

88-49-130

Sam Raddi, Leader of the Canadian committee for Original People's entitlement

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

Barrow, Alaska

Series: Potlatch series

1977

Song by Tanya Tucker

Jeff Kennedy said Sam Raddi presides over a land claims group in the Northwest Territories, a Committee of Original People's Entitlement. Sam Raddi said COPE is a Regional Association affiliated with ITC (Inuit Tapiriasat of Canada) was formed in 1970 to serve the western Arctic Inuvialuit. There are approximately 2500 Inuvialuit living in the western Arctic. Their aims were to support the wishes of the Inuvialuit. They also support other peoples such as the southern people, the Metis and Indians. They deal mainly with the Inuvialuit of the western Arctic. Since 1973 they have been working on the land claims issues with the ITC negotiators. When the ITC put the Nunavut proposal together they submitted it to the government of Canada in 1976. From 1973 to 1977 they did over 6,800 interviews. Some of them have been sent to the ITC office. When the ITC withdrew the Nunavut proposal in 1976 the western Arctic Inuvialuit were not pleased. It was their land claims proposal. ITC had pulled the proposal back without asked the Inuvialuit. He went back to the ITC board in Ottawa to give back the proposal to the federal government. The ITC did not want to do that. He returned to the Inuvialuit and asked them what they wanted to do. They decided to separate from the ITC.

Instrumental music by John Fahey

Sam Raddi talked about dealing with the Canadian federal government. On December 7, 1976 they told the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Warren Almond, that they were on the way to a regional settlement for the western Arctic. This was in agreement with John Amagoalik ?, president of the ITC. The minister accepted this and agreed it would be dealt with separately with ITC land claims. They did make some deadlines on their work. He told minister that he would be presenting him with the agreement by June 1. He said they gave their proposal to the federal government on May 8, 1977. The minister said they failed to meet the deadlines which had been set. They told the federal government that they would like to have an agreement principle signed before the federal government decides on the pipeline. The minister said that could be met. The minister of Indian Affairs knew that they had based their original land rights settlement convenient with the proposal so it wasn't something new to them. They had a year to go through the proposal and they knew that they were going to base their proposal to that. The minister said they were able to meet the deadlines that had been set. Raddi said he was always skeptical about the federal government of Canada to settle land claims for the Natives. He's not sure if they really want to settle the land claims. If they really had wanted to settle the land

claims the minister would have by now made some commitments that they have been asking him to do so within the cabinet ministers. Because he isn't getting any commitments from the cabinet ministers he is very skeptical that the Indian Affairs or the federal government want to settle land claims in the Northwest Territories or in Canada.

Song by Bobby Gentry

Sam Raddi said the Inuit Circumpolar Conference was talked about since the first of April, 1976. It is not a new subject to them. They have been thinking about it in the western Arctic. They had a workshop in Inuvialuit not too long ago. They went over the items of agenda with the delegates of the northwestern Arctic. They felt this conference would be as important as his negotiations with the federal government. He firmly believes this is a very important conference and all the nations involved in this conference will be able to succeed. It is the most important conference that the circumpolar Inuit will ever hold. If they want to achieve what they are aiming for in the future the only way possible is to get together as a nation and work to try to resolve their problems of common interest for example the offshore drilling which will affect all three nations - Greenland, Canada and Alaska. He will urge the conference to try to set up a smaller committee to try to look for money for this kind of lawsuit defense. He said he has never heard about land claim in the past that was not settled without a lawsuit. There will be a lot more lawsuits in the future. This conference will be considering all these points. He expects to get support from the conference for Inuvialuit, Inuit or Native land rights proposals. As he said before they just presented to the government of Canada their Inuvialuit land right proposal and he would also like the Circumpolar Conference to support their land rights proposal. This is what the Inuvialuit want. To respect the wishes of the Inuvialuit of the western Arctic he would like to get full support from the Circumpolar Conference and in return they will all be seeking support from each other all the time. He expects Greenland to be seeking lands rights settlement.

Song by Buffy Sainte-Marie

Jeff Kennedy said Sam Raddi reacts to the possibility of a gas pipeline route through land claimed by his organization. Sam Raddi said their organization has been opposed to any kind of pipeline or any major development that may be out of control. This is one development that they see that can be out of control – the building of a pipeline. In their proposal they do not say pipeline or no pipeline. The federal government decided to give authority to Gas Arctic to take the gas in Prudhoe Bay down the Mackenzie Valley. They are not saying there should be compensation they want assurance that there will not be an oil pipeline or a road built along the gas pipeline route.

Song by Johnny Cash