

88-49-01 Potlatch Series

Mary Jane Fate of Rampart- Tanana Chiefs Conference: Urgent message for AK Natives

Linell Burrell (pronounced Lee-nell) of Juneau- comments on Tlingit culture

Music by John Angaiak (sp?) in Yupik.

October 21-23, delegates from interior Alaska attended Tanana Chiefs conference in Fairbanks- Mary Jane Fate of Rampart delivered urgent message to Alaska Natives: 1974 new law passed for Johnson O'Malley programs throughout the US. Provisions need acting on, 12 committee members on the review board. Need to establish real parent Native Committees to plan, develop, evaluate, and monitor all monies and programs of the Johnson O'Malley funds. Money from the fund should go for special needs of Indian children in education for state operated schools and native groups not private schools or BIA. \$26 million had been provided to Indians on non-taxable Indian lands, in 1974 this was opened to all Indians in the US with at least ¼ Indian blood. Mary Jane explained that now that it is open, the money can go to the communities where the majority of the natives live. Indian communities who are affected should nominate Native representatives for the committees. Education Committees need to decide where the money would be best spent. Work on education need for native children. AK received \$ 4.6 million for Alaska Native education in the past, an additional \$1 million was granted this year. Review committee- 12 members, one from each geographical region. Should this committee continue? If not, should there be sub-region committees? If not, should there be village committees? Administration costs need to be as low as possible so that the majority of the money can go to Alaska Native special education needs. Application forms and Johnson O'Malley program guidelines are available for proposal submissions. Questions and information should be directed to Ralph Eluska, the director of the Jonson O'Malley AFM Committee. Deadline for proposals was January 15, 1975. Mary Jane and others requested that non-profits disseminate information to all school districts, groups, and segments of urban areas surrounding the association and rural. The information needs to get to the parents and school board administrators so that they can express what the *real* education needs are.

Thanks to University of Washington press, Alaska Festival of Music, Loraine Koranda, and performers, KUAC can present the following Alaskan Eskimo songs and stories. Main subject discussed was about Shamans. Shaman (Angakkuq) or "medicine man," was a person of wealth, respect, fear, power. They no longer practice. Shaman's life was one of danger. Men and women were shamans. Unusual dreams and visions were indicators of shamanistic powers. Shamans bring themselves into a dreamlike state in which they work. Drum songs were an important part of the shaman's work, and included drumming and singing. The drum songs were composed for rituals, good fortunes during hunts, and for medical curing. One Eskimo explained that the shaman's drum represents the world, and by means of the drum they travelled all over the world. While performing, the shaman would fall into a trancelike state. Shamans would speak to spirits. Stories speak of powerful shamans. Shamans often used archaic language or made up a special language in their songs. *Lady Shaman's Spear Song* has great magic powers, returning a woman shaman from the dead. Songs and amulets were given power by the

shaman. Songs and amulets could be sold or traded. Marriage to shamans was considered unwise. Words in shaman songs are largely without meaning. Historic shaman stories are shared. When missionaries came to the villages, shamanic practices were opposed. As Eskimos converted to the Christian religion, their faith in Shamans diminished. Shamans' influence in the society diminished. Many Eskimo elders still believe in the old stories. Paul Green shares a story about his great grandfather, Uquinik, who was a medicine man in Kotzebue. The story is *The Shaman Who Went to the Moon*. This story is about Uquinik on the Noatak River where he saw the new moon. He visited the new moon using his powers. The family could see the man sitting in their home, shaking, but when they spoke to him he did not respond. His spirit had travelled to the moon. When his spirit returned to his body, he told his family what he had seen. There was another medicine man, the Angakkuq Ashukuk from Point Hope. Uquinik's son and grandson did not believe him; they thought he was just making the story up. When the people from Point Hope visited the next spring, Uquinik asked if any of their people had visited the moon when it was last a new moon and one of the old men responded yes, there was a man from Point Hope who went up to the moon then and had visited with Uquinik on the moon.

The Lady Shaman's Spear Song, and *Rock with a Hole in it* are played by Jon Ullana of Point Hope. *The Shaman Girl Song* is played by Joe Seden of Hooper Bay.

Host talks about the Television equivalent of Potlatch, the Alaska Native Magazine which also depends on the advice and direction of Alaskan Natives. Linell Burrell of Juneau is an advisor of the television show. Linell Burrell visited KUAC studios in Fairbanks and was interviewed. He is a Tlingit Eskimo from Juneau, AK. He grew up in Juneau, went to Seattle University for a semester and then went into the armed services, serving four years with the US Air Force. He travelled to Germany, and then returned home to Alaska to his sweetheart. They have two children. They moved to California to go to college in San Jose, CA. They lived in California for 15 years. After many years in the printing business Linell decided to attend radio and television school, and opened his own shop in California. After growing tired of the traffic and noise, Linell and his wife returned to Alaska so that they could teach their children about their culture. They felt that in California, their children were losing their identity; who they were and where they came from. Linell feels that it's important to know where you come from in order to go forward into the future. The kids adapted well to life in Juneau. His daughter joined a Tlingit dance group, the Young Gaisong Dancers. Linell went to work for the Department of Labor, as a Manpower Specialist. He ran a social service project as Director of the Family Service Center. After the project ended he went to work at the Governor's office as a Utilization Manager in the office of Telecommunications. Linell shares that his Tlingit culture has been put down and suppressed, and that they were told they need to learn to be something other than what they feel inside. He feels that culture is important to bridge the gap between the past and the future. He feels that many of the problems that Alaskan Natives have had in the past is because there is nothing to hang onto, nothing to help them bridge the gap because they have let go of their culture. They were told that they needed to suppress their culture, and their cultural art (such as beadwork, carvings, etc.) were simply trinkets to sell to tourists. He says it wasn't until lately (1970's?) did their artwork become valued as something to put into museums and art galleries. He feels that this is a very important part of their transition into western culture.