All of these articles share the common characteristic of being produced from **materials** obtainable in the study area by individuals engaged **in** subsistence activities as **well** as being objects that can be produced in one's spare time, rather than requiring hours of uninterrupted labor. This is not to say that many village men and women do not spend hours a day working on ivory carving and **basketry**. Rather, it is to emphasize the fact that this important source of income is available **generally** to the population and that craft production is much more **easily incorporated** into the **village** routine than is regular **9:00 to 5:00** employment. Craft production is also compatible with the contemporary village systems of production as presented **above**, in that the men and women who most often specialize in craft production are not those who are actively engaged in subsistence hunting and gathering except during specific times of the year for specialized activities such as herring processing and berry gathering,

The amount of time an individual spends on this activity depends on many factors, including other sources of cash available to the family and to the individual artist, artistic ability and enjoyment of the occupation, the availability of materials (particularly raw ivory and seal skins), the marketability of the product, and the degree to which the individual is still actively engaged in traditional seasonal activities.

Finally, although the actual form of the finished products differs from their traditional counterparts (e.g., the lidded baskets made for sale versus the traditional open work **basketry** of the study area), the fact that traditional materials are still in use has an important integrative effect. As we have seen in the section on ideology, wastage of animal products ran counter to the traditional **Yup'ik** cultural logic; thus, continuity in the preparation of seal skins and gut, the collection of fine rye grass, and the use of walrus ivory is looked upon as important and commendable in itself, aside from the financial benefits it will bring.

Yet on the other hand, this occupation involves the use of traditional skills applied to traditional materials with the distinguishing feature that these goods are now to be sold instead of given away or used within the family. This change in traditional patterns of use does entail an obvious potential for social change, as the net effect of craft production becomes individual economic gain rather than the direct extension of effective kin ties within the social group, although the means

to extend these ties is still available. In fact, the way the profits from the sale of arts and crafts are used is more an indication of the degree of social integration than a cause of **social** disintegration.

**Whether** or not a woman uses the profits from her **basketry** to **play** bingo or to buy **the** goods necessary to host a village distribution in the name of her grandchild depends **upon** a number of **factors**. The fact remains, however, that with the possibility for individual profit, and the potential for choice, a new element has been added to the traditional productive activity.

### Commercial Trapping

Because of the **lack** of reliable regional statistics on the number of trappers, number of animals taken and the fur prices per species per year for the last several years, it is impossible to give **reliable** information on the average **annual** income derived from trapping by individual trappers in the study **area**. However, **it** is possible to speak generally on the subject, and to supply village-specific information from the author's own **field** notes.

Like arts and crafts production, trapping is **still** a significant income source in the region, particularly in those villages and in those households within the more prosperous villages in which other means of cash acquisition are unavailable. Both red and white fox are generally available **along** the delta **coastline**. However, hunters in the **larger** villages such as Hooper Bay must go farther **afield** in the pursuit of

fur-bearing animals. Land otter, muskrat, and mink are available, although the latter is not nearly as abundant as it was traditionally, especially along the lower coast near **Quinhagak** and Eek (Bruce **Dinneford**, State Fish and Game biologist, pers. **comm.**). Also, beaver, although not a traditional resident of the delta flatlands, have recently begun to move into the coastal estuaries.<sup>36</sup>

Trapping was much more important as a primary source of cash during the early and **mid-1900s**, especially in the **riverine** communities close to Bethel. In this area families traditionally moved to spring camp in the mountains in search of squirrel and muskrat, as well as to fall camp in order to trap mink and beaver. Only four families from **Kwethluk**, above Bethel, left home for camp in the spring of 1977. Such seasonal movement is no longer common. In the coastal region today, men leave home in the late fall for several days at a time to set trap lines which they then infrequently check. Twenty-three hundred dollars was the total income derived from trapping by the most assiduous trapper living in Toksook Bay during the winter of 1976-77. He was one of 12 men who trapped regularly, although many other individuals occasionally **killed** fur-bearing animals.

From talking to hunters in the Nelson Island area, it was learned that reasons for the decline of trapping included the scarcity of fur-bearing animals, low prices offered for furs (relative to other sources of income), the high price of gasoline to fuel snowmobiles for winter trapping, and the disinclination to spend time away from home tending an

elaborate **trap line**. It must be kept **in** mind, however, that Toksook Bay is a community that has a high number of other sources of income available **to** its residents.

In the study area in general residents have **slowly** moved away from trapping as a significant occupation. Encouraging residents to return to trapping is part of the AVCP overall economic development plan for the region. In order for trapping to **re-emerge** as a **signficiant** economic activity, it is essential that the furs trapped receive the highest market price available to the trappers. In order that this may be accomplished, cooperatives have been proposed to assist in the purchase of bulk supplies for trappers **and in** the marketing of the trapped furs in volume.<sup>37</sup> However, the cultural stress on individual independence and self-reliance **as well** as the decline in traditional village interdependence through trade have not provided a receptive atmosphere for the formation of cooperative enterprises of this type.

### Reindeer Herding

A unique resource for the residents of **Mekoryuk** is the reindeer herd which was started by the Lomans in **1920** when they landed some 99 head on **Nunivak** Island. This herd has been maintained on Nunivak in the face of the general decline of the industry in the rest of the study area in the 1930s and 1940s. Although the herd has been reduced from **11,000 to 4,000** head in the **last** five years (**Selkregg, 1974:256**), it is **still** harvested.

The **Nunivak** Island Reindeer Project, as it was formerly known, was originally run by the BIA. It was turned over to the IRA Council in 1970. Asian markets continue to buy velvet reindeer antlers for aphrodisiac products (paying \$30/pound) which are taken during an annual roundup in the middle of July. Until the old packing plant and **commercial** slaughtering and processing operation (then the largest such operator in Alaska) were destroyed by a fire, the herd was also rounded up in the early fall, and meat and skins harvested and sent to the Lower 48, as well as to Japan and other parts of Alaska. 38 It is presently hoped that this operation will be resumed in another two or three years, when a new packing plant has been constructed by the BIA. The **Nunivagimiut**, under the auspices of Bering Sea Reindeer Products, Inc., are presently experimenting with various breeding techniques, and maintain contact with the Reindeer Herders Association of Northern Alaska. Although the annual harvest supplied both meat and cash to families in **Mekoryuk**, its absence at present is not immediately felt to be the cause of severe economic hardship. This may in part be due to the mixed nature of the economy. Also, during the last year construction of a new village high **school** has provided high-paying jobs to many of the men who would otherwise have been employed in the slaughtering and packing process.

#### Profit-Making Corporations

A significant change in the regional economy in the last **10 years** has been the rise of the village and regional profit-making corporations

created under **ANCSA**. Although private enterprise was certainly established in the villages well before **ANCSA**, and **still** flourishes in the form of locally owned and operated stores, recreation halls and movie houses, the investments **that** ANCSA funds have made possible are beyond what any individual or **small** group of individuals could have accomplished. **In** the investment of the village and regional profit corporations, including the developing fisheries, **lies** the economic hope of the future.

The village and regional non-profits, as we have seen, administer state and federal funds hiring local residents for community services such as sidewalk construction, village waste disposal, health care and social services. Although the money of the profit-making corporations is also federal in origin, the intended use and means of disposal of these funds is quite different. **While** the non-profits concentrate on the immediate development of community services, the profit-making corporations are enjoined to look to the future economic development of their communities and region. And perhaps more significant, while the non-profits are dependent on continued financial support from federal and state agencies, the profit-making corporations will receive a finite number of allotments and **will** then be effectively on their own.

Up **until** very recently, the **usual** pattern for a village profit corporation in the study area has been for it **to** own and operate a **corporation** store, dealing in groceries, **snowmachines** and parts, **ammunition**, gasoline and stove oil. Each corporation may employ from two to six

full-time employees. However, within the last few years the larger villages with their larger capital have been able to invest in more elaborate facilities. The best examples of this are the Sea Lion Corporation of Hooper Bay and the **Chevak** Village Corporation, employing 19 and 22 local residents, respectively. In each of these villages, corporation facilities now include a hardware store, recreation center and restaurant. The Sea Lion Corporation has also invested in a so far very successful telephone company, United Utilities, Inc., which owns and operates phone service in six other villages in the region and has the franchise for the entire **AVCP** region. Also, the subsidiary, Sea Lion Construction Company, based in Anchorage, boasts contracts such as the one to build the terminal building at the Kodiak Airport (Alaska Dept. of Community and Regional Affairs, 1979).

Perhaps as significant as the success of these individual village corporations is the attempt of several of the villages to join forces in intervillage corporations. In 1976, the five Nelson Island villages, as well as the village of Mekoryuk, joined together to form Coastal Management Corporation (**CMC**) in order to facilitate investment of ANCSA village money. The continued unity of the coastal communities in the face of new village identity on the one hand, and **regionalization** on the other (they took their money out of **Calista** in order to directly oversee its investment) is marked by the adoption of this corporate structure. With ANCSA village money, CMC turned down investment possibilities in Anchorage in order to purchase an air taxi service, hoping to gain control over a vital bush service as well as the profits



which it engendered. This was a risky business for their fledgling management skills and had disastrous financial results. Village Aviation went out of business in the fall of **1979**, and its air taxi license has since been revoked. However, the **choice** of an air taxi investment shows vividly their commitment to the unity and development of their traditional homeland, as well as an increased connection with the outside world (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:67**).

Although the Nelson Islanders' early corporate attempts were not successful, their corporation appears to be on the road to financial solvency. More significant, other villages have not only learned from **CMC's** mistakes but, in a village corporation seminar **held in Chevak** in August of **1980**, resolved to look into other forms of **intervillage** collaboration. Now that individual village corporate activity has been tried, with mixed success, working together and pooling resources is viewed as the direction of the future and the chief means available for expanding investment potential.

At the village corporation seminar in **Chevak**, village corporation mergers and the establishment of a more unified body **of** corporations for political and financial advantage were the main issues discussed. Oscar **Kawagley**, then president **of Calista** Corporation, emphasized the concept of village corporation merger, either with other village corporations or with the regional corporations. Other alternatives such as management corporations and joint ventures were **also** considered, **The** intent is **to** provide the communities in the study area with a

broader economic base, **politico-socio-economic** clout, and open investment capabilities, nationally as well as internationally. Investment **in the** region will still be possible, but merging for specific purposes will also expand corporation horizons. According to AVCP'S Harold **Napolean**, "the economic survival of the village corporations is at stake, as the village corporations are generally 'depressed' economically. Unless a concerted effort is made. . . they will lose their money" (Tundra Drums, **8/21:1**).

The Interface Between Reliance on the Traditional Subsistence Goods and the Products of Wage Employment: The Cost of Subsistence

A careful cost analysis of hunting and fishing would enable us to better understand the relationship between the subsistence and wage sectors of the economy. Although only limited information is available on the quantification of subsistence resource utilization, it behooves us to give careful attention to what information is available, as "viewed from the perspective of traditional cash economics, living in the village should be impossible" (**Schuerch, 1980:12** in **Fienup-Riordan, 1982**).

The amount of money that it would take to pay for a replacement of the fish and game taken from the land is difficult to estimate. Hemming and Braund (**1978:67-9**) have made a useful attempt to estimate the cost per pound of the subsistence harvest of herring in the Nelson Island area as well as the cost of replacing that resource with one that is

currently commercially available. Giving the annual harvest per **family** in the villages of **Tununak, Toksook** Bay and Nightmute (all heavy herring harvest communities) **as 2,000** pounds, "the total expense of harvesting **herring**, including prorated depreciation of equipment, may not be much more than \$.10 per pound" (ibid., 67). The replacement **cost** of the harvest, however, is estimated at \$4,000 (2,000 pounds of herring multiplied by \$2.00 per pound necessary to replace it with salmon commercially available from the lower Kuskokwim or Yukon salmon fishery). The author's research on Nelson Island confirms these figures (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980**), and would agree with Hemming and **Braund** that if anything this is a conservative estimate. The protein replacements presently available in the stores cost **well** over \$2.00 per pound. Also note that although herring is abundant in the three Nelson **Island** villages, and therefore relatively inexpensive to harvest, it is but one resource harvested in the area. In order to **supply** the nutritional needs of the community, many more varieties of fish and game must be exploited.

Wolfe's (1977) detailed cost analysis of subsistence resource utilization for the coastal **village** of **Kotlik** confirms this high dependence on locally available fish and game. Average costs of harvesting species range from **4¢** per pound for **sheefish** up to **\$1.50** per pound for ptarmigan and rabbits taken **in** winter and spring (Wolfe, 1977:20).<sup>39</sup>

The household's average subsistence harvest of 5,038 pounds of dressed weight of meat and fish **would** cost about \$12,595 if purchased at

the average store price of \$2.50 per pound. This compares to \$1,584 the household actually invested in order to harvest the subsistence food. The households clearly would have difficulty paying for the imported meat with their current cash income, which only averaged \$5,263 in 1976. . . . Other things being equal, each household would have to receive a yearly cash income of at least \$15,000 to maintain a diet comparable to their present one (Ibid., 23).

Wolfe finally notes that hunting and fishing equipment would **still** be necessary for commercial hunting and fishing as well as to meet basic subsistence needs. In Kotlik in 1976 the yearly cost of owning and maintaining a full complement of hunting and fishing equipment (\$2,133), plus purchasing the necessary gasoline, oil and ammunition was \$3,057 (Wolfe, 1977:15). Just over half of this amount was contributed to production for subsistence purposes. This yearly equipment cost was derived by adding the equipment's depreciation (replacement value divided by equipment lifespan) and maintenance expenses. The figure represents a hunter's fixed capital costs. Actually, as Wolfe points out, expenses come irregularly with some years requiring little cash outlay while others require the wholesale replacement of expensive equipment, in which case lack of **immediately** available cash can cause extreme hardship, the hindrance of a family's ability to exploit available resources, the subsequent reliance on commercially available food sources, and the consequent further depletion of cash resources.<sup>40</sup>

Sparck (1980) provides the only other available discussion of the choices that go on at the individual and community level as to what subsistence resources are economically practical to harvest in the

**study** area. **He** indicates a cost consciousness corroborated by Wolfe (1977:29) where most money was invested by villagers during periods when fish and game resources were relatively inexpensive to harvest. According to **Sparck**, in the villages of **Hooper** Bay and Chevak, if the wind is predominately from the south **during** the **salmon** season, the fish are not driven into **the** bay. This limits fishing, as the majority of men have neither the time nor the money to fish for them offshore.<sup>41</sup>

An insidious double bind becomes apparent. Poor or prolonged fishing means that more money **will** be necessary to see the family through the winter, yet that **less time will** be available for cash employment. Finally, and a problem that **Sparck (1980)** indirectly **calls** attention to, the relatively fat subsistence seasons of summer and **fall** when **local** resources are at their maximum and are least expensive to harvest coincide with the boom periods of temporary local employment, when jobs such as **longshoring**, construction, cannery work, and commercial fishing are available. Individuals who work during the summer rely on much more expensive subsistence activities, winter fishing, rabbit hunting, and spring bird **hunting**, which can run as much as **10** times the cost of summer fishing. Working in the summer has simultaneously given them the cash necessary to exploit the more expensive non-fish resource and made exploitation of cheaper fish impossible.

Nowak (1972), in a study of **Mekoryuk**, maintains that the more money a **Nunivaker** has, the more subsistence-oriented he **is able** and **willing to** become, up to a point, with capital necessary to invest in and maintain

the types of equipment that enable him to live off the land efficiently. The impact of an increased cash income is thus to augment and encourage subsistence efforts, money being directly reinvested through the purchase of equipment. Poorer people, on the other hand, according to Nowak are forced to become more welfare-oriented.

Work on Nelson Island (Fienup-Riordan, 1980a) supports Nowak's first conclusion. There, too, the best hunters tend to be those individuals with access to cash to purchase the necessary equipment, requiring a sizable investment. As long as wage employment did not conflict with subsistence periods or unduly restrict time, it served to enhance rather than detract from participation in the subsistence sector, **allowing** households to exploit a wider range of subsistence food resources. Availability of cash correlated with large and varied subsistence harvests. Also, rather than the anticipated decline in subsistence use and the rise in use of store goods corresponding with the increase in family income, income and subsistence use tend to increase side by side.

However, as to Nowak's second conclusion, that poorer families are forced to become more welfare-oriented because of inability to buy the equipment necessary to participate in subsistence activity, this does not seem to be the case in all coastal villages of the study area. Poor families may still fully participate in the subsistence economy. However, they must rely more heavily on species **less** expensive to acquire, e.g., tomcod, flounder, herring, and cikaaret (smelt), which

are available **in** abundance **in** June, when many **of** the wealthier men have **left** the villages for commercial fishing. Analysis of informal sharing on Nelson **Island** indicates that a moneyed man may own the guns that **his** poorer brother uses to bring home ptarmigan and seal for the mutual pot. **Also, it is not** uncommon for there to exist a partnership between two individuals, one of whom can afford the latest in equipment, and the other (often older, non-English speaking) who has the extra time necessary to mend fish racks, repair nets, and generally pick up the slack (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a**).

Finally, a recent innovation in the food stamp program now **allows** the use of food stamps **to** purchase subsistence hunting and fishing equipment. This will increase the ability of low-income families to invest food stamps in subsistence activities that will provide more protein than when directly used to purchase food at the store.

**Ellanna (1980:354)** maintains that in the Bering Sea/Norton Sound area, the products of wage **labor** are not distributed via traditional sharing networks (citing Van Stone, 1960; Hughes, **1960**; **Bogojavlensky, 1969**). The implication is clearly that the growth of the cash economy **will** prove disruptive of traditional exchange relations. More recent research in the study area (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a**), however, indicates that while some social disruption is inevitable, the tendency so far, **especially** among the Nelson **Island** villages, is for the products of wage employment to be used **to** extend effective kin ties within and between villages through the traditional formal and informal **redistributive**

TABLE X

SUMMARY OF SUBSISTENCE HARVEST STUDIES (ALL SPECIES)<sup>1</sup>

	Year(s) of Survey	Location	Estimated lb/capita <sup>2</sup>	Dollar Value of Harvest
<b>Nowak</b>	1973-76	<b>Mekoryuk</b>	375 <sup>3</sup> (dressed)	\$ 1,780 <b>net/family</b> <sup>4</sup>
Wolfe	1976	<b>Kotlik</b>	775 (dressed)	\$12,596 <b>gross/family</b> <sup>5</sup>
				\$11,285 net/family
Yupiktak <b>Bista</b>	1973	<b>Tuluksak</b>	1,619 (in the round)	\$ 2,146gross/person
<b>Nunam Kitlutsisti</b>	1974	AVCP Region	1,000 <b>approx.</b>	Not calculated
	1976		(in the round)	
	<b>1979</b>		1,500 approx. (in the round)	
<b>Alaska</b> Planning Group	<b>1974:156</b>	<b>Emmonak</b>	355	
		<b>Tuluksak &amp; Kasig</b>	1,575	
		Russian Mission	1,000	

<sup>1</sup> Modified from Hemming **et al.** (1978): Table **III-2**, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> In several cases a per capita figure has been derived from per family harvest totals.

<sup>3</sup> Estimated from information provided by the study.

<sup>4</sup> The author calculated an average cost of harvest of **\$1.30/lb.**; a net value of \$.89/lb.

<sup>5</sup> The author calculated an average cost of harvest of **\$.26/lb.**



**networks**, thus supporting rather than undercutting community and family **cohesion**, as well as providing for the equalization of both the **products** that money **can**, and the products that it **cannot, buy**.<sup>42</sup>

Current Trends in Subsistence Utilization Patterns  
and the Future of Subsistence

So far **I** have maintained that subsistence utilization of resources and the attendant modes of production, distribution, and exchange have been retained as priority activities within the study area. However, within the mixed economy that presently exists, continuity in subsistence resource utilization depends on a variety of factors.

First of **all**, the continued utilization of subsistence resources assumes (see Dixon, 1976:47-55) their availability. As has been indicated, in the vicinity **of** the larger villages some resources are increasingly harder to come by. With population increases in these **villages**, this trend **will** also continue. Increase in village population affects some resources more than others. For example, while hunters must go farther afield for birds, at present the west coast of Alaska supports a large enough herring stock to support a dramatic increase in human population, if those stocks are properly protected and, perhaps more important, if subsistence fishing continues to receive regulatory priority by the Alaska Department of **Fish and Game**.

This introduces the second crucial element in the future of the subsistence utilization patterns of the delta region. State and federal policies have already had, and will continue to have, a great deal to do with the future contours of the subsistence economy as it is played out in the study area. Their regulations can alternately restrict or expand commercial or sport hunting and fishing, as well as subsistence hunting and fishing.

For example, the U.S. presently has treaties with Japan, Canada, and Mexico which prohibit spring and summer waterfowl hunts, although the Fish and Wildlife Service has not had a policy of enforcing the ban in rural Alaska. The Fish and Wildlife Service wants to legalize the spring and summer waterfowl hunts so that they can be regulated, as the policy of non-enforcement has effectively produced a policy of no regulation at all. This would call for the development of bag limits, seasons, restrictions on egg hunting, and management plans for the distinct watersheds, particularly in the area around the villages of **Hooper** Bay and Chevak, and on Nelson Island, which are prime nesting grounds for geese. For area residents, however, migratory bird limits would be more limiting than the present situation of overlooking infractions and would be resented. The feeling runs deep: "When the world started God gave us food. He didn't give us quotas." <sup>43</sup>

The issue of egg hunting is also a significant issue in that whereas many biologists of the federal and state governments are willing to support the harvest of males **flying** around searching for food, many

object **to** the shooting of molting females which are sitting on nests or the taking of eggs. This will probably become, once the treaty is ratified, the most significant issue of contention between villagers and the federal and state managers (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980c**).

Similarly, with the creation through the national interest **lands** legislation of the massive **13.1** million acre refuge in the **Yukon-Kuskokwim delta**, villagers fear increasing federal restrictions on subsistence activity. It is hard for many villagers to understand the mechanisms of federal ownership and control. As **with** the regional advisory committees set up under the State Board of Fish and Game, area residents complain that the existing input mechanisms are not sufficiently receptive to their needs, **while** government personnel counter that even when input is requested it is difficult to elicit from area residents. One noteworthy exception to this, from the point of view of the residents of the study area, has been the organization of the state into coastal resource service areas to implement coastal development **plans**. This organization has been greatly stimulated by proposed OCS development. As already mentioned, the impending OCS development is a definite factor in the organization of village cohesion. **Within** the study area, **Nunam Kitlutsisti** is the agency that has marshaled support and held elections for the local CRSA board (see Chapter **IX: Political Systems** ). OCS development is definitely perceived as a threat **to** subsistence by many area residents, with the division between development and subsistence/conservationist factions emerging.

Less obvious, but equally important in the maintenance of subsistence as a priority **activity in the area**, are federal and state policies which affect the level of knowledge about and the ability to pursue subsistence hunting and fishing. These include policies that encourage language use, policies such as the recent mandate **for** local secondary education to allow young people to live in proximity to the older villagers who can educate them on the value and means of subsistence activities, and finally policies that encourage respect for subsistence activities through the education of the dominant group (Dixon, **1976:47**). The severe **outmigration** of Mekoryuk can in part be attributed to the unusually high number of **young** people that were sent outside of the region to boarding schools during the late 1940s and early 1950s (see Chapter **VIII**: Cultural Systems).

Another critical factor in the continued viability of the subsistence economy is the increase in demand for goods that only money can buy, simultaneous with the limited purchasing power of village residents due to unemployment or low wages (in relation to **local** living costs) when employed. Means must increase commensurate with wants if villagers are to remain satisfied with village life. The tendency to date is for wants to be on the increase, as villagers become aware of the things that money can **buy** both when they travel outside of the village and when they are visited by non-Natives from Outside.

In conclusion, the continued viability of the subsistence way of life in the study area relies heavily on the development of a viable cash

base **within the** villages and within the region as well as continued availability of subsistence resources. As the public sector of the economy can only contribute so much to the economic development of the region, **it** is left to expansion in the private sector to provide the cash necessary to support subsistence activities in the villages of the study area.

Response to Increased Involvement in the Cash Economy and Attitudes  
Toward Economic Development

Just as there is a great deal of variation in the amount of **involve-**ment in commercial and subsistence occupations within the study area, there is a great deal of variation in community and individual response toward the present level of involvement as well as the prospect of increased involvement in the cash economy in **the** future.

**To** begin with, most Native and many non-Native residents of the study area in the regional center of Bethel as **well** as in the villages are adamantly opposed to federal and state attempts to limit subsistence use of available resources. One prominent Kipnuk resident recalled a state Fish and Game proposal that would have limited use of **local** resources (unspecified) by **all** families receiving an **annual** income of over \$5,000. He went on to say that the Kipnuk City Council responded to this proposal with a resolution asking that Fish and Game personnel come to Kipnuk with **\$5,000** and try to survive a winter! Although no record of this interchange can be located, the fact that a villager

would make such a statement is evidence of the extreme, often emotional, distrust of agencies and agency regulation, and the fear that increased village involvement in the cash economy will be used to justify increased restrictions on subsistence resource utilization.

Another older villager insisted that he neither liked nor trusted "fish and game men and other millionaires. . . . They make me **feel like I** am on a small piece of **land** surrounded by water and sinking." This position reflects a feeling of helplessness, a conviction that in the end the federal and state agencies will do what they want relative to both resource regulation and OCS development.

The official stand taken by AVCP and **Nunam Kitlutsisti** relative to economic development, specifically OCS development, in the study area emphasizes the need for time in order to provide adequate planning (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980:1**).<sup>44</sup>

The concern **for properly planned** economic development is thus an articulate one. But the conclusion that simply giving more time to the planning process will avoid **all** the negative impacts of rapid economic development is felt by many area residents to be overly optimistic.

Most villagers in the study area express an interest in and a concern for the provision of more jobs in their communities. Yet at the same time young and old alike give as reasons for continued residence in the villages, and their preference for a village lifestyle, the

quietness of village **life** and the fact that in the village a person is his or her own boss. Over and over again villagers as well as Native residents of Bethel stated that village life was preferable to residence in the regional center because in the village a person **could** do what he wanted, which usually included regular exploitation of subsistence resources. Moreover, during village visits the author encountered a number of villagers who had been employed on a full-time basis in the recent past, as either health aide or teacher's aide, but who had taken a year's leave or quit altogether because of their dissatisfaction with exclusive wage employment. They complained that their wages (usually high by village standards) were not sufficient to provide food for their families, and that a cash **income**, regardless of how large, could never do more than supplement **locally** available fish and game.

Another characteristic of Native residents of the study area, villagers in particular is their commitment to the status quo, which paradoxically is given as including all of the modern conveniences recently provided in the communities through state and federal programs and grants, including **local** health care, educational facilities, fuel, **television**, telephone **service**, and improved means of transportation. All of these conveniences, however, require increased commitment to the commercial sector in order to maintain **them**. Only recently have villages begun to reach a saturation point. For instance, several villages find themselves blessed by water treatment facilities that they can neither afford to operate or maintain. Villagers are increasingly skeptical as rising **fuel** costs mean that many desirable services come

with a price tag difficult to meet without substantially increased commitment to the commercial sector. Residents of Bethel, both Native and non-Native, by and large already have access to these services which they have obtained through such increased commitment.

Because of this felt need for improved services and increased availability of commercial goods, some villagers are receptive to the proposed oil exploration and the economic development which they feel will accompany it, including increased employment opportunities and income from taxation of the oil industry.<sup>45</sup>

However, the majority of villagers are pessimistic as to the possibility of future oil development resulting in any real economic advantage for the residents of the villages. As one Chefornek resident put it: "Sure, there will be jobs if we want to go to Bethel. But then we're not villagers any more. So what have we gained. We've only lost ourselves like in a blizzard."

Villagers also fear the environmental damage that could accompany oil exploration and drilling. In **Hooper** Bay, a group of both young and old community members expressed fear that spilled oil would saturate the wetlands so important as a nesting and feeding ground for migratory waterfowl. They worried that river mouths and spawning lakes would **also** be adversely, and possibly irreparably, affected.<sup>46</sup>



Although not **all** area residents adamantly oppose **oil** development (and those who do often feel **it** is inevitable just the same), few unreservedly support it. Many take a **middle** road and support directed development. Paul **Kiunya** of **Kipnuk** wrote a **letter** to the state governor seeking the redirection of natural gas exploration, such that in the end successful exploration **could result** not only in increased revenues for the state but also in increased availability and decreased **fuel** prices in the communities of the study area (**pers. comm.**).

An unquantifiable percent of the Bethel business community also strongly supports such directed development, especially by the oil companies, feeling that a substantial private sector investment in the study area is what is needed to counteract the economic, as well as social, problems of the region. They criticize what they would **label** the dole mentality of the villagers, **e.g.**, their acceptance of federal and state subsidy in the form of health care and free education without any apparent recognition of the ultimate source of the funding.

Proponents of this **position** cite the narrow-minded nepotism and **opportunism** that can characterize the commercial sector of the villages.<sup>47</sup> The problem here is that what appears as calculated opportunism on the part **of** the villagers is more often a real conflict in values, where the traditional **values** of independence and loyalty to one's immediate family come **in** conflict with the relatively new **value** of responsibility to the community as a **whole**. This is not an issue that can **be** resolved overnight, and considering **how** new most villages are as political and

corporate entities, it is remarkable that they are as successfully integrated as they are in the study area.

Finally, commitment to economic growth through fisheries development is not always seen as compatible with economic growth through offshore oil development. In fact, people involved in the commercial fishery, both in Bethel and in the **villages**, are often more skeptical about and more visibly opposed to, proposed oil exploration and development than subsistence-oriented traditionalists living predominantly in the villages or the smaller group of conservationists, as well as traditionalists, resident in the regional center. Individuals even marginally involved in the developing fisheries of the region are adamantly opposed to any kind of development that would endanger the future exploitation of that renewable resource. As has been discussed in the section on commercial fishing, although a future professional fishery would be qualitatively different from the present "scratch" fishery, it is felt by many that it is still the mode of economic development most compatible with the present mix between cash and subsistence occupations that typifies the study area. This point of view is **articulated** by many village profit corporations, as well as by the **regional non-profits**, including AVCP and **Nunam Kitlutsisti**.

Here is one final note on the variation in attitudes toward economic development, and specifically OCS development, in the study area. When beginning this study, the author was prepared to find differences of

opinion correlating with age and exposure to the commercial sector of the economy. Thus, older individuals without experience of major economic development might tend to **be** more hesitant, while younger **individuals**, with more education and experience in the regional center and beyond might **be** expected to be more receptive to the **idea** of economic development in the study area. **It** had also been suggested that younger members of the communities might alternatively show more awareness of the dangers and pitfalls of unplanned development, and thus be more reticent than the more naive members of **their** parental generation.

During the course of field research, **all** of the above possibilities were represented. No one age group or **social** or economic sector **could** be credited with a single perspective on the **issue** of economic development. The **only** accurate generalization that can be made is that across **all** age barriers, sex barriers, race barriers, and class barriers, the majority of people contacted supported the official stance of **Nunam Kitlutsisti**; that is to say: **We** need time. The value and in fact necessity for economic **development** in the area is accepted by young and old **alike**, and by both Native and white. But what the majority seems adamantly opposed to is precipitous and unplanned development in such a socially and environmentally sensitive area. Such development, if it occurs, would be deeply resented in the study area.

### The Nutritional vs. Cultural Value of Subsistence

Finally, an issue that must **at** least be touched on is the nutritional value of subsistence and the consequences to the mental and physical as well as the economic health of the community of the replacement of local Native foods with food stamps, or their cash equivalent. The present mix of cash and subsistence occupations has already produced a significant shift in dietary composition. For one thing, protein intake has in some Yukon delta villages decreased by as much as 50% and the deficit has been replaced with low-nutrient, dense carbohydrates. Lack of intake of calcium and iron is also significant. <sup>48</sup>

Traditionally, residents of the study area ate a high-quality diet at least partly because there was nothing else to eat. Now not only are the elements of a new diet available, but choice has entered in, as new foods of low nutritional value replace old ones. Consequently there has been a rapid increase in recent years in diseases among residents of the study area which are the hallmarks of industrial society, e.g., obesity, cardiovascular disease and hypertension (Draper, 1978:44). The bitter irony is that now that people are better equipped than ever before to hunt and fish, malnutrition sets in, unintentionally enforced by government food programs and an increased sedentary life (Fienup-Riordan, 1982).

In discussing the nutritional value of the traditional Native diet, Dr. Hurwitz (Association of Village Council Presidents, 1979:10) concludes:

- 1) **The iron** content in sea mammals is ten to **eleven** times that found **in** an equivalent measure of beef. . . .
- 2) If he were prohibited from catching ptarmigan, in order to fill his daily requirement for thiamine, the Eskimo or Indian **male would** have to consume twice the amount of store bought meat. . . .
- 3) Seal **oil is** rendered fat and is polyunsaturated. . . . Fewer than five Eskimos have been hospitalized for heart attack in the past 5 years.
- 4) The rate of **dental** decay **is** astronomical, we think, by the detrimental effects of introducing parts of a westernized diet. . . .
- 5) The problem of chronic **otitis**, perforated ear drums, is **likely** the result of a radical change in children's diet. . . .
- 6) The high incidence of iron deficiency anemia may **be** related to feeding canned milk formulas. . . .
- 7) If the welfare and food stamp recipient were to encounter limitations of their subsistence harvest, these programs **would** not yield adequate resources for rural families to **exist**. . . .
- 8) Most essential foods are unavailable year round **in** village stores. . . .
- 9) Food stamps cannot control Alaskan weather. Total dependence **[sic]** on welfare purchased supplies **would yield** tragic results if villagers did not **lay** away subsistence food stores for winter.

As was stated in the beginning of this chapter, the subject of development in the study area cannot be separated from social **and cultural** issues. The very terms in which the subsistence/cash controversy is argued make this abundantly **clear**. **The value of** subsistence **implies** more than the capacity of a way of life to supply nutrients for **the**

physical body. It also implies the nurturing quality of hunting and gathering as a means to support and maintain the social body.

Dr. **Hurwitz** also notes the personal and community value of hunting and gathering and preparing subsistence foods. Family ties are strengthened and reaffirmed with expeditions ostensibly to pick berries and gather eggs, and conversely., family ties would be weakened by placing limitations on subsistence resource utilization. Subsistence hunting and fishing have a definite **sociocultural value**, both as a valued social activity and as the means of producing new social value, as fish and game are the stuff that gifts are made of, and gift-giving is the way that social relations are defined. Finally, the welfare system has already reduced the self-reliance and self-respect of a formerly totally independent and self-reliant people, contributing to severe problems of alcohol abuse, suicide, and violent crime in the study area. It is thus noteworthy that village-originated alcohol treatment and prevention programs always include an emphasis on subsistence activities (Association of Village Council Presidents, **1979:11**). Subsistence activities support the social as well as the physical well-being of the community as the following statement makes abundantly clear:

Our area is not an economically developed area. We depend on the sea for our food and clothing. There is much sharing in the catches, as we realize the needs of our brothers and they realize our needs. It is not joyful to see our children and grandchildren hungry. If the **law** prohibits hunting of sea mammals at any time, the people will listen to the hunger of their families and

hunt even against the law. Every one of us is Eskimo around here. We all have to eat our own Native food, and there is no question about it. We cannot possibly go without. Please try to fathom our great desire to survive in a way somewhat different from yours, and thus see why the hunters will continue to go out. --Elders of the village of Nightmute (Association of Village Council Presidents, 1979:7).

That the argument for and against the value of subsistence is put in terms of nutrition often reveals more about the dominant white culture than it does about the Native economy. Nevertheless, concluding testimony given before the Congressional d-2 hearings in Anchorage remains as clear a statement of the problem as it was when it was originally given:

[Don Mitchell, attorney]: . . . But more important, it has to do with economics. As, I indicated in our written statement, a conservative guess as to the dollar value of subsistence to the bush is somewhere between 30 to 50 million dollars a year. Even if the settlement act were a success, those dividend checks are not going to replace that resource if that resource is lost.

[Byron ]: We are talking about a free food stamp program for all Americans who make less than 4 thousand dollars a year. You don't have to buy anything anymore - its given to you. Wouldn't that draw in the food industry?

[Mitchell]: I doubt that very much when you are talking about villages of 2 or 3 hundred people way out on the end of the economic distribution food chain. More important, even if it did, I think the fundamental issue about subsistence -- and why native people are so upset about it, and they are not upset about it because of our statistics about dollars -- they are upset about it because the only reason those villages exist, the only purpose they have is to allow a convenient staging area for a group of people who have

lived together over hundreds of years to get game in their area. If you take away that function there is no reason to be there. I think Dr. Hurwitz of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation testified in Bethel that the severe alcohol abuse problems in rural Alaska are ungodly. If you take the one, well, I wouldn't want to sit around all day reading paperback books and waiting for someone to bring me something to eat. I'd go nuts. If you had people sitting out at those villages with plenty to eat, plenty of **gussuk** (white persons) food and, nothing else to do, if you think you have problems with alcohol abuse now. . . .

[Congressman **Seiberling**]: I think it is very difficult for a person who has never lived in a Native village to comprehend that the subsistence lifestyle is the foundation of Native culture. If we substitute food stamps, even if they are free, even if they are adequate, even if we can get the food up there, we have destroyed their culture. (emphasis added).

Sad to say, far from a thing of the past, this naive reduction of subsistence to caloric intake continues, and time and again characterized statements made during the April 1981 hearings on the proposed repeal of the subsistence legislation (Tundra Drums, 4/16:20).<sup>49</sup>

### Tourism, Sport Hunting and Fishing

Efforts to promote tourism, recreational fishing and hunting, and tours of the tundra as a source of income have faced continuing opposition from area residents. Residents are committed to retaining existing resources for local use, as well as supporting the continuation of the culture as a personal experience? rather than an exhibit for outsiders to observe. It is felt that exposure similar to the tours of the Nome,



Kotzebue, and Barrow areas would cheapen and hurry the decline of the **Yup'ik** culture. To date only **non-Native** entrepreneurs, such as Bruce Crow and Sons and Wien **Air** Alaska, have sought to develop the tourist trade, and **as** yet without much success (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980e**). If an **exotic** bush experience is **desired**, urban Alaskans fly to Nome or Barrow to view the **Iditarod** and the blanket toss, rather than to Bethel, notorious more for its riverfront junkyard and seasonal flooding than its colorful **floorshows**. Even the third annual Kuskokwim 300-mile dog race, publicized widely for the first time this year, drew relatively little outside attention and retained its status as a community event.

Similarly, residents of the study area **have** shown **little** interest in developing commercial enterprises for sport fishing. So far, their only extended experience of sport fishing has been a disaster. Upriver from **Quinhagak, pilots** from Bethel began to moonlight as fishing guides starting in the early 1970s. By 1975, they were taking consistent trips to the headwaters and ocean entrance of the **Kinetok** River, where the individual trout were large in size, although the **total** population was **small**, and **slow** growing **due** to the altitude and latitude of the lakes. Although trout in the upriver area began to grow scarce, the wealth of **Kinetok's** salmon spawning runs continued to attract increasing numbers of sport fishermen. **Trash**, human waste, drinking and dope accompanied this development. The **Quinhagak** City Council then tried to develop plans to make its airport off limits, to make access **to** the river more **difficult**, and to arrest people for littering. The **village** government, however, could not organize itself, and considering the

social and political ramifications of harassing Bethel residents, they dropped their plans. According to Nunam Kitlutsisti (1980e),<sup>50</sup> the community resents the visitors and would act to terminate the fishery if given the chance. A continuing frustration is the lack of continuity in the commercial fishery where tendering and quality either cause no fishing, or the poorest price per pound in the delta. The State Division of Tourism and Sport Fisheries continues to suggest that the village take advantage of the opportunity and capitalize on the sport fishery. The villagers, however, do not want to invest efforts in alternate forms of employment that might impinge upon their commercial fishery.

The influx into the study area of new populations bent on recreational pursuits causes significant problems with respect to allocation and distribution of game populations as well as in the area of sport fishing. The Native population in the delta is already straining the renewable resources of the area. It is felt by area residents that a future influx of people into the study area, a class of people with recreational interests and time and money to pursue them, would put even more pressure on these resources.

In both the national interest lands legislation and in the state law, it is where you live, not who you are, that gives you the right to hunt available game. The state does have further criteria, including the availability of alternate income and the length of time you have lived off the resource, in addition to residency in determining who can

exploit the game resources. But the development of a resident **monied class** in western Alaska would mean the need to involve this class of people in the rural decision-making process. Also, because residency is so important, guides and air charter operators who seek to maintain their businesses will seek to purchase **lands** in the rural areas in order **to** maintain their access to the resource. **Also**, money translates into mobility (e.g., small **plane** charter) which villagers feel would put the newcomers at an unfair advantage. Recent state subsistence legislation has in fact advocated the limitation of aircraft use in upriver exploitation as the best means of protecting both the moose population and the rights of subsistence users.

Finally, an increased number of non-Natives into western Alaska could **also** exaggerate the problems of head hunting for walrus. Already cases of wasteful **hunting** have been used by the urban press, and **people** who are not sympathetic to subsistence, in order to undercut the claims made in defense of subsistence resource use. This is a very sensitive issue, as the traditional **Yup'ik** patterns of marine mammal use go hand in hand with an ideology advocating respect for the animals and care of their carcasses. Cases of Navy personnel shooting at **seals** in the Cape **Romanzof** area, as well as the killing of **12 walrus** by commercial herring fishermen from outside of the region in the Cape Newenham area (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980d: 6**) understandably infuriated the local residents, both because of the effect on this critical subsistence resource and the **knowledge** that **groups** antagonistic to subsistence would **use** any head-hunting example to embarrass their subsistence effort and to

try to seek revisions in the Marine Mammal Protection Act in order to **allow** for the commercial and sport hunting of walrus by having the Native exemption removed and **control** returned to the state (Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980d:7). Although this could bring money into the villages, as with the commercialization of musk ox on Nuni vak, villagers are often the last to benefit. Until 1979, Nuni vak hunters were retained only as assistant guides and denied access into the full guide function by the state's registration and licensing procedures. Up until very recently, the State Division of Game placed its highest emphasis on protecting the out-of-state hunter and the recreational traffic into western Alaska. However, in its recent decision to allow a reduced fee for local exploitation of the musk ox herd on Nelson Island, with permits issued on the island and so effectively discouraging sports hunters from outside, the Board of Game is showing itself increasingly sensitive to the wishes and needs of area residents.

#### Summary: The Politics of Subsistence

As discussed in detail above, the fundamental paradox of village life today, in the study area as **well** as other parts of the state, and thence the reason that the issue of subsistence has achieved such notoriety, is the continuity of dependence by villagers on the products of the land and sea, yet the corresponding discontinuity in the technology necessary to exploit these resources. Briefly stated, population concentration with the establishment of schools and centers of trade has resulted in resource depletion in the immediate vicinity of the

villages. Because of this resource depletion, there has arisen a need by villagers to travel farther afield in the pursuit of fish **and** game. This mobility has come to require cash for the purchase **of** boats, motors and **snowmachines**, not to mention the fuel to operate them. Thus, the mobility of the hunter comes **to** depend on the ignobility of wage employment. And it is with this need for money and the things that money can **buy** that the **scenario falls** apart, as employment remains seasonal at best and welfare an insufficient alternative. As stated, by economic standards, the villages cannot afford to be where they are. Yet they continue to persist. And in fact, although the prediction in the early **1970s** was for a net outflow of people on marginal incomes from the villages **to** places of employment, the 1980 preliminary census data reveals the reverse, that the young are staying in the villages and producing families.

With this dual problem of a limited economy and food supply, the **resi-**dents of the study area have understandably sought to guarantee their renewable resources from competition and interference from **non-renew-able** resource programs. Through the federal national interest **lands** legislation (d-2), and through **S.L.A. 151 (H.B. 961, 1978)**, rural leaders throughout the state, including representatives from the study area, obtained a preference for the subsistence user, and protection of subsistence resources. The federal Congress as well as the state legislature determined that for the foreseeable future, there was no adequate way to replace subsistence resources through **the private sec-**tor, so maintenance of the subsistence rural Alaskan economy was sound public policy. **51**

Legislative actions and administration policies have subsequently begun to tie the concept of subsistence use as a priority activity into the fabric of management. Yet, the continuing concern of the villagers is that when resources dwindle and competition from other consumptive users and non-consumptive users increases, the political process will turn on subsistence. As the recent battle in the state legislature makes abundantly clear, their fears may be justified.

The future of subsistence resource utilization in the villages will rest on the ability of the villages to influence government agencies in implementing and upholding legislative actions that recognize and guarantee subsistence rights. With Nunam **Kitlutsisti** as their spokesman, the residents of the study area are beginning to make themselves heard in both Juneau and Washington, D.C. (e.g., **Sparck, 1980**; Foster, 1978). For example, in part because of the hue and cry that they raised against the Japanese trawlers' incidental salmon catch both in international waters and within the American 200-mile fishing limit, in March of this year the Japanese government agreed to voluntarily cut back on the harvesting of king salmon on the high seas. Although some of the members of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council have greeted this announcement with skepticism, both Nunam **Kitlutsisti's** director, Harold Sparck, and Norman Cohen, legislative aide to Rep. Tony Vaska, expressed confidence in the self-imposed limit and moreover felt that this was the first instance in which the needs of western Alaskan fishermen had been positively and satisfactorily dealt with within the international fishing community (*Tundra Drums*, 3/5/81:6).

**Nunam Kitlutsisti** has also successfully represented area residents on the **issue** of the right of **local** fish and game advisory committees to implement emergency closures during the course of any hunting or **fish-  
ing** season (Tundra Drums, 7(38):1). They also worked during **Congres-  
sional** oversight hearings in **April of 1981** to point **out** that although commercial exploitation of Bering Sea bottom fish is desirable, attention must be given to the important role bottom fish play as the **sub-  
stratum** on which marine animals, hair seals in particular, depend. Poorly managed commercial interception of bottom fish would adversely affect the residents of the study area who depend on marine mammals for their food.

As with the issue of whale quotas farther north, the articulate defense of subsistence issues by **Nunam Kitlutsisti** and **AVCP**<sup>52</sup> is beginning to solidify response within the study area. Area residents are beginning to organize around specific issues and stand as a united front in the defense of subsistence rights. Their response to attempted regulation and the imposition of quotas is mixed. **While** the need for management is beginning **to be** accepted, area residents **still** put **family** first and **bag limits** last, as testimony given in **1979** by **Nelson** Islanders on the necessity of spring bird hunting made abundantly **clear** (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1979)<sup>53</sup>

Significantly, in the recent election residents of the study area put their support behind Tony **Vaska**, who as head of **the House** Special Committee on Subsistence is attempting to make more visible, and it **is**

hoped comprehensible, area residents' stand on subsistence use of fish and game. Hearings recently **held** on the proposed repeal (HB-343) of that portion of the state fish and game law which gives subsistence users priority when fish and game stocks are depleted, elicited a wealth of testimony in the study area.

The public testimony given **by** both Natives and non-Natives in April at the Bethel Legislative Affairs Office was unanimous in its support of the current subsistence laws. Reasons given for this support ranged from personal inability to exist on "white man's food" (Bob **Kilangak** of Newtok) to the importance of **the** present laws as management tools (Harold **Sparck**, Director of Nunam **Kitlutsisti**). Joe Paniyak of Chevak noted in his testimony that with all of the federal budget cuts, the proposed repeal of subsistence hunting and fishing laws was particularly threatening. Martin Moore of **Emmonak**, at the time acting **Calista** president, echoed the need for fish and game for economic survival in the villages. But more important than the nutritional or economic value of subsistence, time and time again testimony dwelt on the inherent **value** of the subsistence way of life, and the desire of young and old to pursue a subsistence lifestyle.

Finally, as spring is the time for courting, simultaneous with the flare-up of the subsistence controversy, the oil companies have begun to visit the coastal villages of the study area to give testimony to their good faith. In April four representatives of the industry visited **Chevak**, holding a meeting in the city office building. About



35 community members turned up for a video presentation and **question-** and-answer period. The issues that came up reflect the very same concerns and the very same unanimity as the subsistence testimony that **took place in** Bethel:

Next to speak was **Ulric Nayamin**, a member of the Chevak Traditional Council and one of the most respected elders in the region. "To simply broaden your vision of our life-style: The **oil** we use **is, not** produced by our community but we need **it**. If, however, a **spill** does occur, it will touch our stomachs. We **aren't like** you. If we have troubles, we can't turn to a bank. The coast is our bank . . . ."

**Brennan** (Alaska Oil and Gas Association representative) had obvious difficulty responding to **Mr. Nayamin's** eloquence. "Anything we can do to make our activities compatible with your life-style, we **will do it.**" **Brennan** answered. Anything short of not drilling . . . . When someone pointed out that oil development had other **social** impacts -- notable increases in alcoholism, suicide, and crime as a recent University of Alaska study of the North Slope found -- **Brennan** responded that **the** oil companies were not "in the **social** welfare business."

. . . .

Then **Ulric Nayamin** spoke again, this time about traditional food sharing among the **people** of **Chevak**. "When some families are short of food, then those who have taken a **lot will** share with them. But someone who gets a **lot** of dollars working for the oil companies won't come back and give out handfuls of dollars." **Brennan** had no response to this (**McDiarmid, 1981**).

**It** is especially appropriate that this testimony comes from **Chevak**, a village that experienced starvation as recently as **1978**. After two years of poor **salmon** harvest, the village found **itself** in the spring of **1978** with no more Native foods and limited supplies in the store.

Its airport was out of commission for six weeks, and thus access to imported food was very limited. Goods and mail had to be brought in to Hooper Bay, which had a paved airport, and then over to Chevak by snowmobile. This too was disrupted by an early thaw which made overland travel impossible. Finally, the only telephone in the village broke down, and the BIA radio remained the only system of two-way communication the village had **directly** to Bethel. Store supplies continued to dwindle, and the poor condition of the tundra, the open streams, and the very warm weather prevented an adequate seal harvest. The people walked on foot after birds and muskrats (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980h**). This episode emphasizes the isolated **condition of** even a relatively "modern" coastal community, and the ultimate dependence of its inhabitants on the Bering Sea.

From this experience, and countless ones like it, emanates the villagers' concern for the government's offshore leasing programs. Theirs is a fragile environment. The elevation differences between mean high tide and areas 50 to 75 miles in from the delta are often measured in inches.

A significant **oil** spill under the ice in periods of winter flooding could some fear effectively emerse the delta in oil, adversely affecting the nesting grounds of migratory birds as well as the habitat of fish, seals, and small furbearers. Marine tanker traffic might also adversely affect the distribution of marine mammals and waterfowl (**Nunam Kitlutsisti: Game**).<sup>54</sup> Even the efforts of their own regional **profit-**making corporation to enter into subsurface exploration contracts with

the oil companies have not **been** looked upon altogether favorably by **the villages**. The preservation and careful management of the habitat and the **biota** of the study area take precedence over any proposed economic benefits that **such** development might bring.

Residents of the study area are **well** aware that wildlife populations fluctuate, as do human populations. The regional population is now at the point that it was just prior to direct contact. The aboriginal balance between man and his environment has been reestablished. However, in the interim, there have been significant disruptions of the biological cycle, including the harvest by outside competitors of migratory birds and fish, both those directly relied upon by area residents and those that form the substratum for the fish and marine mammals on which they depend. Aware of these inroads, as **well** as the ever-present threat of commercial and sports exploitation, and environmental disruption by proposed oil development, area residents have supported the designation of much of the **delta** region as a wildlife refuge. They **would** be even more supportive of a similar **classification** of the adjacent coastal waters.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The following are the chief problems in the estimation of subsistence utilization patterns:

1) The annual survey of the **Kuskokwim** River subsistence fishery, initiated in 1960, **relies** for its information on subsistence catch calendars which are distributed to fishermen prior to the fishing season. It is highly unlikely that entries on these calendars represent an accurate picture of the exploitation of the resource because of the villagers' inability to give accurate counts. Often they are illiterate **and** speak no English and thus have to relay much of the catch information through their school-age children (Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, Div. of Commercial Fisheries, **1979:10**).

2) Villagers are also hesitant or unable to give accurate information out of fear that the research may be aimed at more regulation. According to Dan **Nanalo**k, Sr. (1980):

I have been misled in the past years by our white counterparts, when they came and asked questions of our area. The whiteman asked what was in our area National Resource wise. When I answered their questions and assisted them in the information that was needed by them. In the later years the information was used in a detrimental manner to the Native Communities livelihood [sic] as well as economically.

3) Subsistence hunting and fishing information is inaccurate because it is often based on second-hand reports or at best on brief visits by data gatherers.

4) Subsistence catch data are often given in pounds with no indication of how figures are arrived at.

5) **In** gathering information on subsistence fishing, fresh fish that are consumed are not included in the counts.

6) Information often represents expanded data (Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, Div. of Commercial Fisheries, **1979:9**), meaning that catch data for those families known to have fished but not personally contacted is assumed to be the same as the averages for the particular village. As indicated by **Wolfe** (1977) and **Fienup-Riordan** (1980a), there is often as much variation within a village as between villages.

7) Harvest information is species specific. However, resources of minimal importance during **normal** years become extremely important during other years. In the same way, while one species may be overharvested, there will be a simultaneous decline in the exploitation of other species. Thus, as we **will** see in the description of village resource utilization patterns, the overall picture is extremely important.

8) For comparative purposes, the biggest drawback is the scattered quality of the data, with many short-term surveys with specific objectives covering the harvest of different species during different seasons. No comprehensive baseline data is available for the quantification, of regional utilization patterns.

9) Only recently, in the work of such organizations as Nunam **Kitlutsisti**, Yupiktak **Bista** (Davidson, 1974), and **AVCP** has any attempt been made to integrate the facts of subsistence utilization patterns with the social and cultural implications of these patterns. Now, however, in the face of increasing regulation and limitation on subsistence activity, these organizations are trying to bring together a data base on subsistence issues in order to increase federal and state awareness of the problems that economic development entails. Even the use of the rather amorphous phrase, "subsistence way of life," has significance in that it emphasizes the cultural, social and political value of what until recently has been taken as strictly a matter of economics.

10) The cost of harvesting particular species varies considerably between hunters because of the abundance of fish and game in the area **exploited**, differences in **skill**, and range of species selection. For example, a wider selection of animals tends to spread a hunter's fixed costs over a greater set of returns (Wolfe, 1977).

<sup>2</sup> The harvest utilization maps contained in this chapter were prepared as follows:

Figure 4. Hooper **Bay/Chevak**: Based on interviews with three Hooper Bay elders, three Hooper Bay hunters, three **Chevak** hunters, and Eugene Joseph, Sea Lion Corporation land planner. Mr. Joseph was particularly helpful as he has been involved in the development of subsistence utilization maps for the Hooper Bay Village Corporation. All interviews took place **during** the summer of 1980.

Figure 5. **Nunivak** Island: From **Lantis, 1946: Nunivak** Island.

Figure 6. **Nelson** Island: Based on informal interviews and **conversation** with numerous hunters in the **Nelson** Island area, the majority in **Toksook** Bay and **Chefornak**, as well as the author's observation of harvest patterns during residence on **Nelson** Island from fall of 1976 through the winter of 1978.

Figure 7. **Chefornak** and **Kipnuk/**

Figure 8. **Kongiganak** and **Kwigillingok/**

Figure 9. **Tuntutuliak** and **Eek/**

Figure 10. **Quinhagak:** All of these figures were based on limited information gathered during field trips to each of the villages during the summer of 1980. At most 5% of the active village hunters were consulted. Maps were later checked for accuracy with key informants from those villages. The information given is felt to be accurate but does not represent the full extent of subsistence resource utilization in the village groups represented. For instance trapping areas have not been pictured at all. The maps do, however, indicate the general dimensions of critical harvest patterns.

3

Mother earth is a cruel parent to her polar children...The sea affords them all they need, and to it they have recourse for food, clothing, and even fuel. It may seem strange to speak of going to the sea for wood. The great spring freshets of the Yukon, **Kuskokwim** and other rivers, bring down **immense** quantities of trees, and the various currents of the sea distribute this driftwood along the coast (Barnum, 1883:45).

4

The Lower Yukon Fish and Game Advisory Board, under impetus from the **Co-op**, hopes to convert the Romanzov herring fishery from an open to an exclusive registration fishery, to encourage local use (Tundra Drums, 9/11/80:10).

5

Prior to the large-scale black cod fisheries of the mid-30's and 40's in the Bering **Sea**, the coastal villages seasonally harvested black cods jigging off the near shore's ice shelf in the fall and spring. The overharvest of these species by the commercial fleet eliminated this seasonal harvest. Although national fisheries scientist [**sic**] believe that the **black** cod have recovered in the Bering Sea today, the in-shore population of black cod near the Delta's coastline has not recovered, and the seasonal near-shore subsistence fishery has not begun again (**Nunam Kitlutsisti**, 1980a).

6

The kill is still sometimes subject to the traditional division between hunting partners, the first share being the skin and ribs, the second share the seal haunch and liver, and the third share the shoulder cut.

7

"No one kept exact count of his small hair seals (or "harbor seals"), but every hunter knew exactly how many adult bearded seals every other hunter had caught, and everyone was rated thereon" (**Lantis**, 1946:173).

The bay must be partially **clear** before seal hunting begins. However, if strong north winds blow the ice away as it breaks off from the shore pack there **will** be poor hunting **since** **seals** are found near floating ice **floes**. An onshore wind, pushing the ice **landward** and closing the **leads**, **will** also prevent hunting. The large wooden skiffs need room to maneuver and a clear path of return to the village, insurance against the changing winds and the massive ice floes stacked by the high tides. Most hunting is done in the open ocean, in **Etolin** Straits, in the mottled, patchy, jagged sea, among the ice chunks dislodged **by** break-up. Men hunt in the crack between winter and summer, when the ice has given them room to approach, but while it still **lines** the shores as protection from a treacherous open sea (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a:90**).

The herring runs vary from year to year, not only in the amount of fish, but in individual fish size. **In 1977**, the herring ran from June **11** through June **17**. The fish were **unusually small**, and escaped the larger mesh and, **ironically**, newer nets. **In 1978**, the major run occurred in **early** May, with another smaller run in the first part of June, and during both runs the fish were particularly large and oily, approximately eight inches each. Although the catch was greater in **1978**, the weather turned rainy **in** mid-June and many of the fatter, slower **drying** fish were spoiled (**Fienup-Riordan, 1980a: 105**).

**10** **Needlefish** are as tiny as they are multitudinous, so that their presence "in the thousands" should not be overly weighted. Also, eating over a cupful at one sitting often **gives** people indigestion.

**11** One example of such a contemporary trading relationship is the regular exchange of seal oil and dried herring for salmon strips and frozen whitefish between a Nelson Island family and a family now resident in Bethel. The Bethel woman is originally from the coastal **village** of **Kongiganak**, and is the first cousin (father's sister's daughter) of the **Nelson Island** woman. The husband of the **Bethel** woman has immediate **family** in **Nunapitchak**, and so through his wife supplies his mother, two sisters and their families with **seal oil**. As he has a full-time

job in Bethel, his mother and sister are by and large responsible for procuring the whitefish and salmon that constitute his side of the exchange with the Nelson Islanders.

12 Much of the material in this section is a loose paraphrase of material included in **Fienup-Riordan (1980a:84-138)** Chapter II: The World of Work: The Cycle of Subsistence. Since this is as yet unpublished and no comparable account is available for the study area, it was felt that it would be worthwhile to include it here.

13 The Department of Labor conducted a Manpower Outlook Survey in Eek in 1970; of 186 inhabitants, 68 filled out applications, or 37% of the total population. These 68 comprise 100% of the work force. Of these 68, 7 were employed (school, postmaster, store, National Guard). Ninety percent of the 68 had incomes under \$3,000 (Alaska Planning and Management, 1972).

INCOME GROUPINGS

	Total	Employed	Unemployed
\$ 0-2,999		2	59
3,000-5,999		3	2
6,000-8,999		2	0
9,000 and over		0	0

14

III. Income Distribution	Toksook Bay	Tununak	Ni ghtmute
April 1970:			
Families under \$3,000	85%	89%	<b>98%</b>
Families between \$3,000-\$6,000	<b>7%</b>	6%	2%
Families over \$6,000	<b>8%</b>	5%	
April 1977:			
Families under \$3,000	7%	<b>11%</b>	36%
Families between \$3,000-\$6,000	23%	28%	27%
Families over \$6,000	70%	<b>61%</b>	37%

From Fienup-Riordan, 1980a, p.61-2.

15 These sources were identified through village inquiry as well as available information on state public assistance and then confirmed and substantiated by the various funding agencies. Often the agencies were only willing or able to disclose general employment figures. Even where detailed figures were available, they were not always equally available for all villages. More significant, they indicated a great deal of variation from month to month and year to year, especially in areas such as CETA funding and public assistance. The result is a very



general picture of regular employment and its cash effects in the different villages.

16

Asked if Scammon Bay could do without CETA workers, Mayor Homer Hunter said, "People can't work for no pay." he said. [sic] CETA pays the salary of the city administrator, telephone operator are used to pay for the city clerk. [sic] City manager Fritz Willie of Napakiak said he would like to see more CETA positions far the city. He said without CETA, plus state and federal money, Napakiak would have a hard time paying for itself. . . . Many city administrators [sic] salaries are paid by CETA. Chevak city administrator Frank Chayalkun is no longer under CETA but he used to be. He said there are 25 full time and part time CETA workers at peak periods in Chevak and they help the city a great deal. He said if it were not for CETA workers many full time positions would have to become part time position [sic], or be abolished (Lenz, 10/9/80a:14).

17 However, the Reagan Administration proposes to entirely eliminate payments to Alaskan Natives at the end of the 1981 fiscal year. The GA program currently operates on a budget of \$5.7 million in Alaska. Approximately \$1 million is jointly distributed through AVCP and BIA social services office in Bethel. Branch Chief Jim Shanks reported, "Although 5.7 million is not a lot of money to Alaska, 1 million is a lot of money to the Bethel region!"

18 According to Martin Moore (Lenz, 10/9/80b:15):

I'm not for welfare. I think the welfare system is the worst thing that ever happened to people in the Calista region. You lose your self respect for supporting yourself. You cannot be dependent on the state in order to survive. That is not the way the native people were brought up. They survive on their own initiative and independence.

19 In a 1980 survey of families in the Delta, the State of Alaska's Division of Social Services determined that 1 out of every three households in the Delta receives transfer payment of one form at least from government. When the villages of the Delta are separated from Bethel in this survey, one out of every two families is a recipient of government assistance (Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980f).

In the **Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim** area, we have one of the highest cost of living and lowest average income per capita.

The yearly cost of living is as follows for average family of 5:

1.	Food	\$25.00/day	\$ 9,025
2.	Energy cost	<b>37¢/KWH</b>	960
3.	Heating Fuel	\$1.50/gallon	2,250 ( <b>1,500</b> gallons)
4.	Gasoline	\$2.00/gallon	1,000 (500 gallons)
5.	Clothing ( <b>spring</b> , summer, fall, winter)		1,500
6.	Fishing gear, motors, nets, <b>etc.</b>		4,800
7.	Winter gear and equipment		<u>3,500</u>
			\$ 23,535

This is a very conservative figure, and does not include home repairs, health expenses, purchase of large investments like boats or snowmachines, air transportation which is our only way of distance travel, and other normal needs.

The average income at present time is \$6,000. This figure is higher then [sic] last year's \$4,300. As you can see, other money is needed to support a family, and that money comes . . . through relief programs (Foster, **1976:1**).

21 As in other areas, the village of **Alakanuk**

. . . used to raise revenues by running a bingo **game**. The state department of revenue began interpreting regulations strictly at one **point**, and the city had to pass operation of the game to the fire department, which qualified under the new rules. The fire department donates its bingo profits to the city for a total of \$25,000 (**Lenz, 10/9/1980a: 14**).

22

Mayor Patrick **Phillip** and City Councilman Terry Cook of Alakanuk agreed that without federal revenue sharing "we would be hurting."

"Without federal and state revenue sharing we would have to take the city telephone out," said Phillip. "I don't know how we could pay personnel, the city clerk and mayor and the police force. We would have to shut down the city office" (Lenz, 10/9/1980a: 14).

23

. . . [S]tate projects this year, will enable the city to run at a profit. The state has provided \$280,000 to construct boardwalks in the area. . . . The city is charging \$42,000 to administer the project. The city is charging \$150,000 to administer a \$3 million road project (Lenz, 10/9/80b:15).

24 According to Nunam Kitlutsisti (1980f):

With the need to **marshall** summer time for cash income decreasing food intake, a rational decision to increase winter harvest as replacement protein was initiated. The elimination of local foods in close proximity to the village brought about by increased winter predation, better gear, and larger populations, forced the harvest pattern outward from the village. Collection of summer **salmon** for dog teams was severely limited by the exodus for outside summer work, so winter harvest was made more efficient by **snowmachines**, which reduced the time requirement for successful winter harvest, in terms of travel **only**. The skills of the "**nukapiaq**" or hunter were **still** essential for success, but the time of **travel** to hunting areas was reduced. This **also allowed** the hunter to **plan** his time of departure to **allow** for seasonal winter jobs **in** the winter **also**. As the village lifestyle moved into a different clock system, the external needs began to grow; cash began to replace **seal** oil as a staple, yet even as hard as the people tried, they continued to **fall** behind. The replacement cost of imported protein continued to climb in comparison to **local** protein; gasoline and oil, now necessities govern the household and timing of activities. **As** the **people** began to **fall** behind in their acculturation to the order of village life, they turned from **self-sufficiency** to the government **dole** system.

25 For example, when the monthly agency income for the community of **Hooper** Bay (\$43,511) is compared to the agency income **for Tuntutuliak** (\$15,803) and this income is divided by the number of households in each community (101 and 30, respectively), the average monthly household incomes in these two communities are seen to be roughly comparable (**\$435** and \$500, respectively).

26 It is hoped that state alternatives, such as the proposed STEP program, will at least partially fill the vacuum entailed by federal withdrawal.

27 With help from the Alaska Native Foundation's newly established small loan program for herring development, the **Stoknavik Co-op** obtained a \$375,000 development loan from the Alaska Renewable Resources Corporation. They then made arrangements in Seattle for the purchase of materials and the training of co-op members in order to build their own herring boats, equip them and get them in the water, which most were able to do for the 1980 herring run (**Babb, 7/23/80:6**).

28 Exclusive registration is presently being sought for this fishery by **Nunam Kitlutsisti**, as "competition from Bethel-based herring fishermen would seriously cut into the small profit margin those **Stoknavik** fisherman depend on."

29 Net fishing is the basic method on the **Kuskokwim**. Set gill nets anchored or staked in place is the prevailing technique employed in the lower river because of sandbars and tides, while drift nets are employed upriver, with some small nets used for subsistence purposes. Both types are operated out of large outboard-powered skiffs. Early commercial operations on the river depended on hard salt and mild cure processing, with small amounts of the product canned on "floaters" (mobile processors). More recently, the fish are shipped out by air for processing (see Pennoyer, **1965:38-51** for a concise history of the **Kuskokwim** commercial fishery).

30 Two hundred seventy-five thousand dollars in wages was earned in the **Kuskokwim** District commercial fisheries in 1979 (Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game, p. 44, 1979, Annual Salmon Management Report). Dividing this figure by ± 530 fishermen fishing on 230 miles of river, the result is less than \$1,000 gross profit per fisherman!

31 In the summer of **1980** an 18-year-old boy used his earnings (\$1,000 total) to buy a suit for himself and signed the rest of his check over to his parents who immediately spent it on a year's supply of stove oil from the incoming barge.

32 In fact, one week before this statement was made, **Calista** Corporation and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (**CIRI**) formed a joint venture for the purpose of gathering information to explore the possibility of investing in the **bottomfishing** industry. The joint venture documents were signed on August 7, and the joint venture is open for participation by

other Native corporations. Also, the loan programs that Roye recommended are already beginning to open up. The traditional Kuskokwim "scratch fishery" (Lenz, 8/28:6) now has state and federal money available, and this input is having its effect, cf. the successful opening of the Cape Romanzof herring fishery. Yet caution is advised, as the Romanzof success story was based on careful planning. There the commercial fishing took place only after subsistence fishing, and villagers borrowed money on payback terms commensurate with the vagaries of the herring runs, a plan which hopefully will prevent bankruptcy in years when the fish do not come in sufficient quantity for commercial harvest.

33

Only when greater scientific understanding is at hand, when accurate estimates of the harvestable surplus of herring exist, and when local support for a fishery emerges should development of a carefully managed commercial fishery be considered for the Nelson Island area. If initiated, it should be limited to gill nets, and other types of low investment gear that would foster maximum local participation (p. 133).

34

September 9, 1979

To: Whom it may concern:

This letter concerns one of the issues which is often talked and discussed about in the meetings concerning the commercial fishing of herring fish.

During the visit of Senator Mike Gravel and State Senator George Hohman, the people brought up the matter of commercial fishing which both Senator Mike Gravel and State Senator George Hohman don't seem to have control over. The people, here in Toksook Bay, strongly oppose the commercial fishing because the herring fish is the main subsistence of all families. They know it would bring the income like any other commercial fishing, but knowing if the commercial fishing ever takes its first step there won't be anymore [sic] herring, or very less run the following year and that would leave each family with less that wouldn't last for the whole winter. Besides the reason

mentioned above the people also fear if the commercial fishing ever starts, the herring eggs would be harvested from the spawning areas which would put an end to a herring run for the following year, or there may be no run.

The people would **like** to have Nelson Island area to be kept closed for the commercial fishing and would like to advise those who may be thinking in the means of starting the commercial fishing not to think or to have any thoughts that way before seeing or after meeting with the people of this area.

Sincerely,

City of Toksook Bay, 1979 (Letter to the Editor, Tundra Drums).

35 The villages of the delta have already petitioned the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to enact sanctuaries to govern tanker traffic lanes in the ocean to prevent mixtures of traffic and discharge with other uses, principally commercial fishing, and migratory routes of marine species required for coastal utilization. They feel that OCS development could interfere with oil storage and purchase plans for the Delta's own commercial fishing fleets. For example:

If a marine supply base [for the oil industry] is developed in **Pastolik** Bay, and depends on Dutch Harbor or **Emmonak's** tank farm for diesel and gasoline needs, then interruption of the normal channel of supply for Delta villages' domestic oil needs could occur, or a localized situation in the Yukon Delta of over-demand and inability to increase winter supplies could force higher per-unit costs of oil on the villages and commercial fisheries, making regional and local economic efforts suffer. (**Nunam Kitlutsisti**, 1980a).

36 Since 1971, there have been three consecutive years of relatively low water in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers. This has been followed by movement of beaver out of the headwaters down into the flats receiving water which is often surcharged by ocean currents. Here beaver have begun damming areas where village fishermen normally go for their winter food supplies of **blackfish, loche** fish, and needfish. These dams have begun to interfere with the spawning **cycles** of the freshwater fish that are so important to the coastal people. Efforts have been made recently to teach the coastal people how to trap beaver, but to date although there has been some success in putting a stop to the beaver menace, a market has not been created for beaver pelts.

37 By this plan, trappers would **be** paid an initial price, the fair market price, at the time of transfer of the furs to the authority of the trappers' cooperative and they would then receive, if the furs attracted a higher price, a later bonus for the furs, therefore returning more money. Currently, trappers sell their furs to the first person available because the need for cash is so significant in the winter and they take a much lower price than the furs are worth. **An** example of this is that muskrat were getting **\$1.50 to** \$2.00 per pelt in the Yukon **delta** in **1980**, and they were getting **\$6** a pelt **in** the Fort Yukon **area**. A second **example** is that large mink were getting \$35 a pelt in the villages in 1980 and the large mink pelt was going for \$85 to \$90 a pelt in the Seattle fur exchange during Christmas time (**Nunam Kitlutsisti, 1980b**).

38 Between 1958 and 1965 the slaughter ranged from a low of **10%** (**1,500** head) **to** a high of about **21%** (2,826) of the annual reindeer on hand. Also, close to 200 animals were taken annually by Nuniwak Natives for their own use. Meat products sold from the plant then included: whole carcasses half carcasses boned meat, **kidneys**, livers, hearts, antler sets, antlers cut up, hides, front and hind quarters, loins, ground meat, tongues, meat scraps, sinews and tendons, leg skins, and hooves.

39 Note, however, that the cost of harvesting subsistence resources varies tremendously between hunters, depending on individual ability, the richness of the area exploited, and the range of species, as a wider selection of animals tends to spread, a hunter's fixed costs over a greater set of returns (Wolfe, 1977:21).

40 The kind of careful cost analysis that **Wolfe** has produced for **Kotlik** is lacking for any of the villages in the study area, a severe limitation in discussing the relationship between the subsistence and wage sectors of the economy. Yet although Wolfe's estimates are based on a sample of only eight households in a single community **100** miles up the coast from the study area, and although Wolfe himself advised extreme caution in extrapolating from his data, in the opinion of the author Wolfe's estimates represent as accurate a statement as can be made at present about the cost of subsistence today in the study area.

41

Their boats are **simply** dangerous in ocean waters. Subsistence fishing for salmon, by both gasoline costs and **limits** on **gear**, is to seek the largest number of fish in the shortest amount of time, using the **least** amount of gas, and requiring no special purchases of gear. If the fishing is completed **by late** June, this **will allow** the men of the **family** the remainder of the summer for seasonal employment to **raise**

money for oil and gas purchases. But with south winds, the scenario falls apart.

**With** no fish in the expected time, serious problems resulted in the village. First, the supply barge for oil and gasoline came early. Those people who wished to purchase bulk supplies had to seek work early to hoard money to pay for gas. This limited their time for fishing. . . .

By not getting the salmon, people opted for looking for work, or going after other fish and seals. Because harvest is more difficult and catch per unit effort drops when seeking small whitefish rather than salmon, gasoline and time spent increase greatly. **What** dollars and time were available to the village family, were fast disappearing.

Fuel costs were normally six times as great for an equivalent weight of whitefish, and the **supply** limited, forcing longer and longer trips to harvest the resource. The longer the time away, the more funds expended for transportation energy and the less time available for seasonal employment. The less time for earning funds, the greater dependence on alternate resources.

42 This informal equalization makes it exceedingly difficult not only to gather information on but also to come to useful and accurate conclusions about household economic viability.

43 **Quoting** statement by Dorcas Rock of Point Hope in "Whalers' Wives Give Support" (Iundra Times, March 1980).

44

The ocean is the source of life for the subsistence dwellers of the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta. It is part of their web of life. Faced with a relative overnight transmutation of their natural environment into a punchboard for offshore platforms and onshore staging **areas**, the villages have determined to ask the government for time . . . to develop a Coastal Zone Management Plan and have it in place before leasing commences. They have asked for time for the villages to determine if the creation of regional government, independent of oil



development, has now become feasible. They ask for time for governmental agencies to develop their abilities to monitor oil development, and, time for the oil industry to develop the techniques necessary for safe operation in the **wintery** sub-Arctic waters of the Bering Sea.

Time is **all** they request. The villages fear that a precipitous rush into the **cold-water** seas will mean oil spills. They fear for their marine mammals, which supply them with oil and meat; for **their** birds, which feed them in lean months; and for their fisheries, which provide 70% of their protein needs, and the only cash economy for the villages of the delta. The village people are unprepared for the 20th Century, and will not benefit from the jobs created by development. They are unskilled in sophisticated construction activities, and training programs can not be developed before leasing begins.

45 For example, according to the land planner for the **Hooper** Bay Native Corporation:

Potential for oil is really high in the deficiency area, which **will** enable many of our young men and women to double the chance of working in the near future. We have tried really hard to pick out the land that we most think is rich in oil and has some value to it (Joseph, 1974:7).

46 According to **Nunam Kitlutsisti (1980i)**:

The relationship of habitat disruption in **ex-**change for jobs has been reviewed by the **vil-**lages and the very **blunt** statement the vil-lages maintain that they have been told repeatedly about how the adoption of technology and industry into the delta **would** increase jobs, but what they have noticed is the importation of non-local **people** into the areas to fulfill those job needs that have occurred. Village leaders in convention through the **AVCP** have repeatedly stated that the training programs sponsored by industries that are seeking **vil-**lage support have been negative at best and the hiring practices are often times blatantly discriminatory.

47 They cite the apparent double standard that enables the same villagers in **Tuntutuliak** who have earned \$1,000 a week as construction workers on their new REAA high school to refuse to send their children there to be educated. Similarly, some of the residents of **Tuntutuliak** voted to keep hiring for the high school construction project within the community and then turned around and imported married sons and daughters presently resident in other villages and insisted that because they were the offspring of residents, they qualified for local hire.

48 Pregnant women and women of child-bearing age appear to be most in jeopardy, followed by the elderly and adolescent populations, and Knapp (1979) concludes that if changes in the dietary intake patterns of the study area continue at the present rate, that even greater numbers of the population will risk developing nutrition-related disorders.

49 For example:

Barbara Miller of **Mat-Su** took a novel tact [sic] in her opposition to the current subsistence law, saying that "[T]here is no reason for the subsistence law in a time when food stamps, ADC, welfare, BIA and other payments are available" and she believes that "as soon as one accepted one cent of public money they forfeited any subsistence user designation." Ms. Miller expressed her belief that it was grossly unfair to give subsistence use priority when "all the people have a right to all the game." When questioned by Representative Joe **Chuckwuk (D-Dillingham)** as to whether she knew that most of the aid programs she had cited were threatened by the proposed budget cuts and whether she also knew that these programs are inadequate to supply a person's needs in their current form, Ms. Miller merely repeated her prior opinions. (Tundra Drums, 4/16:20).

50 See Nunam **Kitlutsisti (1980e)** for a comparable case of the conflict between sport and commercial fishing at Goodnews Bay.

51 According to Nunam **Kitlutsisti (1980g)**:

The indifference formerly displayed (detailed in "A Short History of Game Mismanagement by the State of Alaska's Department of Fish and Game in Rural Alaska and Subsistence Villages") was replaced with a concerted effort to protect the subsistence economy. In a short period of time, the state created a Subsistence

Section within the Department of Fish and Game to monitor and supervise subsistence-related activities of the department, and advise the policy-making boards of Fisheries and Game on issues of allocation affecting subsistence. In addition, the Alaska State Legislature commissioned a Legislative Subsistence Oversight Committee. On the federal level, the Secretary of the Interior promised the Alaskan Native community, that even without a legislative mandate from the national interest lands bill (d-2), that he would protect the priority right of subsistence dwellers to wildlife resources on federal lands in Alaska. The Secretary followed this promise, when acting under Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to withdraw delta lands for a 20-year refuge, to declare as a policy of the withdrawal that subsistence harvest would be given the highest priority of consumptive users.

52 Note especially their publications "We Need Time," "The Other Village," "The Other Village Revisited," and "Does One Way of Life Have To Die so Another Can Live?" and "You Don't Forget Hunger."

53 They stand on the side of North Slope Borough Mayor Jacob Adams when in the keynote address delivered before the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Captains Convention he said:

Let me tell you, the battle lines are drawn. On one side we stand, the Eskimos, prepared to fight for our cultural existence. Pitted against us are those who call themselves "whale conservationists," but whose only concern is preserving whales, not people (Tundra Times, 3/4/81:4).

54 It is interesting to note that the practice among herring fishermen in the coastal communities of the study area is not to kill a seal at the time when the herring are in the water, for when the oil spreads from the kill the herring disappear from the area. In the same way, marine mammals avoid areas where oil has been spilled.

## XI. CONCLUSION: MAJOR AREAS OF IMPACT

### Social Systems

The discussion of social systems began with a delineation of the contours of the traditional kinship system and then proceeded with the effects on traditional social structure of:

- 1) Population concentration, the abandonment of the traditional migratory way of life, and settlement into more or less permanent villages where more people were gathered together for longer periods of time. Although permanent settlements have been a relatively recent development it was noted both that traditional mechanisms existed for the integration of large numbers of people (albeit for short periods of time) and that contemporary villages and villagers are often not as fixed as they might at first appear.
  
- 2) The disappearance of the traditional men's house and the introduction of single-family dwellings. Here it was noted that so-called single-family dwellings are not always used as are their counterparts in non-Native communities. The question was also raised as to whether or not the proximity of the different sexes and the different age groups in the nuclear family household is a contemporary source of stress.

3) The decrease in infant mortality and the improvement of health and education delivery systems in general. The result of these developments has been a sharp increase in the population (after the **initial** decline during the historical period), and the relative youth of that population. Traditional **social** relations have been radically affected by this demographic shift. The dramatic increase in the number of dependent children, as well as the length of their social and economic dependency, has put strain on the resources of the communities, and has radically affected the time the adult population must spend in child care as opposed to other community and subsistence activities. Also, nuclear families now tend to be larger and more self-sufficient.

4) The increase in personal mobility. Coincident with increasing employment opportunities in **Bethel** and Anchorage, there has developed significant out-migration by the younger generation, leaving the **villages in** order to set up independent lives elsewhere. To date, this mechanism of outward mobility has had minimal negative impact on family and community structure in the study area. However, an increase in employment-related movement (especially by **males** and singles) might well result in hardship not **only** for the immigrants, but also for the older residents who remain in the villages and who **rely** on the younger villagers not **only** for monetary support, but more important, for supplies of fresh fish and game due them as senior kinsmen. **No** paycheck sent home from the regional center can make up for this hardship (nowhere perceived purely as economic.), as was made **clear** in the section dealing with the interface between subsistence activities and ideology

and the cash economy. Consequently, families in the study area are at present reluctant **to** allow their members to engage in long-term residence and wage employment outside of the **community**.

5) The simultaneous increase in family spread and the increase in means of interfamily communication. The negative effects on traditional family structure **of increased** mobility of certain sectors of the population, e.g., the young and the single, has been to some extent countered by the positive effects of an increase in means of interfamily communication, including the use of the C.B., village phone, tape recordings, and radio messages to keep people in touch with each other. For example, increased communication greatly eased the personal hardship and family stress that accompanied the early boarding school programs in the study area as well as in other parts of rural Alaska (Kleinfeld, 1973).

6) The continued effects of formal education and the division of labor between parent and educator. The role of formal education in undercutting the traditional authority structure and the traditional relationship between parent, grandparent and child cannot be overemphasized. Whereas traditionally it was the role of the mother to train her daughter and the father his son in subsistence utilization patterns, the introduction of formal education not only took the role of educator away from the parent, but also presented (and often continues to present) as obsolete and inaccurate much of what the parents had to say.

7) The increase in the non-Native sector of the population, and the coincident increase in social problems of cross-cultural communication and value conflict. Although the change in the median age of the **population** constitutes the most dramatic demographic switch to date in the study area, a **rapid influx** of outsiders coincident with economic development in the area is already altering the population structure even more radically. Population growth through in-migration is beginning to impact **sociocultural** systems in the sense of increasing impersonality of social relations and potential disruption through miscommunication. Interethnic attitudes and relationships have increased as potential sources of discrimination and misunderstanding.

So far, many of the non-Natives (e.g., educators, missionaries, health care personnel) who have come to the study area have done so to make it their home. Often they engage in subsistence activities, for both recreational and economic purposes, and again have a measure of respect for the **land** natural resources and Native inhabitants of the study area. However, insofar as they do not come intending to stay, they are a **problem**. Any further increase in the non-Native segment of the population lacking long-term commitment to the area will involve a corresponding increase in conflict between divergent cultural values. An increase in non-Natives in the regional center would change the character of the population structure as **well** as the typical circumstances of Native/non-Native interaction, with Natives no **longer** in the majority, and consequently less powerful.

Finally, it is ironic to note that those men and women who have come to the study area as conscious instigators of change (e.g., missionaries and educators) have often had no greater impact on the population of the study area than those who have come and may continue to come out of economic expediency with no conscious intention to alter the existing way of life of the indigenous population.

8) Changes in community structure: Bethel as Crossroads. There continue to be significant social and exchange relations between the villages, and between Bethel and the outlying villages. Besides providing an opportunity for nontraditional patterns of affiliation (**interethnic** friendships and marriages, increasing opportunities for same- as opposed to other-generation relationships) the regional center, itself a relatively new social institution, is becoming a frontier where new forms of social organization (new in context of both traditional Native and traditional western patterns of organization) are being tested and developed.

9) Indicators of inter- and **intrafamily** stress as they relate to both traditional and contemporary family and community structure.

Divorce, child abuse, suicide, alcoholism, violent crime and mental health problems have been examined, especially as they reflect an increased sense of dependence on external sources of power. **In** the study area, the expression of personal and family problems tends to **be** inner directed as opposed to the overt conflict experienced in other instances of **cross-cultural/interethnic** confrontation. External passivity



and internal violence characterize the response of the Native population of the study area. The consequences of this response pattern have been analyzed, including the possible effects of an increase in the non-Native sector of the population as mentioned above.

Compared to Native and non-Native communities in other parts of the state, **all** of the communities in the study area have retained a high level of personal interaction, where the mechanisms of traditional social control such as gossip and group approval are still effective in dealing with **intra-group** deviation. They would be adversely affected by a rapid population **influx** or rapid change in the composition of the community that **challenged** this traditional authority structure. **Domes-**tic problems, many **involving** alcohol, as well as inwardly directed **vio-**lence (suicide) and other **mental** health problems can be anticipated to increase with the consequent disparity in economic conditions, political powerlessness, job pressure, population pressure, sexual competition, and loss of self-identity. The latter is critical, as the confusion of cultural categories so often coincident **with** situations of **rapid** culture change can **result** in the negative perception **of** situations and events that up **until** the onset of rapid change have had a positive or neutral value.

10) Human support systems. Human services already available **in** the region to deal with the above problems have been cataloged (**e.g.**, health care, **rural** education delivery, **social** services and **mental** health facilities, manpower development and training services), Both

the administrative structure as well as the overall effectiveness of service delivery have been **substantially** reduced by recent federal **cut-**backs. However, the systems now in place, if properly funded, could deal effectively with regional service delivery.

### Cultural Systems

Although often considered superfluous in a discussion of the more tangible characteristics of a region such as employment availability or population structure, a discussion of the cultural systems of the **study area and the potential** effects of development on those systems has been treated as of primary importance.

Many of the same circumstances have been seen to have had an effect on the **social**, economic and political activity in the region (e.g., the influx of outsiders, externally imposed challenges to the traditional authority structure, etc.). Each involves a cultural confrontation as well.

A cultural system has been defined as the system of beliefs, values and culturally constituted practices that characterize the population of the study area and that comprise the coherent world view that is passed down from generation to generation within that population. This world view has been seen to be articulated in action as **well** as ideal. And since there is often a difference between what people say they do and what they actually do, this discrepancy, too, has been dealt with.

Consideration of the cultural systems of the study area began with a general discussion of the traditional world view as it was played out in the various realms of human activity, including a discussion of traditional ritual distribution and exchange, cosmological relations, and mythology. In this context, the cultural ideal of the independent, self-sufficient hunter was given consideration, along with the ideological basis for the traditional division of labor between the sexes (creating a situation of equality with a difference) as well as the hierarchical relation between the generations.

Following a general presentation of the cultural systems of the study area, intrusions into the value hierarchy were dealt with. A distinction was made between a change in the form and a change in the significance of various activities. For example, the formal change in hunting equipment that has occurred in the last several decades has been accompanied by a need for cash that has entailed a culturally significant change in the relationship between man and his environment.

Issues that will potentially be affected by OCS development include:

1) The significance of the retention of traditional ritual distributions by the study population, including the spring seal party (uqiquq), exchange dance distribution (yurarluni), and annual communal feasts (kaluqaq). Where modification, replacement and even amplification within the form of these traditional events has occurred, as on Nelson Island, this has been seen as a positive indicator of community health

and cultural integration. Where the formal distributions have ceased to be practiced, as in Hooper Bay and Quinhagak, this was seen as a negative Indicator.

2) The ideological implications of reliance on traditional subsistence activities and systems of exchange. In this context, the cultural values relative to subsistence practices were dealt with. Both Native and non-Native values focus on a significant relationship between man and animal in the environment of the study area, and neither group supports economic or social development that would jeopardize this relationship.

3) The interethnic, cross-cultural character of the study area, and its ability to withstand further cultural intrusion. The regional center, Bethel, is a bilingual, **bicultural** community where interethnic stress, although by no means absent, is to some extent alleviated by a generally positive attitude toward traditional Native culture as well as a genuine respect for and interest in the introduction into the community of the cultural artifacts of western civilization, ranging from an African import store to an English tea house, both opened within the last year. The primary goals of these businesses may be economic viability and profit, but their effects are more far-reaching. The question remains as to how an influx of outsiders that may not share this positive attitude toward ethnicity might affect the population of the study area.

Although the population of the study area has a generally positive attitude toward cross-cultural differences, this is not to belie the fact that these differences do, in many instances, cause real communication problems. Besides its bilingual character, the population has a **generally low** reading level and low level of media sophistication and availability. Cultural differences in conversation etiquette also exist as well as differences in what is considered important to communicate. A fundamental question remains as to what the effect of these differences will be on the communication and interpretation of information pertaining to OCS activities and the development of consensus on issues related to future development of the area. Bridging the differences in regional opinion and, to a certain extent, countering the effects of isolation of certain sectors of the study population, a local radio station and weekly newspaper (the Tundra Drums) have been able to connect Bethel and the surrounding villages, and to provide the means for the development of a regional consciousness.

4) The past and potential effects of the removal of traditional support systems in the study area without adequate replacement. The mental health of the study population has been seen to be closely tied to that population's sense of continuity with traditional cultural values and activities.

5) Native expectations. Finally, based on the existing cultural framework, extensive consideration was given to Native attitudes toward the above issues, including their perceived rights to improved health

care and educational facilities, their support for the development of commercial fisheries, and their request for delay in proposed OCS development. **In all** cases they support development only when it is perceived as compatible with continuance of "the subsistence way of life" and all of the complex and often contradictory rights and duties this entails.

### Political Systems

The discussion of political systems initially focused on a discussion of the traditional power hierarchy and mechanisms of social control and decision-making. The general efficacy of control mechanisms such as ridicule, gossip and avoidance in small-scale societies was presented, as well as their particular applicability to the study area.

The discussion of the traditional power hierarchy was followed by a discussion of innovations in this system, including:

- 1) The introduction of formal village self-government, including both traditional Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) and city councils. **It** was seen that contemporary village government both parallels and diverges from traditional consensus decision-making.
- 2) The introduction of formal authority networks, including the court system, magistrates, State Troopers and village **public** safety officers. These intrusions have severely undercut the traditional authority

structure which **relies** on ostracism **as** a mechanism of **social** control. For example, to **date**, although both law enforcement facilities and a formal means of **legal** redress (the court system) have **been established** **in the** study area, conflict resolution in both the villages and the regions? center is **still less formal** than in more urban areas of the state. A **crime** committed in a village may be punished by informal, although none the less **biriding**, excommunication from the community. The regional center thus becomes the unwitting repository for the social castoffs of the **smaller**, more tightly knit, communities, providing a relatively anonymous atmosphere for the offender until the immediacy of the conflict has blown over. This use of Bethel has already become problematic. Conversely, **the** traditional means of social control might prove difficult to enforce **in smaller communities** of the study area with any rapid **influx** of outsiders that do not understand or respond to this mechanism of problem solution, but rather anticipate more formal means of social control which, in turn, are not forthcoming.

3) Existing regional government systems **were** discussed, including both the profit and nonprofit corporations set up under **ANCSA**. These include:

- A) Calista, the profit corporation to which the **Native population** of the study area **belongs**. Among the **issues pertinent** here is **Calista's** perceived **role** in the economic development of the region both where this development is and **is** not seen as potentially disruptive to **the** population of **the** study area.

Although **Calista** is a corporate and not a governing body per se, by virtue of its extra-regional affiliations, it provides a link between regional and statewide activity. For example, the profit corporations of the study area, including **Calista**, may well experience an increase in both political and economic power relative to the oil industry as through future land conveyances the profit corporations receive title to the lands that the oil industry might require as staging areas for development within the region.

- B) The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), the nonprofit counterpart of **Calista**, and Nunam Kitlutsisti (lit. save the land) the environmental arm of AVCP that is the regional spokesman on matters such as subsistence, d-2, fisheries development, and OCS exploration and development. The two most important questions that arose for the purposes of this report were 1) the degree to which these nonprofit corporations are in conflict with and/or see themselves in competition with the profit-making corporations, and 2) the degree to which the stand of the nonprofits is really representative of the study population.
- c) The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC), organized in 1969 as an advocate for Alaska Native health rights. Today it employs about 120 employees, including 68 primary **commu-**nity health aides located in 48 villages, and provides a wide



range of health promotion, preventive, and primary health care services funded from a variety of state, federal, and private foundation sources.

D) AVCP Housing Authority, which enables the **region to** apply for federal grants and long-term, low-interest loans for the construction of public housing, which has already led to a significant amount of new construction in the study area.

E) The Rural Education Attendance Areas (REAA), which administer the newly decentralized **school system** of the study area. **Local** control of this system by residents of the study area is **still** a hotly contested issue.

F) The Coastal Resource Service Area (CRSA) set up under the Coastal Zone Management Act (**CZM**) of 1977, and presently **involved** in producing a workable **CZM** plan for the study area.

3) Supraregional government systems, both federal and state. Particular attention has been given **to** the interaction of local communities and larger government organizations (e.g., the effects of agency programs and delivery systems on village self-sufficiency) and how this interaction might be affected by potential OCS exploration and development.

4) Conflicts within and between political systems. Here, among other things, the relationship between the regional Native political organizations and the municipal government of Bethel, the regional center, has been specified. Questions considered include: the conflict, both overt and covert, between those two governing bodies; the significance of the feasibility study being conducted by AVCP on the advantages and disadvantages of the establishment of borough government for the region as a whole; and the issue of proposed OCS exploration and development affecting the move toward boroughization. To date, OCS as an issue has failed to intensify conflicts within the region, polarizing different factions, but rather has served to unify the region.

5) **Related to the above, is the issue of community and regional cohesiveness as expressed through commitment to intra- and inter-regional organization and issues, e.g., the social concern expressed at the 1980 regional women's conference, as well as the concern expressed about wet/dry legislation by both Native and non-Native residents of the study area prior to the October voter referendum in Bethel. For example, as alcoholism and its attendant evils are recognized as considerable problems in the study area, the issue of whether or not to **allow** a city-owned liquor store was the most emotion-packed issue of the last election. As it turned out, the proposed liquor store was defeated by a vote of two to one. Yet, thanks largely to coverage by the Tundra Drums, both sides were thoroughly presented and discussed with all conflicting **concerns** taken into consideration.**

## Economic Systems

Finally, the most striking feature of the study area is the fundamental dependence of its inhabitants on the products of the rivers and the sea, both traditionally and at present. **Their** way of life is inexorably bound up with the seasonal cycling of fish and game, and although communities have solidified in the last 30 years, to some extent obviating the need for the seasonal migrations of the study population, the places people have chosen **to** settle are precisely those which have in the past supplied, and continue to supply, ready access to subsistence resources. If either minor natural fluctuation or major **industrial** disaster were to **alter** the pattern of resource availability, the modus vivendi of the villages would cease **to** exist, and the resident population would be forced to relocate. For **all** the apparent **immobility** of the new village communities, with **schools, clinics,** airstrips and housing projects, they are far from permanent features of the landscape, and continue to be highly dependent on the renewable resources the rivers and the sea provide.

**To** clarify the contemporary parameters of the interdependence of man and environment, and the current interdependence of the traditional subsistence and more recent wage economies, the following **issues** have been presented:

- 1) The village cash economy, including consideration of both private and public sector employment in the villages of the study area, as **well**

as employment such as commercial fishing, cannery work, and **firefighting** available outside the villages on a seasonal basis. At present, commercial fishing and government subsidy are critical in providing a regular cash flow into the villages.

2) The commercial exploitation of subsistence resources. Although the commercial exploitation of some subsistence resources (e.g., Nelson Island herring) is highly controversial, the current trend in regional economic development is toward increasing importance of and reliance upon a still developing commercial fishery. Residents of the study area are understandably concerned about projected OCS development in the region as it might adversely affect this development.

3) The interface between reliance on traditional subsistence goods and the products of wage employment. There are definite limits on cash employment in the smaller coastal communities of the study area. At the same time there is a critical need for cash to support an increasingly expensive subsistence pattern, involving modifications in the traditional pattern, such as the use of **snowmachines**, oil stoves, and electric freezers. Villagers are beginning to feel that they can ill afford this time-saving but fuel-hungry equipment. At present, there exists a precarious balance between subsistence activities and cash employment. If future economic development fails to make cash available to the villages, this will cause as much hardship to the study population as damage to their subsistence base.

- 4) The economic significance of subsistence. A cost--benefit analysis of subsistence indicates that at present earned income is largely plowed back into exploitation of **local** resources, rather than being used to replace subsistence resources with a store-bought equivalent. Also, given **the** features of village economic systems described above, it would be impossible to purchase a replacement for what the **land** and sea provide in the study area.
- 5) Current trends in subsistence utilization patterns, including resource availability regulation and utilization. The effects of federal and state regulation of bird and sea **mammal** hunting, as well as fishery management, have been discussed. **At** present, the conflict between Native **priority** and government policy is focused on such issues as the international migratory bird controversy as **well** as the development of harvesting regulations for the **Nelson** and **Nunivak** island musk ox herds.
- 6) Regional attitudes toward economic development. Focusing on the increasing awareness of the communities in the study area of the implications of projected OCS development, the question arises as **to** whether or not an **areawide** stand toward anticipated impacts of OCS exploration and development can be identified. Some non-Native and Native **business-**oriented individuals and organizations, located both in the regional center of Bethel and in **the villages,** perceive economic development coincident with OCS exploration and development as beneficial. OCS development is favored because it **might** stimulate construction and improvement in transportation and barge facilities, and in other ways provide a secure economic base for the region.

At the same time, residents fear, and with some justification, that they will receive none of the benefits of oil development (i.e., employment **availability**, job security and increased earning capacity for those already employed), but **all** of the headaches (i.e., social problems, a damaged environment, and the consequent destruction of both the budding commercial fishery and what remains of the traditional subsistence way of life).

The sense of helplessness among the study population in the face of government decisions affecting the future of their resource base may be strong enough in itself to cause a problem, actual development notwithstanding. Yet there is good evidence that projected OCS development is becoming a social and political, as **well** as economic, issue around which local and regional interest groups are organizing. Plans are already being formulated to enable the residents to successfully cope with future development, i.e., vocational programs set up by the local community college in order to provide technical training for individuals who wish to seek full-time wage employment. Also, villagers who might otherwise be unfavorable to development that withholds direct personal benefits may hold a more favorable attitude toward development that they perceive as providing benefits, in the form of increased educational and employment opportunities, for their children. At the same time, a great deal of resentment would result if those same individuals were excluded from either the direct or indirect benefits of such development. **It** is largely the Native rather than the non-Native residents of the study area who presently **lack** the **skills** that would

make them acceptable as oil company employees. **OCS** activity that ignored the possibility of training local Native residents in favor of importing previously trained non-Natives would result in racial tension, disappointment, **and** a great deal of resentment.

7) Sport hunting and fishing. To date, there is **little** competition between sport and subsistence harvesting of fish and game resources in the study area. However, where sport hunting and fishing do exist (**i.e.**, musk ox hunting on Nunivak Island, sport fishing in the vicinity of **Quinhagak**, and, further south, the Goodnews River), there is both a **real** and perceived competition between local use of available resources for subsistence purposes and exploitation of those same resources by non-Native sportsmen. Because of the value that they place on their subsistence resources, both economic and ideological, Nelson Islanders have already worked to exclude non-Native sportsmen from harvesting **local** musk ox. With continued non-Native population influx, this and other comparable conflicts might be seen to escalate.

8) The politics of subsistence. **All** of the above issues come together in the issue of subsistence as it relates to the study area. This is an issue in which **social**, economic, political and cultural aspects are inextricably linked. Appropriately, maintenance of the subsistence way of **life** has become a catch phrase for the retention by the Native population of the study area of continued access to renewable resources, access to **health** and **social** services that support continued residence in remote coastal communities where such resources are

available, control over the content of the formal educational process in order to ensure continued commitment to village life by the younger generation, and a voice in the regulatory process that controls the allocation of renewable resources.

Residents of the study area continue to put their muscle behind the maintenance of the subsistence way of **life** and support economic development **in** the region **only** insofar as it is compatible with and supportive of the continued harvest of the region's renewable resources. At this point in time, the disruption of the harvest of renewable resources, without the provision of an adequate and acceptable replacement, would lead to cultural disintegration, social disruption, and economic disaster.



## APPENDIX I

### Research Design

The data-gathering process that preceded the composition of the **Navarin Basin Sociocultural** Study was **two-fold**, consisting of both library and field research. The two forms of data acquisition were alternated throughout the period of research in order **to** maximize efficiency and feedback potential.

#### LIBRARY RESEARCH

The first step was a thorough consideration of **all** available information in recent publications and resource libraries pertinent to the **sociocultural** systems of both Bethel and the adjacent villages, with special consideration given to the coastal communities running from the mouth of the Kuskokwim north to the mouth of the **Yukon**.

Among the materials consulted during the period of library research, both primary and secondary sources were included. First of **all**, some attempt was made to locate and consult sources of historical and contemporary information in the form of journals (**Oswalt, 1961**), diaries, and letters (**Deschout, 1934-42; Robaut, 1889; Kilbuck, n.d.**; Barnum, **1893, 1894**) written by the men and women who traveled or worked in the study area from the period of historical contact forward. **In** addition, renewed interest by the **Yup'ik** in their own past has spurred historical

research by Native students, including the collection of oral histories. This material, published both by the Yup'ik Language workshop and in the Bethel Regional High School publication Kaliikaq Yugnek (1974-1979) proved extremely helpful in providing background information. Much primary source material, especially documentation of the period of early Catholic missionary activity in the study area, had already been gathered by the principal investigator, and the material was reconsulted in the light of new questions that emerged pertinent to the history and development of the study area. Although the research design by no means allowed time for an exhaustive search of the primary literature of the study area,<sup>1</sup> there was sufficient time **to deal** in a thorough manner with some of the more problematic and relevant issues of regional historical development, e.g., the nature and significance of religious conversion in the early 1900s. Although no nonpartisan first-person accounts exist for the period of historic contact, least of all the missionary accounts, this did not invalidate their usefulness in giving a picture of the early interest groups struggling for social, political and economic control of the study **area**.

The principal investigator also consulted attempts at interpretation of primary material, including **Oswalt (1963b; 1966; 1979)** and Lantis (1950). Since secondary sources dealing with the study area are few and far between, extra-regional sources were often consulted for comparative purposes (Ray, 1975; **Burch, 1975**). Anthropological investigations of life in single villages and culture areas were also employed, including **Oswalt (1963a)** and Lantis (1946).

Other **SESP** studies were used both **to** help the principal investigator define the contours of **sociocultural** analysis in general (**Ellanna, 1980; Payne, 1981**), as well as the scope of work of **sociocultural** analysis in the context of other studies pertaining to the **Navarin Basin** (Alaska Consultants, **1981**). Other documentation that proved **particularly** useful included joint community economic development **plans** (Derbyshire and Associates, **1980**); Department of Community and Regional Affairs village maps (1980); AVCP and Nunam **Kitlutsisti** subsistence data and issues papers (**AVCP, 1980; Sparck and Shantz, 1980**); and the outstanding areawide news coverage and editorial work of the Tundra Drums (1979-1980). Summary accounts, collecting observations and analyzing differences between regions and rates of change in Native communities also proved **useful** (e.g., Human Associates, 1975; **Selkregg, 1974, 1976a and b**).

Finally, several theoretical works were of particular importance in helping the principal investigator **to** organize the material contained in the present document, including **Sahlins (1976); Lévi-Strauss (1962), Schneider (1965), Dolgin et al. (1977), and Geertz (1973)**.

#### FIELD WORK

As preliminary library research in the spring of **1980** and the organization of my own previously gathered field notes were used to determine the boundaries of available information, village visiting and the use of village consultants were subsequently used to identify the weak

points in, and give general evaluations of, the picture of the region that was beginning to develop. At this point, new inter- and **intra-**regional organizations were identified, as well as other sources of village information previously unknown to the principal investigator (i. e., village census data organized by family available in many city offices, corporation land use documentation).

The village visiting consisted of three two-week field trips, in which all of the coastal communities of primary interest in the study area and one village each in the tundra and riverine village groups, were visited. All of these villages had been previously visited by the principal investigator, and it was thus hoped that much could be **accomplished** in a relatively short period of time, with visiting concentrated on the villages with which the principal investigator was least familiar. **Indeed**, the field trips proved to be critical to the success of the research, for although library research had revealed some statistical information pertinent to the area, no recent **ethnography** and **ethnohistorical** accounts existed for any of the coastal communities, aside from the principal investigator's own work (**Fienup-Riordan**, 1976, 1980).

During summer field sessions information was gathered for 14 of the 15 **coastal** communities of primary concern, which divide into five village groups. The remaining villages were considered more generally within the context of adjacent communities (i. e., the tundra villages). These divisions are not arbitrary, but are internally perceived and recognized as valid by the study population. **Intervillage** activity was

specified in all cases, while **intravillage** activity was specified only for the coastal village groups and Bethel. Village descriptions were then put together, including information on village population, community education and health facilities, religious **activity**, employment patterns, subsistence orientation, **plus** outstanding characteristics of each community and village group, such as the **annual** exchange dance between **Tununak** and **Toksook** Bay and the village cannery at Mountain Village.

Field trips were planned so as not to conflict with subsistence and commercial salmon fishing, the two chief activities which reduce village population on the coast in the summer, or with church rallies and dance exchanges in the winter, which although very interesting **allow little** time for casual conversation and information gathering.

The principal means of acquiring information during the village visits were participant observation and informal discussion with the village residents. Participant observation is a fundamental technique of the discipline of anthropology and cross-cultural investigation in general. It implies the acquisition of knowledge about a particular cultural configuration by active means, by doing and taking part, rather than through the object-oriented questionnaire approach which is more controlled and less productive of unanticipated information. Questions were often asked by the principal investigator, but this occurred in the context of informal discussion and **casual** conversation. Thus, during the **village** visits, the principal investigator spent time

observing the **ins and** outs of village life as well as talking informally with villagers ranging in age from **10** to 70 years. The principal investigator also visited city offices, attended meetings and gathered informal testimony on the anticipated direction and effects of future development in the study area.

Finally, as travel by the principal investigator was kept to a minimum, village consultants were relied upon to explore location-specific issues, both while the principal investigator was in the village and after each **village** visit. Phone calls and letters kept the contacts current, as well as visits from the consultants while they were in Anchorage for meetings, shopping, or vacation. This use of consultants was possible because of the principal **investigator's** previous experience and connections in the area. **All** of the consultants were **individuals** who had been dealt with by the principal investigator on both personal and bureaucratic levels. Each was asked to provide information on the characteristics of his or her particular village as **well** as their unique experience of culture change. Also, as participants in an ongoing research project, they were used to keep abreast of village current events and developments (i.e., **local** attitudes toward commercial exploitation of the bottom fishery, salmon prices in Bristol Bay, and the Japanese participation in the herring fishery). Although these are not necessarily oil-related issues, information on them did provide an index of receptivity to change, and attitudes within the different communities toward commercial exploitation of natural resources.

In dealing with the consultants, the following procedure was adopted. There were no general meetings of consultants. However, a letter was sent to each proposed consultant at the end of April 1980 explaining the aim and scope of the **Navarin Basin Sociocultural** Study, and the part they were being asked to play in it. The principal investigator then reviewed the kinds of information needed and asked for suggestions. Also, at this point, inquiry was made into **their** views on OCS development and what these views were based on. At the same **time**, they were informed of the **travel** plans of the principal investigator as well as the proposed timetable for getting together with each of them during the course of the year. Each was encouraged to contact the principal investigator if they had any questions.

The formal employment of consultants as set out in the proposal met with only mixed success. However, the net effect of the contacts that the original **bid** for information initiated was invaluable **to the information-gathering** process on which the final technical memorandum is based. Although a formal consultant was not employed in every coastal community, enough connections were established to enable the principal investigator to check out new issues in previously considered villages with the help of the contacts made during past visits. The need for this kind of feedback relationship in a research situation in which villages could be visited one time and one time only was the moving force behind the original proposal to employ consultants, and as this objective was successfully met through **less** formal channels, the intent if not the **letter** of the proposal was carried through. **In the** end,

the principal investigator cannot overemphasize the value of informal discussions with consultants, friends and acquaintances, both in the villages and in Bethel. As in her work on Nelson Island, almost everything of real significance that was learned, everything that jarred fundamental assumptions as to the significance of the events in the study area, was the product of informal questioning and listening. Whenever possible, proposed explanations and analysis were thrown back **at** friends and acquaintances to see what sense they **could** make of them. While a professional exchange of ideas such as the one between the principal investigator and the OCS personnel helped to focus the research, the exchange with residents of the study area served to continually open up important avenues for consideration.

Bethel, the regional center, was also visited at the beginning and end of each field session, in order to contact agency personnel responsible for areawide human delivery systems, as well as to visit and talk with city personnel and area residents about the community of Bethel itself. Aside from these visits, Bethel was visited independently during October when the Tundra Women's Coalition sponsored the first regional women's conference to be **held** in the state.

In itself, the analysis of Bethel presented a special case of a community as large as all of the coastal villages combined, with a sizable non-Native population, a permanent Native population drawn from many of the smaller villages in the region, and a large transient population, both Native and non-Native. Time did not allow for actual fieldwork



in the regional center nor for long-term participant observation of the Bethel population. However, as in the consideration of the coastal communities, the disadvantages inherent in this relatively short-term study were **to** some extent mitigated by the principal investigator's familiarity with the regional center dating from 1974, with residence there in 1977 and 1978. Extrapolation from prior experience and current contacts was relatively successful, although obviously far from the ideal way to gain a thorough grounding in the complexities of the situation. It was, however, possible to detect many important qualitative and quantitative changes that have taken place over the last **half** dozen years.

Area mental, physical and social health problems were **also** dealt with from the perspective of the regional center through the agencies based in Bethel for the administration of health and social services. Bethel functions as a supply nexus for the delta region. **It** also performs important functions as a **cultural** no-man's land, **e.g.**, drunkenness curtailed in highly conservative villages indulged in **in** Bethel under the fiction of anonymity. Bethel residents therefore experience social problems directly related to problems of adjustment within the outlying villages. The principal investigator attempted to delineate this interrelation between Bethel and the villages, analyzing both the positive and negative effects of the traditional kinship and distributional structure as it is extended to include kinsmen now resident in Bethel. Bethel remains incomprehensible without knowledge of the surrounding villages, and conversely, it is impossible to **fully** understand the

village situation without an understanding of this culturally **viable** loophole.

#### STUDY LIMITATIONS

The information gathered and synthesized for the purposes of this report was brought together under “the theoretical and methodological contours roughly outlined above. However, several constraints were operative throughout the period of both research and analysis. These limiting factors, affecting both research quality and analytical depth, were inherent in the **Navarin Basin sociocultural** analysis from its inception.

In most instances, the principal investigator was well aware of these study limits from the very beginning, and in fact some of the limitations of the present study are endemic to cultural translation in general, i.e., how can an outsider accurately represent the Natives’ point of view such as to make it comprehensible to someone relatively unfamiliar with the cultural milieu of the subject population.

The most severe restriction was inherent in the very definition of the **SESP** technical report as set out in the RFP. By definition, the final technical report was to reflect a literature search, and not the results of direct fieldwork. Contractors were hired for, and must rely heavily upon, past experience in and knowledge of the study area, even when that experience had been directed by questions very different from the ones that they must try to answer for the purposes of the SESP technical report.

Thus, although brief **field** trips were seen as desirable, the **SESP** did **not** have the funding to support extensive primary research, and **contractors** working within the program were directed to secondary source material. In any regional study, this approach presents problems, but in the **Navarin** Basin region the problem of relying on secondary literature is extreme, as very **little** good information, especially data **pertaining** to the coastal communities of the study area, is available. For example, direct information on residents' priorities, recollections, and perceptions of change can be gleaned from neither the existing literature nor short-term field work.

Also, where primary information is available, the time limitations on completion of the study **placed** severe restrictions on its use. For example, there is extensive archival material available on the history of the Bethel **region**, but very **little** has as yet been synthesized, and many of the most telling documents reside in distant archives in the states of Washington, California and Pennsylvania. Although analytical secondary syntheses of the region are rare, even on specific topics, the primary literature on the study area is vast and compelling, and restrictions on its use frustrating. Not the **least** informative (and thankfully easily accessible) is Bethel's healthy, gutsy, weekly newspaper, the Tundra Drums, which continually provided the researcher with insights into regional attitudes and concerns and is **highly** recommended **to** anyone interested in **following** regional development on an ongoing **basis**.

Aside from the time limitation placed on consideration of available primary literature, another disturbing limitation on the present study was the suspect quality of what little statistical information was available on the region. Fish and Game statistics are in some instances valid for the communities of the Yukon delta, where English is more widespread and a larger non-Native population has been in residence. On the coast to the south, however, parents still take great pride if they have a child whose existence is unknown to their kinsmen in the next village, let alone the census personnel. In the RFP it was required that the principal investigator make use of any statistical information available through the Subsistence Section of the Alaska State Department of Fish and Game. Yet the Subsistence Section subsequently contacted the principal investigator to help in gathering **precisely** that data!

A further problem in data acquisition was the establishment of rapport in communities in which the principal investigator had minimal previous experience. Perception, and thus reception, of the principal investigator ranged from **nosey** and threatening to sympathetic and useful. By and large reception of the principal investigator was quite positive, and the two-year-old daughter who accompanied her on field trips was more often an **entré** into information-rich situations than an interruption or distraction. However, the problem of lack of trust of any outsider, regardless of how apparently benign, who comes **to** stay for but a few days in a remote coastal community is a very real limitation on the quality and quantity of information that the principal investigator was able to gather for the purposes of this report.

To end on a positive note, aside from the problems in data acquisition and analysis inherent in the SESP program, SESP was able to provide opportunities for a useful and stimulating exchange of ideas between contractors, and between contractors and **SESP** staff. From the point of view of the principal investigators the SESP staff acted less as censors than as catalysts and springboards. For example, the first field trip in May of 1980 was undertaken in the company of an SESP staff member, Chuck **Symthe**, who was making the trip for the purpose of familiarizing himself with **rural** Alaska in general and the study area in particular. Not only was he **well** received, and the comment made again and again that more Anchorage personnel should follow his example and spend more time visiting the villages, but in trying to introduce the region to him, the principal investigator clarified in her own mind salient features of the region and of coastal communities, that although obvious to her had not previously been perceived as important in writing up an accurate and useful baseline description of the region. **In other** words, the kinds of information most useful for the purposes of **socio-cultural** systems analysis and ultimately for analysis of impacts on those systems, became increasingly clear **in** the course of mutual encounters and discussions. This kind of direct, personal interchange is seen by the principal investigator as an extremely effective **tool** in communicating **sociocultural** information in house. **If** seminar **discussions** were carried on in Anchorage between the contractors and the **SESP** staff as part of the ongoing process in creating a baseline, for the purpose of enriching the staff as much as the contractor, the principal investigator is convinced that the ultimate contours of the finished

baseline studies, as well as the understanding of the different regions by **SESP** staff, would be greatly improved.

## Endnotes

1 Sources not consulted for the purposes of **this** report but of **obvious** interest to persons **seriously** interested in the history of the study area include:

- (a) The archival material contained in the **Alaska** State Historical Library, Juneau.
- (b) **Material** stored at the University of Alaska Library, College, **Alaska**. Here the most important unpublished source of **information** on the study area is Documents Relative to the History of Alaska, which also exists in transcript at the Library of Congress.
- (c) The material contained in the **Moravian** Church Archives, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, including the diaries, manuscripts and letters of John Henry **Kilbuck** and his wife, diaries of Joseph **Romig**, Ernest **Weber**, John **Hinz**, and Benjamin **Helmich**, plus other mission records. **Also** available here is a **complete** collection of the **Moravian** Church **publication**, The Proceedings of the Society of the United Brethren for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen. The Archives are the single most important source of unpublished information for **the Kuskokwim River** area during the American period.
- (d) The papers of the **Moravian** missionary William H. **Weinland**, contained in the Huntington Library, San Marine, California.
- (e) The Pacific Manuscripts of **Ivan** Petroff in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- (f) Statewide periodicals, especially the Tundra Times coverage of the study area, although this is **brief relative to** the large population of the area.

(g) The mimeographed studies and published reports of the Arctic Health Research Center and Alaska Native Health Service.



## APPENDIX II

### Social Structure and Ritual Distribution Among the Nelson Island Eskimo\*

My aim is **to** give a structural account of the **social** and exchange **relations** among the Eskimo of Nelson Island. I have taken as my starting point two **ritual** distributions that **still** occur on Nelson Island, and one **annual** festival, the Bladder Feast, which is no **longer** practiced.

The first ritual distribution is the **seal** party or uqiquq (fr. uqur- "oil, fat" plus -lir- "to be provided with . . ." plus y-quq "one that is . . .," **literally** one that is provided with oil). At the end of **April** or the beginning of May, when the first bearded seal of the year is shot, the first seal party is celebrated. One to a dozen seals are taken daily from then on **until** the end of May. The rule is that a hunter's first **large** bearded seal of the season is brought home to his wife or mother to be cut up and divided among the other women in the village, specifically those to whom the hunter **is** neither **consanguineally** nor **affinally** related. The seal party, whether **given** for husband or son, is a distribution in which women join with their relatives to give to their non-relatives and potential **affines**. The duty of guest as **well** as hostess is **still** performed, without exception, by **all Nelson Island** women, and only by women, as the hunters themselves are excluded.

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\* Paper presented at the 1980 annual meeting of the Alaska Anthropological Association.

Participation is taken as a matter of fact, and one of **the** facts of womanhood. If the seal party is generally described to newcomers as a celebration by a wife for her husband, actually the majority of parties are given for successful sons, not just in the sense of parties by mothers for unmarried sons, but also, as we shall see, parties by wives for husbands, with the husband's mother and mother's sister doing the actual distribution as invited hostess.

In accomplishing a seal party, the freshly killed seal is cut into pieces inside the house and literally thrown out the door, along with an array of goods, including everything from crackers and tea bags to toilet paper and Mexican hats. Strips of cloth are also given, along with pieces of string, strips of seal gut and patches of shoe leather. When the distribution is completed, the women gather up their gifts and go back home.

The second ritual distribution that provided me an **entré** into the cosmological system of the **Qaluyaarmiut** was the winter dance distribution in which it is said that men and women fight each other through the dance. In this winter exchange, men and women divide into two groups to prepare secret dances for the presentation. Yet paradoxically each dance needs both a "husband" and a "wife." Thus, when it comes time for the men to dance, two men perform as a couple, one as "husband" and the other as "wife." Both are necessary in order to effect the singing in of the gifts. While the "wife" dances, her "husband" comes in with a herd of dancers behind him, carrying in gifts after each

dance. Thus, **in** the context **of** a dramatic opposition and separation between the sexes, the whole village divided along sex lines, the groups are mediated through impersonation of men by women and in the alternate dance **sequence**, of women by men, in order that the gifts may be sung in. **Also**, this exchange dance joins as husband and wife **precisely** those women who were opposed as non-relatives in the spring seal party.

The seal party proper is preceded by two very significant events, the gift of pieces of raw blubber and meat to scrambling children outside the village, and the drink of fresh water given to the seal inside the village. This drink of fresh water is critical to the recycling between the world of the **seals** and the world of men. The drink is given the dead **seal** that its **soul** may leave its body, and it is equivalent to the drink of water that is given the human child when it is named, thus becoming the vessel of human spiritual essence.

**Qaluyaarmiut** children are usually given the name of someone who has lived long and who has recently passed away. Names are said to pour in from the dead, as a way of remembering them. The verb base yungcar- (to treat medicinally) originally meant to rename in an effort to cure. Conversely, **the verb** base kangingyuq- means "to get very **ill** after someone else has died." Here the **person** getting **ill** wants to acquire the name of the deceased person. Thus, naming was **literally** a life-and-death matter.

The customary procedure for naming is that the name giver enters the house where the mother and child are staying, bringing dried fish, **akutaq**, and a dipper of water (or can of Coca Cola). These are given to the infant. The child's mother drinks the water, sprinkling some on the floor and/or on the head of the child. The name giver will then call the infant with the dead person's name and hand the food to the mother, who takes a pinch of each type of food and throws it on the ground, so "pretending that the dead person was **alive** and letting the infant become the dead person" (Beaver, 1975:36). Thus, a drink to a living child effects a union of human body and soul, while a drink to the dead seal effects a disjunction between them.

Some spiritual essence passes with the name, and in an important way the dead are still believed to live again through their namesake. Thus, an essential scarcity of souls is established. The living have lived before and the dead never finally pass away. Guests are always well treated as they might be relatives. The perpetual collapsing of the generations is captured in the justification given for spoiling children: the inability to discipline their infant "mother" or "father." Alternately parents are warned that if they scold their children too much, the children will lift up the edge of the sea and go back to where they came from!

Finally, when the dead seals cross the border of land between the sea and the village, gifts are given to the children. This space between land and **sea** is a dangerous area, inhabited by corpses and spirits,

**and** men traverse it **at peril**. Yet here the children receive as the dead incarnate, and their eating of raw meat is symbolic of the rebirth of the souls of the dead, who through naming are **alive** in them.

There is also evidence of a cycling between **living** and dead seals, an annual alternation that is vividly embodied in the traditional Bladder Feast that up **until 40 years** ago was still a vital part of the ritual **cycle** of the Nelson Islanders. In late November or early December the bladders of the seals caught during the previous year, containing the souls of the **seals**, were inflated and brought into **the gasgig** (men's house) to be feasted and entertained before they were returned to the **sea, pushed** through holes in the ice and born again.

The Bladder Feast was first and foremost a mid-winter attempt to **call** forth a successful spring. Through the auditory mimicry of spring and the use of new spring hunting equipment, it was a ritual replication of **all** that actually would be enacted in preparation for and accomplishment of the spring hunt. The return of the bladders to the sea through a hole in the ice at the end of the Feast was explicitly recognized as a process by which seals and the seasonal cycle itself were born again.

**The** feeding of the children in the seal party had its structural inversion in the Bladder **Feast**. On the **last** night, before the bladders were sent down under the ice, men and boys, with their faces painted as were the bladders, appeared to frighten women and children. **This** noisy impersonation of the sea? spirits by the men, trying to intimidate the

women who placated them with food, was recorded for the coastal tribes from the Kuskokwim to Seward Peninsula. On Nelson Island, the bladders were said to eat the children in order to ensure provisioning efficacy. **In** the same way, the body of a dead child was sometimes carried by a hunter in **his** kayak in order to draw the seals. This eating of the children is a fundamental reversal of both the structure and intent of the seal party. There **the children** become the ancestral hunters when they pierce the raw meat in celebration of the seal's recapture, **while** in the Bladder Ceremonies the seal's return to the sea is predicated on the children becoming food for the souls of the seals. As the seal's death is equated with human rebirth, through both replication of the reproductive process and the gift of raw meat (metaphorically man) to the wild children that men might be born again as potent hunters, so the seal's rebirth involves the consumption of the socially raw human, the child. **In** the seal party, the children consume the hunter's catch, and so incorporate the hunter, while in the Bladder Feast, men metaphorically consume the children, while the seal spirits are actually believed to do so. Men and the souls of the seals are again equated. In the transference of a name, the child shares food and drink with his namesake, whose spirit comes to reside in him, as in the transference of knowledge in the tale of the boy who went to live with the seals, food was shared between the child and the old tungunug (bearded seal). Both dead humans and **living seals** share food with a child, while living men and seal spirits consume the child. As the seal spirits are treated as equivalent to men, seals are treated as human souls. And on both sides of the equation children eaten or eating are the nexus of the transformation.

Thus there is a continual collapsing on the mechanical **level**, **expanding** on the reproductive **cycle** at the **level** of ideology, and ultimately reinforcing a life-celebrating system by which the same seals and the same humans, through naming and **the** return of the bladders are continually in circulation, each cycle of human generation accomplished through the symbolic regeneration of the seals which are themselves dependent on the human reproductive process for generational continuity. In the spring celebration of the death of the **seal**, raw hunters are "cooked" along with the meat. So in the Bladder Ceremonies, the seals' souls, treated in every respect as the human dead, ultimately consume raw humanity in order to be born again as living animals.

To return to the seal party proper, it is important to bring **in** at this **point** a general discussion of the efficacy of cutting as a means of power transference, and specifically of the power transference effected by **female** cutting, tearing and throwing up and away of parts in the process of rebirth and regeneration. After gifts are thrown to the scrambling children (the human dead incarnate) and a drink is given to the spirit of the dead seal, this is the next significant phase in the process of dealing with the hunter's catch.

In daily **life**, when cutting game, chewing skins or sewing, men and **especially** women constantly find themselves engaged in cutting and biting **animals**. It is an ambiguous act **for** although cutting constitutes a necessary and **vital** activity in sustaining human **life**, at the same time it deals out death to the animals on which it is perpetrated. **In** the

subsistence round, cutting animals, e.g., butchering, was by and large a female occupation. In **ritual** distribution as well, they are the ones to divide and distribute the meat and gifts that are to be given. Young girls employed story knives (yaaruin) as a form of recreation. These they used to cut stylized story pictures into the dirt, relating many of the traditional tales or gulirat in this fashion. One tale recounts the plight of a young girl who has refused all suitors, and so is given a piece of seal blubber as a husband by her angry father. Her mother, however, takes pity on her and gives her a story knife which the girl uses to cut the blubber into the shape of a human boy, which subsequently comes alive and goes home with her as her husband. This efficacious cutting of raw seal that gives birth to a human husband forms a striking parallel to the intent of the cutting and distribution of meat after the spring hunt.

In the transformation of a girl into a woman at the time of her first menstruation, it is precisely this cutting and approximation to raw meat that is prohibited. The prohibitions at the time of puberty underline a parallel between the conversion of a child into a sexually mature and socially potent adult and the separation of **seal** and human body and soul which is accompanied by similar restrictions on use of sharp objects, movements, and the consumption of raw food until the soul is reborn in the annual Bladder Feast for the seals or in the instance of naming for the human spirit. A parallel thus exists between the cycling of persons in the social system and the cycling of souls in the cosmological system. And in both instances, images of biological



**birth** are employed in such a way as to underline the regenerative, pro-creative and cyclical qualities of the transformation.

At puberty, a **girl's condition** approximates that of the fetus, **in** her social invisibility, restriction of movement, and the prohibition against both childhood and adult activities. She is in the social womb, and the end of her girlhood and the beginning of womanhood are clothed in the images of birth.

On the coast, the instance of a girl's first menstruation is referred to as "the putting away of the dolls." These miniature dolls provide a condensed image of the **Qaluyaarmiut** attitude toward the procreative process. They are constructed from wood or ivory and often made with a hole running from **the** head **to** the base of the body, as through their use and their constant recycling the process of human regeneration was accomplished. Young girls were forbidden from using these dolls during the winter or inside the house. Their use was restricted to the outside, and the summer season, marked by the return of the birds. Their dormancy in the interior of the house (**nepiaq** from the base **[e]ne-**, "house" plus the postbase **-piaq** "genuine, . . ."; with postbase **-liaq** "a . . . which is made," **[e]ne-** becomes **neliaq** womb, lit. made house) during the winter, and their emergence in the summer as the plaything of immature **girls** replicates both the transformation of **their** owners through puberty restrictions into women **capable** of **giving** birth and the birth process itself. It seems **only** appropriate that a **girl** would be required to put away her **irniaruag** (lit. pretend child) between the

time she could play with it and the time when she could produce her own.

The significance of the birth metaphor, simultaneously figuring into the process of human transformation and the freeing of the souls of the seals in the seal party, can be clarified by reference to the symbolism of holes as entrances and exits between the world of the living and the world of the dead. The human birth process is explicitly equated with the exit from the inside of **the house to the outside**.

Throughout pregnancy, women are admonished to go through the doorway as quickly as possible, that the child's exit from the mother (**caqun**, lit. device for wrapping, from mother's womb) will be expedited.

As the individual house **[e]ne** is the domain of the woman, as work space as well as living space, the doorway (traditionally an underground passageway and porch) leading from its interior is treated as an icon of the exit from the womb. The words **anelgun** (peer, one who emerged at the same time), **anenerrag** (newborn child) and **anutiig** (birthday, lit. anniversary of one's emergence) all derive from the base **áne-** (go out). Thus the entire female domain is equivalent to the womb from which the infant emerges, as well as the social womb from which the child emerges into adulthood. Further recall the designation of spring as the time of the cutting open of doors (Barnum, 1896:49). Thus, emergence from the human habitation, and metaphorically from the human body, is synonymous with a particular seasonal transition as **well**. Spring is given as an explicit period of reopening, rebirth, and renewal.

Beyond the cutting of raw meat and taking it through the doorway, the act of throwing also has special significance. Throwing things up has the effect of freeing a spiritual essence, and in the case of the seal party the throwing of the pieces of raw meat frees the soul of the **seals**. The human soul moves upward through a **hole** in the roof of the house or storehouse when death releases **it** from the human body. The corpse itself is removed from the house through the skylight. During the funeral, a widow **will** both throw ashes (ghosts cannot cross ashes) and cut across her trail with a knife as she follows the corpse to the place of burial to ensure that the soul of her husband leaves his body, and their family, in peace. Finally, mistreated or deserted children are said to be freed from their human form and transformed into birds with the power of flight as a release from their predicament. Disobedient children, on the other hand, sink into the thin earth surrounding the village, if they attempt to traverse the perilous tundra. Thus, we see a cyclical movement between the spirit world, the world of the living and the **world** of the dead, effected by throwing things up inside the village **and**, alternately, sinking down outside the village.

As the house has **been** likened to the womb, and normal exit from it synonymous with birth, entrances to this **social** space must be considered. To enter or come into a dwelling is referred to as pug'uq. In the winter, before the cutting open of the summer doorway, the entrance into a Native house is by a **small**, sloping tunnel, which ends at a circular shaft extending up to the **floor**. This opening, which is generally about three feet deep, is termed the pugyaraq (Barnum, 1901:306). It is

here that the spirits of the human **dead wait to enter** the men's house during the Feast for the Dead or to receive their **daily** libations. It is also in this tunnel that the spirits of the seals come to consume the children at the close of the Bladder Ceremonies, and that the dancers wait in order to sing in their gifts during the annual exchange dance. When a seal bobs up or emerges from the water, this is also described as pug'uq. One grandmother was describing the day when she went under the water (was baptized) and her grandson jokingly inquired, "Then where did **you pug'uq (come up)?**" Thus as spring exit is synonymous with **birth**, the winter entrance is a means of rebirth into the **world** of the living by the spirits of the human dead. Again the human dead and living seal, human rebirth and animal death, are equated, and a continual, annual cycling between them is established.

The dead were traditionally buried in the fetal position, "doubled up and rolled into a perfect ball" (Fox, 1926) and dressed for the eternal hunt. As the seal's body is given the same respect as the human dead, so the human **body** was likened to a seal. It was wrapped in seal skin and tied into a bundle with several yards of seal skin **thong**. Then it was dragged out of the house, usually through the skylight, placed on a sled, and on top of it were thrown all the dead's belongings. A woman followed the corpse carrying a wooden dish **full** of ashes which she threw behind her across the trail of the sled, after which she slashed the air with a knife. By this sequence she reversed the **seal** party process of first cutting and then throwing the meat. Finally, after the body was placed in a wooden coffin, the rope was retrieved.

As the throwing of the goods approximates the intent of the seal party to effect a disjunction of body and soul, the retrieval of the life **line**, as **it** is called, **iconic** of the **umbilicus**, seems crucial in a belief system which celebrates not life after death but **return** to life (rebirth) of the dead.

This image of cutting the umbilicus to free the seal or human soul is not **only** present in the funeral ceremony but in the bits of cloth and string cut and thrown at the **seal** party. Whereas the strips of cloth given at the seal party are a miniature form of the bolt of cloth spread out for display during the dance, and are in a part-for-whole relation to it, the patchwork quilt that reappears during the succeeding dance distribution is a qualitative transformation of the bolt. **In** the same way, the gut parkas worn during the traditional Bladder Feast and by the shaman during his spiritual hunting **trips** were constructed from the strips of dried gut distributed in the seal party. **What** is introduced into the exchange system (e.g., the bolts of cloth and **rolls** of gut) during the winter dancing will **be** taken apart, cut and distributed for the spring seal party. Alternately, the articles that exit from the **cycle** during the winter distribution (such as bedspreads and rain parkas) are a fabrication from seal and seal party **parts**. Here seasonal and ritual cycling are equated with a movement between taking apart (cutting and tearing) and fabrication.

Cutting and fabrication by a woman were seen as ambiguous **acts, dangerous** in improper contexts. Both were prohibited at puberty. Cutting

in the seal party, as we have seen, effects a disjunction of seal body and soul. In the winter Bladder Ceremony's prohibition against sewing, along with the distribution of goods previously sewn, there is a re-joining but with an important difference. Cutting cloth and seal meat in the spring and throwing them through the door had generative efficacy (producing the potent hunter) and were analogous to cutting the umbilicus and giving **birth**. Fabrication, on the other hand, putting these torn pieces back together again inside the house, the social womb, was a winter activity analogous to gestation (**prebirth**) or rebirth, as everything born has lived before and **will** live again.

Cycling on the material plane thus parallels the cycling of persons in the social system, the seasonal cycle, and finally the cycling of souls in the cosmological system, with images of biological birth employed in such a way as to underline the regenerative, procreative, and cyclical qualities of the distribution. Thus in the dance, instead of cloth and raw seal cut and thrown out the doorway, itself cut open in the spring, the goods are brought in whole and "cooked" through the winter entrance and distributed inside the house, symbolic of the entry of the seal spirits and the return of the spirits of the human dead. As spring exit is analogous to birth, the winter entrance is a means of rebirth into the world of the living by the spirits of the human dead. **In** this simple opposition between cut and whole cloth and between raw pieces of meat and whole skins or pokes full of oil, the human dead and living seal, human birth and animal death are equated and the cycling that we saw on the cosmological plane is established on the material plane as well.

### APPENDIX III

#### Family Histories

The following **family** histories are by and large self-explanatory. Two **comments**, however, are necessary. First, the families have been roughly divided according to an "economic" criterion (i.e., high-income family, moderate-income family, and low-income family). Several other criteria are obviously at work **in** their differentiation. These criteria include family spread, family age and general family orientation (the **older**, more traditional Yup' **ik-speaking** Georges, as opposed to the younger, somewhat more emancipated **Petes**). What the reader should keep in mind, however, is that although the families differ considerably, and give a fair representation of some of the variation that exists in the villages of the study area, they are more similar than **dissimilar**, especially **when it** comes to economics. For **all** their wealth and **power**, the **Georges** do not live **all** that differently from the Petes or the **Daniels**. This equation is the product of village-wide and **intravillage** reciprocity networks. Thus, while the **Georges** have more wealth, they also have more obligations to meet, not just to maintain their immediate family, but to share their bounty with the community.

Second, the families presented are not actual families **but** are **carefully** modeled after families with whom the author has **long** been familiar. Names, numbers of offspring, and details of personal history have been changed to protect individual identities. **It** is not **felt**, however,

that this editorial license detracts from the validity of the family histories as examples of types of household situations.

THE GEORGE FAMILY

HIGH INCOME

Mrs. George had 15 children, and 12 are **still** alive, the oldest a boy of 26, and the youngest a **girl** of 6, with a good mixture of boys and girls in between. She says that some ladies have just girls and some just boys, but that she is lucky enough to have both kinds. She is proud of her kids and glad that it can be different for them than it was for her while she was growing up. Then, she says, it was work, work, work. Her father died when she was very young.

After that, she stayed, with her mother and her little brother in a traditional sod house. She said it used to get cold in those **old** mud houses, but that her mother used to let her sleep in the smokehouse by the little fire that dried the fish in summer. Sometimes her mother joined her there. When she was 13 she went up to the mission school at **Akulurak**. Laughing, she says that she learned a lot there, about God and gardens, **but** no arithmetic. Three years later she came home when her mother remarried and she was needed to help with younger brothers and sisters. That was hard, that time. Everybody had TB, including her mother. That lady could not do any work, so Mrs. George had to do for the whole family. Three years later she says she was glad to get married. She was only **16**, but that was old enough, and besides, she says, "**I'd** been chosen by my kid's dad and **I** had to go with him, even if I didn't want to. My mother let me go anyway."



Then she had **kids every** year for a long time. She was lucky. Most of them **lived**. Only **Martina died in** the hospital of leukemia. **She** started staying **at** the hospital in Anchorage when she was two and died when she was **just** three. Mrs. **George** went **in** to visit her **once**. The doctors wanted the whole family to **move** in to be with her, but her husband didn't want to, and **Martina** died. Ralph died when he was six. He went to Bethel to have his tonsils out and then the doctors sent him home **early**. **He** started bleeding, but it was too late, and he died. Since then she **has** never liked sending kids to the hospital.

But Mrs. George is no sentimentalist. She talks about the dead without regret and about the living with a fine sense of human fallibility. She says she was **lucky** in her husband. Her mother had told her that if she married him she **would** never be poor or hungry **again**, and it was **true**. His energy matches hers, and together they fill two freezers every summer, with fish and birds, along with barrels of berries and **salted fish**. Her storehouse is neat and **full**, and she is the only woman in the village who has enough **put** up to be able to **sell** some to hungry whites.

Thus, the George family is **ample** in both members and resources. They **live** together in **BIA** housing with running water and electricity. But of **all** the houses in the village, theirs is the **only** one with **an** extension built on the **back**, creating a second **living** space **bigger** and more **lavish** than the open eating room in the **front**. **It** has couches and a big stuffed chair, rugs and a **clutter of comic** books and pop **cans**.

Pictures of **all** the living children cover **the wall**. The children who passed away are pictured in the kitchen over the old **couch** that backs the table and benches of that busy space.

As it is now, the house sleeps 13: Mr. and Mrs. George, Mr. George's mother, the nine youngest children, and the eldest daughter. The second eldest son is in his second year at the University of **Alaska** in Fairbanks, and the third in line (a girl) was married in the fall of **1978** and has set up her own small household, already complete with child. Mrs. George's mother and step-father are still living, and are in the house for at least one meal a day, although they live in their own 8- by 10-foot plywood house 100 yards away.

Although Mrs. George's parents eat with their daughter and her family, they do not work directly with her. Rather, Mrs. George's mother directs her son's wife in herring processing, seal butchering, and berry gathering, whatever seasonal task needs to be done. **Mrs.** George, on the other hand, works under the direction of her mother-in-law, an equally exacting task master.

In the same way, Mr. George does not hunt with Mrs. George's brother, but rather with his sons or his own mother's brother's son, his first cross-cousin. These two men have a long-standing, intense and jocular relationship, which they carry over into the **commercial** fishing season, being joint owners of a small commercial gill-netter. Mrs. George's brother, on the other hand, hunts primarily with his wife's unmarried

brother. **Mr.** George has two **other** step-sisters in the village, but both of these individuals and their families work on their own. They bring regular informal gifts of meat and agutak to their step-mother, and let their children visit her at the **Georges'**, but have no working relationship with her.

Having such a large **family**, **Mrs.** George's life is circumscribed within the home. With the help of her eldest daughter, she is responsible for butchering the seals and game brought back by her husband and five adult sons. The four remaining girls are between six and **13 years** of age, and are only just beginning to help with the arduous job of processing the catch. Yet even in the last few years, they have been old enough to **do** the housework and dishes, as **well** as to babysit for their younger cousins.

Meals are the liveliest times of the day at the George household, taking several hours with sometimes as many as **20** people **all** crowding into the kitchen/dining/living space at once. The table is **large** and takes up half the room, but still it cannot hold everyone. The grandparents, parents, and any of their friends who may be visiting eat first at the table, usually fresh seal soup or dry fish with seal **oil**, followed by a huge pot of tea and pilot bread or fried pancakes. When they are done, they move to the couches under the window by the stove and the young men and children crowd around the **table** for their share. No one goes away hungry, as more dried fish can always **be** brought in from the storehouse or out of the freezer **if** the soup runs **out**. **Mrs.** George

usually cooks one big pot of soup a day for the mid-day meal, boiling water and filling the pot with large chunks of fish and game, often up to 25 pounds for one meal. The evening meal is dried fish, with the younger girls clearing the table and feeding the bones to the dog, Elvis. Frozen beef or a canned alternative never make up the main course, although store-bought eggs are sometimes fried for the children for breakfast.

Apart from meal times, the house during the rest of the day is somewhat less crowded, although never empty. Early in the morning Mr. **George** will go to check the ice conditions and the wind and tide. If the weather looks promising, he will go in search of his partner. By **8:30**, the younger children go up to the BIA elementary school, or to the new village high school. Also in the morning, the **older** boys are either off hunting or up at the community center working in the city offices. All are high school graduates, two from Bethel Regional High School and one from East High in Anchorage. When at home later in the afternoon, they gather in the back bedroom with their schoolmates to play guitar or rest up for the evening movie at the show hall.

Aside from Mr. George's mother, who is always at home, Mrs. George is the most constant occupant of the house. But three afternoons, as regularly as clockwork, seal butchering or no, she is up at the community hall for a five-hour spate at bingo, and then **likely** over to a friend's house for dried fish and tea. **In** the evenings, she may take a steam bath with her husband or a friend, or more likely go to the movies with her children.

When the **film is** over, everyone comes home to eat and sleep. At **11:00** at **night** the **dried** fish and **oil** are brought **out** again, and then Mr. and Mrs. George retire to the **large** back bedroom while the younger girls **crawl** up to their beds in the attic. Mr. George's mother **also** has her own room separated off from the main **living** space by a plywood partition on one side and piles **of** cardboard packing boxes filled with clothes, skins and supplies" on the other. The boys share a large fold-out couch on the main **floor** of the house on a first-come, first-served basis, with the rest spreading sleeping bags out on the floor in the **living** room. **It** is highly unlikely that the occasional midnight drunk pounding on the door **could** make **it** to the back of the house without raising a ruckus.

The George **family** is a fortunate one in many respects. **Not** only do they have a large and healthy family, but **also**, in these days of rising prices, most of their children are now **old** enough to be contributing members of the household. Even the 8-year-old has been gathering berries with her mother and grandmother for the last three seasons. The older **girls also** haul water and braid fish, hanging them to dry on racks down by the beach. The boys are **all** capable hunters and fishermen and bring **in** a constant supply of fresh fish and game. This means added work for the women, and indeed, Mrs. George's **lot** is not an easy one. But the rewards are great, too, as hers is a household that may boast as many as six **seal** parties each spring, each one **bigger** than the one before.

The **Georges** are rich in cash as well as in subsistence products. In fact, their unusually high income is the reason they are able to accumulate such a large amount of fish and game. This high income is not from full-time or even part-time employment in the village. Rather, Mr. George is fortunate enough to have a Bristol Bay fishing permit. With younger boys as crew members during June and July, he nets as much as \$50,000 each August. "

Yet, although the revenue from this family fishing venture is high, the costs of village life are equally immense. Ten thousand dollars annually is spent on stove oil, only some of which can be bought from the incoming barge in **June**. Another \$6,000 per annum minimum pays for the pilot bread, tea, sugar, coffee and **Crisco** that regularly supplement their meals. Also, gas must be purchased to fuel the five **snow-**machines and two outboard motors that leave the village on a daily basis, taking the hunters out from the village in search of game, and occasionally in the summer when the weather is calm, 20 miles into the Bering Sea. Airplane tickets are another regular expense, as the boys pay their way to Bristol Bay, with a stopover in Anchorage on the way home. Mr. and Mrs. George, accompanied by several of the older boys, also come into Anchorage for shopping before Christmas, if the fishing season is particularly good and there is cash enough for the trip.

Mr. George also travels in and out of Bethel at **least** once a month in the summer, and more often in the winter, for innumerable meetings. He is a board member of the regional nonprofit corporation, the regional

health corporation, as well as the **city** council and village corporation. **In** fact, **Mr.** George is **one** of the most influential and well respected leaders in his village. The same energy and intelligence that have made him a successful hunter have also made him a successful leader. **Mr.** George is not a **loud** man. Nor is he very old. He seldom **talks** in church or at the city council meetings, but when he does, he is listened **to**. He is an extremely proud man, and skeptical enough of the improvements that have come to village life in the **last** 20 years, and the value of the personal **wealth** he has been fortunate enough to acquire, to remain a staunch traditionalist. He is a conservative who measures every change in village life in terms of perceived benefits as **well** as the costs, both human and environmental. His linguistic competence is a metaphor **for** his attitude toward the white man's world: **Mr.** George **will** speak no English, but he understands it.

Mr. George has thrown his political weight, which is substantial, on the side of the old ways, whenever possible. This does not mean that he has kept his children out of the schools or his wife confined to the village in fear of what exposure to the white man's **world** might bring. The children **all** are, or **will** be, high **school** graduates, the older ones finishing with honors. And his **wife** has performed **traditional** dances and played bingo **up** and down the coast. The **Georges** are neither shy nor **naive**, nor has good fortune made them narrow and **self-serving**. **To** be **Yup'ik** for them is **to** share what the present provides, and to keep the past forever in front **of** you, as traditionally the good hunter always kept in his mind the image of the **seals** upon which he

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depended. As Mr. and Mrs. George remember from their own growing up, you will need in your turn, and no bank account is as dependable as the land and your relatives.

THE PETES

MODERATE INCOME

The Pete household does not present nearly the generational depth of the **Georges'**. Neither is it so large, nor so well provided for. The core of the household consists of Mr. and Mrs. Pete, in their mid- and early 30s, respectively, and four children, three young boys and one 10-year-old daughter. Mr. Pete's adoptive mother and father live alone, and visit the household of their real son, Mr. Pete's stepbrother, more often than they do the household of their adoptive son. As for Mrs. Pete's side of the family, her father passed away when she was four. Her mother remarried, yet passed away soon after. Mrs. Pete then went to live with her mother's sister, who died over a dozen years ago. Mrs. Pete feels little loyalty to her stepfather and stepsiblings, although **all** of them live in the village. She does, however, have an older brother who, although reared in a different family, also lives in Mrs. Pete's village, and with whom she is still closely allied.

Mrs. Pete moved to her present home shortly after she was married, when she was just 18. Before that she had completed three years of elementary school in her home village, but at 14 she had been sent to Anchorage for a TB rest. From there she was sent to **Mt. Edgecumbe**, where she stayed for over a year. She has some merry stories to tell



of sneaking down to the kitchen for "midnight snacking, " but other than that, few fond memories remain of that period, during which time she was constantly homesick. Like other adults of her age group, whether they have stayed in the hospital or not, she is fluent in English, as are her children.

Mr. Pete's mother is also an important figure in the Pete household. This aggressive and energetic matron directs most of the activities of her daughter-in-law, and critically evaluates their results. Yet what could be a tense situation, as Mrs. Pete is of the younger generation and not inclined to follow all of the tedious requirements of the old school (especially the requirement that she spend most of her time at home and rarely be seen out in the village), is actually quite relaxed. For Mr. Pete's mother is too busy with her own social activities (bingo, dancing, basket making, steam bathing, midnight card playing, etc.) to oversee directly the work of her daughter-in-law. Thus, Mrs. Pete is left on her own, and only occasionally does her moderate shirking and immoderate gallivanting reap the ire of her elder. Also, Mr. Pete's parents have their own home and are only occasional visitors to the household.

One of the reasons that Mr. Pete's parents give for rarely sharing meals with the Petes is that Mrs. Pete rarely cooks. In fact, Mrs. Pete, not being in command of sons old enough to bring in fresh fish and game on a regular basis, cannot afford to "cook" every day. Dried fish is often served for both lunch and dinner. Or if dried fish does not suit,

Mr. Pete goes to the store and brings home Spaghetti -o's and cookies for the children, while he and his wife share a small pot of beef stew. Mrs. Pete wishes she had more and is never stingy with what she does have. Being the mistress of a bounteous larder has all the rewards that might accrue to being the mistress of a bounteous wardrobe in the city. Yet with food it is the giving, not the having, from which the satisfaction is derived.

Mrs. Pete, being by nature extremely gregarious, more so than many a better-endowed villager, makes up for the limitations of her larder by simply hosting her female friends for tea instead of for a full meal. Likewise, her husband often brings home a friend for a cup of coffee, or to give him a teaspoon of Native willow ash to make a tobacco quid. Also, as the Petes' house is pleasantly uncluttered with authority figures, and in a central **location** within the village, many of the high school age villagers, especially Mr. Pete's young nephew and his friends, come there after school to visit, play cards, and warm their feet before setting off for their houses. Thus, the **house is rarely** empty, or without a merry chatter. Yet it is altogether a younger set which congregates there. Conversely, unlike the **Georges'** household, respected village elders only occasionally visit, as if to check up on the party.

The Pete family is peripheral to village political life and decision-making. Mr. Pete waits to be told when to stop fishing just as Mrs. Pete waits to be told when the storehouse is full and enough has been put

up to last through the winter. The **children** participate in the mid-winter dance distribution only if their grandmother sees fit. **If they** do dance, grandmother also informs them who will be their partners, and what gifts they must bring. **When** the youngest boy catches his first **seal**, which event is not far off, it **will** be his grandmother who **will** orchestrate the celebration in his honor, although Mr. and **Mrs.** Pete will be required to provide the requisite gifts. In fact, besides the expenses of daily village life (fuel, food, and occasional clothing and equipment), the purchase of these gifts (a **seal** party celebration runs to \$200), accounts for a considerable portion of the cash outlay of the family. However, as they receive in their turn, the initial expense **is** somewhat defrayed. The celebrations given in the name of the accomplishments of their children are one of many indicators of the real affection and pride the Petes **feel** for them. This affection does not, however, often take the form of buying things for the children. As with food sharing, the honor is in the giving.

**Mr.** Pete's income is limited, and just **barely** sufficient to meet the demands made on **it**. As it stands, their house is sparsely furnished, and only on rare occasions do new objects appear. But although the linoleum is cracked and peeling, and the window pane patched over with cardboard and glue, the house is neat and cheerful. Three back bedrooms are partitioned off from the **12** by **12** living space in **the** front of the **house**. The beds are wooden platforms, with foam pads covered over with patched but clean blankets. **A** cotton curtain separates the rooms, and marks them off from the front **of the** house. Three guns hang

over the back wall, but the rest of the hunting and fishing gear is kept in the entryway, along with the freezer and a Coleman stove, which is used for most of the cooking. Heat is provided by a large oil-burning stove, usually sufficient to **keep** the house warm even in the windiest weather.

**Mr.** Pete's weekly paycheck "is never more than \$100, even in the summer when he is able to take over some of the minor village jobs left vacant by the men who have gone commercial fishing. Mr. Pete has no commercial fishing permit, as his stepfather did not bequeath one to him, and he was too young and too much on his own to be fishing **at** the time when most middle-aged men were earning the requisite points. He works erratically within the village, sometimes as city phone operator, sometimes as janitor for the community hall and during the summer he helps unload the incoming barges. The family receives no welfare, although they have in the past occasionally gotten food stamps. Mr. Pete would like to start a business of his own and did in fact open a small store in his living room, where he sold pop and candy bars before movies at the community **hall**. However, he had trouble getting supplies, could not compete with the owner of the **local** show hall and gave up after several months. Finally, with a relatively hand-to-mouth growing up, Mr. Pete had no opportunities for **formal** education, let alone the training that would enable him to practice a trade. He is not even a member of the **local** National Guard, and so does not get the additional income attendance at their winter training camps brings in for other village families.

Mr. Pete's **chief** occupation **is** that **of** hunter. In another half **dozen** **years** he **will** have the **help** and comradeship of his sons, but right now **he** hunts chiefly with his stepmother's brother's son. These two men are both fairly proficient and **fairly** energetic hunters, although never **the** first **in** the village to bring home **seal**, nor the ones to harvest the most fish. The two of them could probably manage a bigger catch. The problem is that Mrs. Pete cannot butcher and preserve more than she already does. Even with this limitation, what they have is just enough in a good year. This is impressive, as besides their own household and some provision to **Mr.** Pete's parents, they also provide fresh stores for Mrs. Pete's elder brother's household. For Mrs. Pete's brother, weakened by TB in the 1950s, is neither able to work in the **village** nor to hunt on a regular basis. **Also**, although her **sister-in-law** is an efficient worker, and **would help** Mrs. Pete if she **could**, most of her energy is spent on her six children, ranging in age from 3 to **13**. The only income the family receives is Aid for the Disabled and, occasionally, food stamps. Mrs. Pete's brother does do some summer fishing as **well** as spring and fall seal **hunting** and bird hunting. But, like Mr. Pete, he has no sons old enough **to** accompany him. **Occasionally** he is accompanied by his brother-in-laws but normally he works alone. His chief pleasure is carving, on which **he** spends much time, yet with very **little** financial reward.

Mrs. Pete's brother is generally recognized as the proverbial "nice" man, never **overly** presumptuous, a follower, not a **leader**. Had he been otherwise, a frustrated middle-aged man always striving to be **listened**

to but with no kindred to be his audience, the community might well have shunned him as presumptuous, if not ridiculous. Villagers are not seen as individuals, as much as embodiments of their position within a complicated web of kinship. If they begin to think and act themselves other than they are by village reckoning, certainly gossip, and occasionally ostracism, may result.

As it stands, the household of Mrs. Pete's brother is even more peripheral to the village than the Petes', as the parents of Mrs. Pete's brother's wife are long since dead, and she has no living brothers and sisters. Their only firm connection to the village is through the Petes, and they lean on that connection heavily. Their self-respect suffers, but there is no evident resentment on the part of the Petes, and in fact a real sense of pride on Mr. Pete's part in having successfully shouldered such a responsibility. There are other cases in the village of families where one of the parents is relatively unconnected and the immediate family of the opposite spouse is heavily relied upon. Most of the leaned upon take the situation in stride, and there are very few instances of even a marginally well-to-do family ignoring the demands of their less fortunate kindred. In the case of Mr. Pete's support of his brother-in-law, the affection between the two siblings, and the easy-going, unambitious character of both husbands makes the situation work.

Neither family is bound for glory, Both sit precariously near the edge, one slightly closer than the other. They have nothing to bequeath their

children **but** their **love**. **But of this** there is plenty. Also, rather than thinking **of** themselves as poor whites, they have **the** very **real** advantage **of** perceiving themselves, in relation to their past, as rich **Yup'iks**. **Finally**, theirs is a rich **village**, **well** situated for **both** summer and winter subsistence harvesting. **It** is not so **small** that no cash employment is available, nor is **it** so **large** that the traditional **redistributive** mechanisms are defunct. Socially the village is **like** a house with many rooms. What comes in the front door circulates throughout. **While** the **Petes** and their **in-laws** might fare marginally in a more isolated location, as it stands, they do **well**.

#### THE DANIEL HOUSEHOLD

#### LOW INCOME

**Mr. Daniel** was born in **1917**. He and his younger brother and sister were **left** orphans in the **early 1930s** and **were** reared in different households and in different villages. **Mr. Daniel** was taken in by his mother's brother's family. They made **him** work hard, and babysit **for** their own young children. He never had time for school but did spend his **late** teens reindeer herding down the **coast**.

Mrs. Daniel was born in the late **1920s** and is **10 years** his junior. She says that she has **lived** through six counts, meaning censuses. She was born at fish camp and moved with her mother and older brother **to** a **winter** village **inland** away from her **parents'** home when her mother died and her father remarried **later** that year. That **is** where **Mr.** and Mrs. Daniel were married in **1948**. The union was arranged by **Mrs.** Daniel's

stepfather and a distant relative. Mr. Daniel came up the coast from Bethel, and stayed the fall in the village. They were married in the spring and continued to live in the 10- by 10-foot traditional sod house with Mrs. Daniel's mother and unmarried brother. Their son, John, was born a year later.

In all, Mrs. Daniel has had 14 children; five of them are alive today. She says the family would be rich **if** they had all lived, but that "measles, the bad cough, and accidents took them away to heaven." Mr. and Mrs. Daniel are themselves lucky to be alive. **In** the early 1950s both were sent to Seattle for extended TB treatment. Mr. Daniel stayed there for two years and Mrs. Daniel for three. They could visit each other, but they had to leave their three oldest children at home with Mrs. Daniel's mother. The youngest they never saw again. Those were hard times.

Not long after the couple returned to the old village, the entire community relocated to the site of the new 61A school and present village. Some federal houses were constructed, but the **Daniels** remained in a small one-room frame structure, heated by an oil drum wood stove and insulated during the winter by snowdrifts. Until the two eldest boys grew to young adulthood and **could** contribute significantly to the **fam-ily** larder, the hard times remained, as Mr. Daniel, weakened by TB, was unable to hunt, and no jobs to speak of were **available** in the tiny village, at that time numbering just over 100 people. When **John, their** pride and joy, came of age, the tide turned somewhat. A year **later**



John died in a boating accident. Yet soon their third son, Paul, began to hunt. Two years later, he married and began having children of his own. Although the two **families'** resources were finally on the upswing, so were the demands placed upon them.

So far Paul is the only **child** to marry. His younger sister (by one year), Martina, still lives with her parents. She left the village for high school in Anchorage, living with foster parents for four years, whom she **still** remembers and writes to at Christmas. After graduation she went to the Seward Skill Center for training, but after four months gave it up and came back **to** the village. She is the only member of the family with any extended experience of living outside the village (aside from her parents' stay in the hospital), and at this point has no desire or intention to ever leave home again. All of the other children are **still** at home and still in school. Even the 17-year-old attends the new local high school. The youngest child is in the fourth grade. **As Paul's** eldest boy is in first grade, there is no break between generations. The joint households number **11**, including two married couples and seven children. Although the **Daniels'** frame house has had a back bedroom added onto the rear, Paul and his wife and two eldest children **sleep** in their own **small** one-room house next door. **All** meals are eaten together in the parents' house, and **all** food stores are **held** in common.

The village **in** which the **Daniels** and their children live is **small** and quiet. There is no T.V. reception, and the **pool hall** and an occasional

movie are **the** only recreational outlets. When Mr. Daniel and the children leave the house to enjoy these events or just to get fresh air, as they say, Mrs. Daniel often sits alone, defining her own private place with a pack of cards, playing solitaire, literally. An intruder might **well** be surprised at the dirt and barrenness of this **small** space, which only fully reveals itself when its human occupants have deserted. **There are a table and three chairs**, plus the three wooden beds that line the walls. Mrs. Daniel sits on the floor with her back against the wall and her legs straight out in front of her, flipping the cards automatically without pause for thought. People say that she is trying to forget her father's death, still quite recent. Her only sister also passed away several years ago, and this was **also** hard on Mrs. Daniel. With her father's passing, her last tie to her stepbrothers seemed to perish. Now she is as alone in the village as the orphaned Mr. Daniel. Certainly they have their children, but among their **peer** group they are very much isolated. There will **be** no one to give the seal party for her youngest son's first seal but herself, a sad thing indeed.

**In** terms of household economy, the isolation of the Daniel family is expressed by a very limited cash flow. Although **Yup'ik** ideology emphasizes giving and sharing as the road to public acclaim, who you give to is a function of who you are related to. As there are only 20 paying jobs in the village, village nepotism dictates that they are concentrated in the hands of three large and relatively powerful extended families. These same families dominate the city council which "political" organism often decides who will receive what CETA position.

Ostensibly because of **Mr.** Daniel's foibles, **but** actually because of **their** lack of powerful relations, the **only** cash-producing post that they have been able to obtain is the position of community hall janitor, which pays Paul \$140 per month. **Of** this, he pays \$34 a month for **\$350** worth **of** food stamps, much of which is used for cookies, pop tarts and diet **cola** for the younger children. Mr. and Mrs. Daniel also receive social security checks each **month**, approximately \$400 each. No one in the **Daniels** family is involved in seasonal **labor** outside the village, although the high **school** aged daughter plans **to** go to work in a **Bristol Bay** cannery this coming summer. One-third of the **Daniels'** **total** joint **family** income is **spent** on stove **oil** to heat the houses and gasoline for their two old **snowmachines**. **Also**, an estimated \$700 goes annually to buy piñot bread and tea, a regular supplement for **all** meals. Very few groceries other than these, plus unspecified amounts of **lard**, coffee and **Tang**, are purchased from the store.

The land has to provide the rest of the **Daniels'** food supply, and the seasonal ups and downs of the coastal subsistence **cycle** are **felt acutely** by the family. **In** the spring when the birds are flocking overhead, they eat **well**, and in the **late** winter they starve. **As** their village is slightly **inland** and hence not one of the most advantageously located of the coastal communities (this in fact accounts for its **small** size), herring, **salmon** and **seal** are **all** difficult of access **in** the **late** spring and early **summer**, and thus expensive to harvest. **Often** Paul is **forced to** stop spring seal hunting and summer fishing before his neighbors, as **well** as before the **Daniel** family storehouse is **full**, because of his

inability to pay for the gasoline necessary to fuel his **snowmachine** to and from the coast. Instead, he sets his net for flounder and **tomcod** in the river, which fish can be harvested in small amounts throughout the summer and **fall**.

The **Daniels** are thus as limited in their subsistence stores as they are in terms of cash input." Although Paul is always at work, either sweeping up after bingo or off on the hunt, the limited resources of the family force the other household members into either idleness or labor-intensive gathering activities which barely produce the calories that they require to carry them out. For instance, early summer finds Mrs. Daniel, as well as all the children, ranging the nearby tundra for hours at a time in search of last year's blackberries and this year's fresh greens and eggs.

Yet, although the take is small, it provides the first addition to the perennial dried fish that their table has received for months, and is greeted enthusiastically. An early spring **agutak** may be made from reindeer tallow and berries, and Mr. Daniel spoons out large portions of the treat to **all** the waiting bowl **se**. Also, at this season, when seal oil is not so much at a **premiurn** as at other times of the year, thick batter may be deep fried on the open air porch to produce the rich, dark **Yup'ik** doughnuts that go so well with tea, and cost so much less than store---bought bread.

In fact, in all seasons, the luxuries that the Daniels can afford to enjoy are only and always those that the land provides, and that many richer, busier village families can no longer afford to harvest. Thus, Mrs. Daniel's seal parties are always well attended, for although she never distributes elaborate or multiple store-bought treats, she always has agutak (Eskimo ice cream) and asaliak (doughnuts) which the older village women greatly appreciate.

Finally, although the cash history of the Daniels family has been somber, Paul was asked to work occasionally during the construction of the new village high school this past summer. That produced tremendous earnings compared to what the family has had in the past. Martina has also begun to work as a secretary in the new high school. Thus the immediate future looks somewhat brighter. However, the family is decidedly topheavy in numbers, with very limited capability or desire to attempt life outside the village. The present level of state and federal subsidy is barely sufficient to sustain them. Withdrawal of such support would probably not force them into the regional center or Anchorage, as they lack the knowledge, experience, or desire necessary to exploit urban resources. Rather, they would be forced deeper into poverty and all the social, psychological, and physical evils that come with it.

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