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ASIATIC AND ALASKAN ESKIMOS: BROADCAST MEDIA
DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS ACROSS
THE BERING STRAIT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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JAMESTOWN, NEW YORK

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ABSTRACT

Eskimo peoples residing along the Bering Strait region of western Alaska and Soviet Chukotka were forcibly separated by the closing of the US-USSR border in 1948. As a result, all communications between these peoples ceased for a period of 40 years. Eskimos on each side were divided into separate streams of Soviet and American jurisdiction, and with the further development of both regions following the second World War, these people became the recipients of new broadcast services. These services, conceptualized and developed from completely differing philosophies concerning the nature, function, and operation of the press, brought Eskimos into the information and societal orbit of the respective nations, though with little opportunity to control the systems implemented on their behalf.

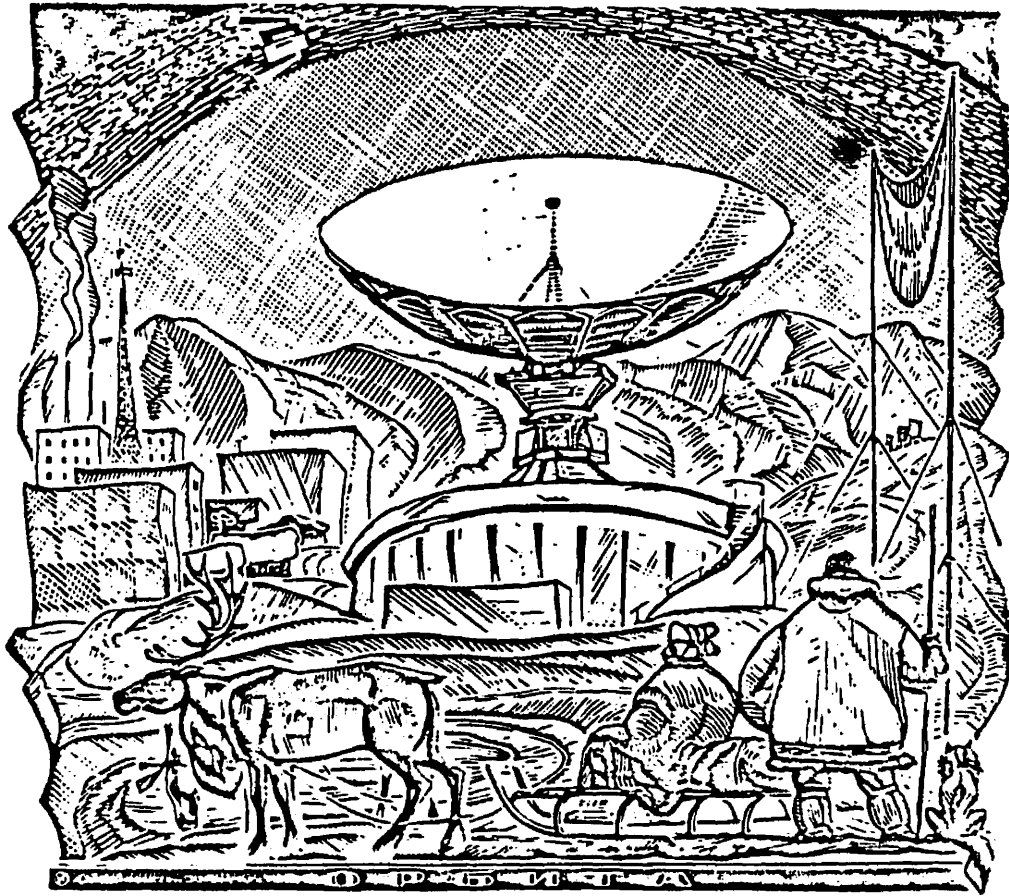
Broadcasting in Chukotka developed in blue print fashion according to central planning directives of the Communist Party, based on an authoritarian, Marxist/Leninist-based model which held a complete monopoly on the means of mass information, in effect, stifling the free exchange of ideas in its attempt to convince Eskimos to accomplish objectives formulated by the Party. Broadcasting in Alaska developed in an opposite fashion, from a combination of state-supported and private initiative based on libertarian/social responsibility models of the press. Alaskan broadcasting was formulated more from the perspective of providing information and entertainment, while radio in Chukotka was more serious in nature, concentrating primarily on political and socio-economic issues facing the region and nation.

As the Cold War between the US and USSR intensified from the 1950s through the early 1980s, communication across the Bering Strait was forceably restricted, yet Eskimos could receive radio services from the other side. While Alaskan stations sought accurate information about the conditions of Eskimos in the USSR, Soviet broadcasting sought to issue a slanted, propagandistic account of the lives of Alaskan Eskimos, despite their lack of accurate reporting resources, in order to convince Soviet Eskimos of the superiority of their lives in contrast to the Alaskans.

This investigation will provide an overview of the development of broadcast media in both regions, as well as a comparative analysis on the role and operation of broadcasting along the Bering Strait, and the participation by Eskimos with such media.

With the development of Soviet *glasnost* and *perestroika* in 1985, new opportunities arose for the reunification of the Eskimo people, and broadcasting from both sides played a role in the overall decision-making process between the Soviet and American governments to reopen the border. This study provides a historical synopsis of the border closing and reopening, and the role of broadcast media in these events. Further, developments in the changing nature of mass communications and the reorganization of broadcast media in the Russian Republic will be explored.

The study concludes with an assessment on the possibilities for Eskimo control of broadcasting in the overall effort to strengthen the process of societal reintegration and national development of these people living along the Bering Strait.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is often hard to give credit to those who inspired this researcher to attempt a work which is yet another attempt to serve the Eskimo people in their quest for happiness and self-fulfillment. In going back on a historical level, the issues confronting communication and the Eskimo culture were first explored in my family by Dr. F. Julius Quist, a physician and missionary to the Eskimo people of western Alaska during the 1890s. We lived among the same families in Eskimo villages, though ninety years apart. We looked at the same ocean, and wondered who and what was on the other side. Where it was impossible for him to travel to that far away shore, I was granted the privilege.

In 1985, this writer stood on the ice between Big and Little Diomede Island, touching the border separating the Eskimo peoples. It was a risky move, with Soviet border guards no doubt ready to act should I venture any further. Three years later, I would be standing on the Soviet shore as an ambassador of peace and goodwill, working on behalf of Eskimos to reopen that border, and could now call Russians my friends. For this opportunity I thank God, as well as Jim Stimple, a fellow Nomeite; a man who allowed me to dream and work together with him for a great purpose. On the Soviet side, I wish to express my admiration for Alexander Ljubosh, a relentless fighter for the establishment of a free and honest press in Russia.

In thanking those who made this study possible, I would like to give great credit to Marianne Stenbaek, Ph.D, a true master at understanding communications in the Far North, for her dreams and encouragement, and for her willingness to allow me to pursue the study on my own terms and timeline.

In providing encouragement and vital assistance, I would like to thank my wife, Tatiana Rostislavovna Johnson.

For providing the impetus to become a fighter, I thank the Eskimo people I have come to know and love on both sides of the Bering Strait. They have my admiration and loyalty, and I am proud to have been given the privilege to live among them. They have taught me much.

Finally, I dedicate this study to my parents, Harold and Laura Johnson, for their love and model of how to live, and to the Saviour upon whom they and I both depend, Jesus Christ.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAPBS	Associated Alaska Public Broadcasting Stations
AAVPC	Alaska Association of Village Council Presidents
ABC	American Broadcasting Company
ACMC	Alaska Chukotka Media Council
ACS	Alaska Communications System
AEBC	Alaska Educational Broadcasting Commission
AFN	Alaska Federation of Natives
AFRS	Armed Forces Radio Service
AFRTS	Armed Forces Radio and Television Service
AIROS	American Indian Radio on Satellite
AMTVA	Alaska Mini-TV Association
ANMSC	Alaska Native Media Support Council
ANSCA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
AOR	Album Oriented Rock
AP	Associated Press
APAP	Alaska Artists for Peace
APBC	Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission
APRN	Alaska Public Radio Network
ARCS	Alaska Rural Communications System
ARD	<i>Arbeitsgemeinschaft Der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland</i>
AT&T	American Telephone and Telegraph
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation

BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BSNC	Bering Strait Native Corporation
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CCCP	Committee for Cooperation, Commerce, and Peace
CEIS	Chulaska Eskimo Information System
CHR	Contemporary Hit Radio
CIRI	Cook Inlet Region Incorporated
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CNMSC	Chukotka Native Media Support Council
CNN	Cable News Network
CPB	Corporation for Public Broadcasting
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DEW	Distant Early Warning
DOA	Department of Administration
ESCD	Educational Satellite Communications Demonstration
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FY	Fiscal Year
GCI	General Communications Incorporated
HBO	Home Box Office
HSSB	House Senate Subcommittee Bill
IBM	International Business Machines
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Conference
KGB	Committee for State Security (Soviet Union)
KBS	Kilobytes per second
KNR	<i>Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa</i>

L/A	LEARNAlaska Instructional Television Network
LPTV	Low Power Television
MCI	Mobile Communications Incorporated
MCPC	Multiple Channel Per Carrier
NANA	Northwest Alaska Native Association
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NCC	Native Communications Center
NHK	Japanese National Television
NMDC	Native Media Distribution Center
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPR	National Public Radio
ORT	Russian Public Television
RATNET	Rural Alaska Television Network
RCA	Radio Company of America
RCP	Radio Company Provideniya
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic
RTR	Russian Teleradio Company
SIP	Satellite Interconnection Project
STP	Satellite Television Project
TASS	Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union
TEIRN	The Eskimo Internet Radio Network
TVNC	Television Northern Canada
TVRO	Television Receive-only
UAA	University of Alaska-Anchorage
UAF	University of Alaska-Fairbanks
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

U.S.	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VCR	Video Cassette Recorder
VOA	Voice of America
WUTE	Western Union Telegraph Extension

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CHAPTER 1

ASIATIC AND ALASKAN ESKIMOS: BROADCAST MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS ACROSS THE BERING STRAIT

Mass Media and the Eskimo

It has been found throughout the literature of mass communications and its analyses on cultural symbiosis and the role of media in national development, a recurring pattern of influence whereby the introduction of broadcast services to non-western, indigenous cultures impacts socioeconomic structures, values, language, and hastens the process of cultural assimilation.

One of the factors causing this change is the transmission of programming which is not reflective of the cultural traits and activities of the receiving society. This partly stems from a lack of participation by these receivers in the media policy making organs which are responsible for the administration of broadcast services. The indexes of political orientation, press philosophy, technology, economics, education, culture, and apathy can be shown as factors for this lack of media involvement.

The best context for developing broadcasting as a means for strengthening and bridging cultures rests upon the notion that the medium has a greater potential to meet defined societal needs when control structures are designed with maximum participation by the receiving society.

Eskimo peoples residing along the Bering Strait coastline of Alaska and Soviet Chukotka provide communication research with an opportunity to examine the role of broadcast media in the lives of

a small non-western ethnic minority forcibly separated into larger sociopolitical cultures of opposing orientation. Their societal context provides a look into how media was uniquely adapted by members of a distinct culture under differing life conditions; how media was used in the overall development of their lands by the dominant society; and how media can be utilized in the process of social reintegration.

Broadcasting and telecommunications have played a key role in the administration, modernization, economic development, education, and sociocultural development of the Chukotka Autonomous Area (USSR) and Alaska. Eskimos on both sides were provided access to media in similar fashion, though the control and message orientation of each broadcast system was based on radically opposed philosophies regarding the nature, purpose, and operational functions of the press.

While both Soviet and American governments were ultimately responsible for overseeing broadcasting in these territories, the implementation of services came about through different means. In Alaska, broadcasting developed from various combinations of private and state sponsorship, while Chukotka was developed in blueprint fashion--constructed in response to central planning efforts under conformity to Communist Party (CPSU) directives and goals.

Given these sets of circumstances, the dissertation will now proceed to relate the problem under study and the course of analyses to follow.

The Problem

Despite given the access to Soviet broadcast media services, Chukotkan Eskimos were systematically denied the right to adapt radio and television into instruments which could adequately meet their communication and societal needs. Unable to operate freely under the communist's authoritarian broadcast structure; to found independent media or to establish telecom links to Eskimos in Alaska, Chukotka's Eskimo would have to wait until the demise of the USSR before such possibilities could be properly exploited.

Across the strait in Alaska, Eskimos had similar access to broadcasting, and to a much larger degree, possessed the right to take command of radio and television services. However, the region's Eskimo community voluntarily delegated responsibility of radio and television service to private and state broadcast entities for a number of reasons, resulting in a decreased influence in determining the levels of culturally cognizant programming available to them. With the historic inability to finance private media, the Western Alaskan Eskimos have been unable to harness broadcast media to its fullest potential in serving defined societal needs.

Lacking strong organization of broadcast media on each side of the Bering Strait, combined with a militarily closed border for 40 years, Eskimos of Alaska and Chukotka could not adapt broadcast media for the purpose of developing communication links between the nations. Only with the opening of the border, and the relaxation of general political controls in the USSR, could efforts to

start the process of establishing long term communication connection commence.

Unfortunately, Eskimo-controlled media is still in its infancy in Chukotka; Eskimo radio in Western Alaska is in a perilous state from a programming and financial standpoint; Eskimo television is practically non-existent on both sides; and there is little communication between Eskimos of the two regions and no broadcast media or computer information connections. This is the general problem existing today which this study seeks to address and provide solutions for.

Dissertation Proposal

This dissertation will set forth two ultimate objectives in dealing with the identified problem under study. The first objective: to prove that Eskimo people residing in the target region, despite their historic inability to achieve a desired level of media empowerment within the state broadcast communications environment of Soviet Russia and Western Alaska, are now in a position--due to changes in government communication policies and telecommunication infrastructures--to work collectively to command and exploit broadcast media and information systems, for the purpose of effecting societal reintegration and attaining Eskimo-defined political, economic, social, cultural, and communication goals.

The second ultimate objective, is to create a communications model which outlines an organization approach toward broadcast and

information technology utilization for promoting Eskimo media empowerment within each nation, as well as international communication links between the Bering Strait and across the circumpolar North.

Given these stated objectives, three proximate objectives will be pursued in the attempt to construct a framework for understanding the historic and present context of communications and the Eskimo, as it relates to the contentions implied by the ultimate objectives.

First, this study will examine the historical development of broadcast media along the Bering Strait regions of Soviet Chukotka and Alaska, comparing the foundations, characteristics, and operational parameters of each respective broadcast media system (Soviet and American), and the participatory role of Eskimos with these separate systems.

Second, the study will document the reestablishment of communication access and Eskimo reunification across the Bering Strait, investigating the role of broadcasting and telecommunications in this process.

Third, the study will detail and analyze the changing nature of broadcast communications in the reorganized Russian Federation and Alaska, gauging their implications on native media empowerment, the creation of Eskimo-controlled information-media services, and the expansion of telecommunication ties between Chukotka and Western Alaska in this context. A definition of the methodological approaches used to address each objective will now be made.

METHODOLOGY

Given the relative lack of information dealing with many aspects of the proposed study; the difficulty of obtaining data in relation to the Soviet perspective; the participatory role of this writer within the many events described; the need for a historical reconstruction and extensive description; and the multidisciplinary nature of the elements impacting the problem identified, no one research method can be employed. Rather, the methodological parameters include a variety of approaches and techniques. It can be stated, however, that an emphasis will be made to follow general guidelines laid down by recognized principles pertaining to historical and descriptive research methodologies.

Each method commonly follows prescribed procedures: detailing the problem outlined; its statement and type; analysis of the problem, including known and unknown data; the securing of data and testing its reliability; manipulation and interpretation of data, leading to the formation of conclusions and testing of hypotheses; ending with general summaries and recommendations for further inquiry.

Concerning a differentiation of the two: the descriptive discipline aims toward fact finding with adequate interpretation. It seeks to interpret the present through abstracting generalizations from cross-sections of current experience. Historical research deals with previous experience in like manner, yet its goal is to apply the method of reflexive thought to social problems, still unsolved, by means of discovering past trends of event,

fact, and outlook. It traces lines of development in human thought and action in order to reach some basis for social activity.

Both methods seek accuracy, objectivity, and quantitative-ness; reliable and relevant data; valid standards of comparison; accurate and adequate description; and caution in interpretation and formation of conclusions. Of additional importance to this study, is the opportunity to utilize conclusions--molded by each approach--in the effort to analyze implications for the future.

These methodologies will be used to guide the study toward the final goal--the two ultimate objectives previously described. In order to assist this realization, the three-mentioned proximate objectives will be categorized as a series of procedures, followed by methods and techniques required for their implementation.

Procedures, Methods, and Techniques

Securing the data

A preliminary task involves preparation of a bibliographic database from Soviet, American, and Canadian sources, in the effort to survey existing relevant literature across the many issues impacting this study, and to assess which data is missing and how it will be obtained.

Various categories of importance to the study were defined to facilitate this task, including (but not limited to) the following themes: political, economic, and sociocultural characteristics of the Soviet Union and Alaska; historical treatises of Eskimo culture and societal involvement in Russia and Alaska;

colonization and developmental histories of Alaska and Chukotka; Evolution of press theory, telecommunications, and broadcasting in the US and USSR, as well as separate developments in Alaska and Magadan Oblast; Inuit/Eskimo broadcasting in circumpolar regions; communication theory pertaining to national development and cultural autonomy; and American-Soviet political relations.

In each of these areas, comprehensive searches were made in numerous databases across the US, including academic, state, federal, commercial, and private archives. For the majority of categories, including general Soviet perspectives on society and press theory, a substantial listing of publications--in the form of scholarly literature, books, journals, magazines, newspaper reports, and film documentaries--was accessed by this writer. Alaska-specific references dealing with Eskimo society, broadcasting, and US-Soviet relations, were studied, with much of this information recontextualized via the personal experience of the researcher, who spent eight years working in Western Alaska in a variety of broadcast and telecommunication applications.

Unfortunately, the bibliographic search revealed many areas which lacked basic data, primarily specific to Chukotka and Magadan Oblast: these areas partially included Soviet state and Eskimo broadcasting; telecommunications; up to date political, social, and economic analyses on Soviet Chukotka; and the general sociocultural status of Chukotkan Eskimos. Considering the importance of the Soviet perspective, and confronted with the fact that much primary material for addressing the many issues did not exist (in either

US or Soviet databases), this researcher was forced to recreate a large portion of primary material, by engaging in fieldwork in Russia over a five year period beginning in 1991. This included archival research (at previously closed state archives) to uncover original sources--in the form of Communist Party, Ministry of Communications, and state broadcast administration documents--and extensive interviews with numerous officials within these agencies. Since no literature had ever been published dealing with Eskimo broadcasting in Chukotka, interviews were conducted with all major Eskimo personalities who played a role in its operation.

The main challenge concerning the Soviet portion of this study, was in synthesizing (from available sources) an accurate and comprehensive historical reconstruction of Soviet state and Eskimo broadcasting. To achieve this, the controversial practices of secrecy protection, censorship, and propaganda policies (employed by Soviet officials overseeing its operation), which hindered the ascertainment of its true status, had to be overcome.

Because of the absence of factual data overall, it is necessary to provide long descriptive accounts and a compilation of important details within most chapters in order to correct this deficiency. A high degree of confidence in setting down historical events and broadcast developments from 1988 onward can be assumed, primarily because of the participant observer role played by this writer (by default), in the many events and actions which took place during this time period. With this advantage, it was possible to compare a variety of accounts (both published and from

other participants) dealing with the events described, in the task of confirming or disconfirming facts or opinions from Soviet and American sources.

Not trusting the participant observer approach (descriptive method) to completely avoid the charge of selective observation, this writer diligently compared his accounting of the many events and issues (in U.S.-Soviet border developments, Chukotkan and Western Alaskan broadcasting and telecommunications), with a variety of sources to insure a basic compatibility with those who witnessed or analyzed the same events. The bibliographic listings will prove the thoroughness of this testing procedure.

Since new knowledge is being set forth as a result of extensive descriptive treatments, this writer asks the reader to bare with the overall length of the study.

Procedures for Proximate Objective #1

The first task is to examine the many parameters which make up the total universe of Soviet and Alaskan broadcasting, going from a macro to micro view (national to local), noting the emphasis on Eskimo participation within these developments. These parameters will now be approached individually, noting how the information is to be gathered.

The first aspect consists of Soviet press theory and subsequent general developments in Soviet broadcasting. An analysis of expert judgement will be conducted by accessing an abundance of scholarly literature (from U.S. sources) which provides relevant

material in describing Marxist/Leninist/Soviet press theory; Soviet radio and television history. Official Soviet references were consulted, primarily the Large Soviet Encyclopedia, supplemented by translated books of Marx and Lenin, as well as Russian language texts on broadcasting and communications as published by the Soviet Ministry of Communications, the State Committee for Television and Radio, Soviet press institutions, and Soviet broadcast journals. Unfortunately, there was an absence of source material in relation to specific developments in Magadan Oblast and Chukotka. No literature existed in U.S. databases on the subject. In Magadan, only one publication could be found which explored early printed press and television developments, and the information presented was extremely limited in scope. Accordingly, internal documents from regional broadcast and communication administrations were consulted, and extensive interviews were conducted in order to clarify timelines, administrative organization, technical infrastructures, and general operations. Information relating to Eskimo involvement was obtained solely through interviews, as no published source material existed.

A central hypothesis, which this material hopes to prove, is that Soviet Eskimos were unable--given the historic environment of political and communications control--to exploit broadcasting in a manner which could adequately meet their defined societal and communication needs.

The second aspect consists of developments in Alaska. Again, analysis of expert judgement was possible via numerous books and

scholarly literature on foundations of U.S press theory and broadcast development. For Alaska-specific references pertaining to broadcast history, published literature from a variety of sources were consulted, especially in relation to state subsidized broadcasting. For information on Western Alaska, source material consisted of Alaska state documents, scholarly literature, reports and reports from broadcast services or consulting firms. In relation to descriptions on radio in Nome and Kotzebue, interviews were conducted with those who founded these operations, and again, the participant observer role was employed by this writer to confirm the description of radio and press operations in the region.

Study on this aspect will set out to prove the following hypothesis: that Western Alaskan Eskimos, despite possessing the right to a greater command of broadcast media than their Chukotkan relatives, have historically been unable to harness both state subsidized and private broadcast media to its fullest potential. In addition, both Eskimo groups have been unable to adapt past and current participation in broadcasting to the task of devising communication interconnections across the Bering Strait.

Procedures for Proximate Object #2

The second proximate objective seeks to document the status of U.S.-Soviet relations along the Bering Strait, Eskimo reunification, and the role of broadcasting in effecting the border opening. For investigating the status of state relations, border history, and Eskimo involvement prior to 1985, there was reliance upon pub-

lished materials in scholarly journals, books, and newspaper articles for needed source material. For clarification of numerous issues during this period, interviews were conducted with Eskimo elders and political leaders intimately involved in the region.

Concerning the period of 1985 to the present, the writer consulted a variety of sources in each country, accessing a number of published sources in addition to radio and television reports. For clarification, interviews were conducted with state, local, and Eskimo officials or leaders on each side. Again, this writer relied on data collection from his experience as a participant observer during this period in order to construct an accurate timeframe of events, and to cautiously move toward generalizations about the many specific observations made before, during, and after the border opening.

This phase of the study will address the following hypothesis: That the opening of the U.S.-Soviet border created the potential for dramatic changes impacting the Eskimo people, specifically in societal reunification efforts, Soviet and Alaskan Eskimo broadcast operations, and future broadcast/telecommunication links between Eskimos in each nation.

Procedures for Proximate Objective #3

The third proximate objective seeks to document the changing nature of state-subsidized broadcasting in the Soviet Union, post-Soviet Russia, and Alaska, in the effort to analyze and uncover the implications of these developments upon native media empowerment,

the creation of Eskimo-controlled information-media services, and the expansion of telecommunications ties across the Bering Strait.

The first initiative in addressing this theme is the historical reconstruction of the tremendous political and state communication policy changes which occurred in Soviet Russia, beginning in 1985, passing through the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, and ending with the current (1996) status of state broadcasting in the Russian Federation.

To address Soviet communication and societal change at the national level, there was a reliance on bibliographic research--in this case, scholarly reports (in U.S. databases) on *glasnost*-era Soviet broadcasting and political changes, supplemented by American journal and newspaper reportage. In addition, Soviet central newspapers and journals were consulted for obtaining factual data outlining changes in Soviet communication policies and broadcasting.

Concerning national changes impacting the regional level in Chukotka and Magadan, there was little information from Soviet central sources on developments in Chukotka. To address this deficiency in data, the writer used a combination of participant research; review of available published literature in Soviet periodicals and newspapers located in Provideniya, Anadyr, and Magadan; and published reports in Alaskan newspapers and journals.

For specific information concerning relating to communication and broadcast developments at the local and regional level, as well as the implications for Eskimo broadcasting, this writer relied on published reports in local Soviet newspapers, as well as extensive

interviews with leading broadcast and communication figures across Magadan Oblast.

Concerning the Alaskan portion of this objective, an effort was made to consult original sources responsible for the reorganization of state broadcasting, in this case, documents from various offices of the State of Alaska (including Department of Administration, Governor's Office, Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, Alaska State Legislature). Further, published sources in various Alaska news media (both printed and electronic) were obtained in order to outline the various policy and infrastructure changes happening between 1978-1996. Much data of a fairly sensitive nature was obtained from reports issued by various communication consulting firms, or from extensive interviews, conducted by this writer, with leading authorities connected with state communications. Finally, the participant observer role was employed to generate specific information pertaining to the impact of overall state developments upon the study villages along Western Alaska.

Synthesis and creation of the model

As the proximate objects have been laid out and systematically described and verified, a synthesis of the many accounts impacting Soviet and Alaskan broadcast communications and Eskimo involvement within these developments will be made--moving from specific observations (ie., change in political and communication structures), to generalizations about the impact of these issues on furthering Eskimo media empowerment--which in essence defines

the task and scope of the first ultimate objective.

This effort of synthesis will ultimately lead to the creation of a communications model--which comparatively analyzes and qualifies the similarities and differences faced by Eskimos, as well as their past and present involvement within each nation's communications environment--to provide the rational and procedural efforts needed to achieve an effective level of media empowerment for the Bering Strait region's Eskimo population (the final objective)

The methodology's final phase will include a general summary and suggestions for further study.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Historically, Eskimo adaptation to changing influences has occurred alongside a submissive deference to the supremacy of the colonizing cultures with which it came in contact. With the closure of the U.S.-Soviet border along the Bering Strait in 1948, communication isolation between these Eskimos was effectively achieved and forcibly maintained. The population, related through language, culture, family ties, and occupation, diverged into separate life streams. They accepted the ruling authority of the established government and its political foundation, participated in the political, economic, educational, and cultural life of each nation, and utilized the various forms of mass media as made available to them.

The Communist Party designed mass media as a primary vehicle for carrying out the building of socialism (in its various manifes-

tations) in Chukotka and among the various small native peoples residing therein. Newspapers, magazines, films, radio, and television were all integral parts of this mechanism to involve the native populations and newly arrived ethnic peoples from across the USSR with the programs and activities of the CPSU.

Western Alaska possessed a roughly equal mixture of native and non-native peoples, undertook the task of developing the region's resource extraction and animal harvesting base (like the Soviets), utilizing mass media for communication with the outside world, coordinating the region's activities, disseminating and assimilating information and knowledge, and for entertainment.

It can be seen that the method for adapting technology is one that references dissimilar societies: Eskimos, while possessing a lifestyle with traits both alien to and characteristic of other aboriginal cultures, can adopt strategies which might mirror those aboriginal problem solving efforts in utilizing media, even though they come from a differing life perspective.

To the Eskimos of western Alaska and Chukotka, the sense of contrasts in a media-oriented society becomes more apparent as Alaska and Russia witness an ever rising trend toward native identity and political empowerment. This native consciousness is increasingly dynamic and manifests itself through a collective drive aimed at influencing government processes, business development, education, land ownership, cultural activities, intrastate communications, and the time-worn quest (in tribal reservations of Alaska and among newly created native associations in Chukotka)

for a separate native government or recognition of sovereign rights.

The Eskimos face a world driven by media, and in this context, radio and television plays its hegemonic role by subtly (or forcefully) merging and validating a western framework over a societal identity and tradition which has existed for more than four thousand years.

Since broadcasting serves as a vital communication tool for the isolated villages along the Bering Strait, it is recognized by both native and government authorities as an instrument capable of achieving multilateral objectives as defined by those controlling the mediums. In Alaska, the executive and legislative branches of government, and leaders from the various native organizations have engaged in discussions over the potentials and downfalls of broadcast programming as received by Eskimos. It is agreed that broadcasting can serve a beneficial purpose if properly adapted, yet there is no consensus on how to implement a model system able to meet these expectations.

From the Soviet perspective, there has been much less discussion. Only since the dissolution of the USSR has there been movement concerning the issue. Over the years, Alaska native groups, government planning agencies (ie., Bering Strait Regional Strategy), and international Eskimo organizations such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), have recognized the need for native media participation, and have frequently issued statements calling for closer ties with Chukotkan Eskimos in this regard, even though

their prior involvement was politically impossible.¹

Acknowledging the past efforts to categorize the nomenclature of mass media influences on society, it should be pointed out that this is not primarily a study of broadcasting and its impact on cultures, but an overall look into the specific conditions of media development among two different nations possessing a shared ethnic minority and their search to be participants in ways which facilitate their sociocultural integrity; how media impacts the inevitable process of acculturation into American and Russian mainstream consciousness; and how media can provide the means to obtain a powerful voice in the future administration of their land and society.

An Overview of Eskimo Society and Adaptation Along
the Bering Strait: Soviet Chukotka and Alaska

The following observation of life and adaptation among the Eskimos of Chukotka and Alaska is based on combinations of direct observation and interaction by the writer, and literary research (especially in relation to the Soviet perspective). The idea for this study began in 1986 and information was collected on the subject through 1991. At that time, research on the dissertation was initiated in conjunction with Ph.D studies at McGill University. Sixteen villages on both sides of the Bering Strait were visited during these research periods, with the writer living in Magadan Oblast and Chukotka for a five-year period between October 1991, and December 1996.

The study primarily targets the Alaskan Eskimos living on the Seward Peninsula, St. Lawrence Island, and Little Diomed Island:

the target population in Russia is concentrated in the Providenski and Chukotski Raion (districts) of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug (area), formerly an administrative entity within the Magadan Oblast (region) territory of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (USSR)--and presently an autonomous area within Russia.

While undertaking a comprehensive historical documentation of the region's past is beyond the scope of this study, an excellent review from earlier literature can be realized from the works of Dall (1870), Hughes (1960), Oswalt (1967), Neatby (1973), Hunt (1975), Brown (1981), Burch (1978) Lauritzen (1983), Sergeyev (1956), Menovshikov (1956), Dikov (1967, 89), Tien (1992), and other authors.² A somewhat longer description of Eskimo life in Soviet Chukotka will be given because of the relative lack of information available in western literature.

The population of this study resides along the shorelines of the Bering Strait, a hostile marine environment situated between the Bering and Chukchi Seas. A span of 51 kilometers separates the two coasts, with a distance of 4 kilometers between the Diomed Islands. The target area represents a small section amidst the larger regions of Chukotka and Alaska. Chukotka's territory contains 737,700 square kilometers, surrounded by the East Siberian Sea to the northwest and Bering Sea to the south.³

It is a land of rolling tundra interspersed with rugged mountains, the highest being Mount Matachingay in the Chukotski Range at 2700 meters. The eastern part of Chukotka (the Providenski District) is mountainous and rugged compared to the Seward

Peninsula. The major river in Chukotka is the Anadyr River, site of the territory's capital, Anadyr. It is a land rich in natural resources (gold, coal, tin, fish, reindeer), with scattered forests stretching along the tributaries of the Anadyr River.

Chukotka is divided into eight districts, equivalent to American counties, each containing an administrative center. These centers are normally located along the ocean, with hundreds of small settlements and native villages scattered throughout the interior and coastal regions. Transportation is conducted by aircraft, motor vehicles, and traditional means. Roads are few in Chukotka, thus logistics of supply are often difficult for the area. It has traditionally been a political unit of the larger Magadan Oblast region and comprises the far eastern sector of the Russian land mass. In 1989, Chukotka had a population of 163,000.

On the American side, the Eskimos of Alaska reside in scattered villages amidst a state that covers an area one fifth the size of the continental United States. Alaska's territory possesses 1,425,000 square kilometers, approximately twice the size of Chukotka. The region spans three time zones, claiming half of the world's glaciers, along with nineteen mountains over 4600 meters, three million lakes, and the smallest population of any U.S. state.⁴

Alaska's native peoples comprise roughly 20% of the state's population, residing in more than 250 villages. Most villages number between 25 and 3000 inhabitants, and are located in areas ranging from barren tundra to forest-encircled mountains. It is sparsely settled within wide regions, as in Chukotka. Major travel to

other locations along the strait and central regions is restricted to aircraft, though boats, traditional locomotion (by foot or dog team), and motorized vehicles can be used despite the lack of a road network. Anchorage, the largest city, is located some 800-1100 kilometers from the Bering Strait villages. It is this vastness of wilderness-dominated space that maintains a delicate separation of many of these Eskimos with the rest of the state and country--a condition equally applicable for Eskimos in Chukotka.

A Sociolinguistic Perspective

The Bering Strait region traditionally has been a meeting area for transient peoples since time immemorial. This is a common anthropological notion which ranges migration dates from 10,000-13,000 years ago to as far back as 25,000 years.⁵ Eskimo were the latest arrivals in these migrations, with clear evidence of their habitation in Alaska at least 4000 years ago.⁶

For the sake of clarification, the target group of this study will be labeled either Eskimo or Inuit, referring to a homogeneous people speaking dialects of a core language known as Eskaluet. Eskimos are linguistically separated between the Inuit branch (Inupiaq in Northern Alaska, Inuktitut in Canada, and Kalaallisut in Greenland), and the Yupik branch (a broken chain of five languages including Central Alaskan Yupik, Central Siberian Yupik, Naukanski Yupik, Pacific Yupik, and the now-extinct Sirinikski).⁷ Central Alaskan Yupik is understood by most native persons in the study area with the Unaliq dialect understood by Siberian Yupik and

Naukonski speakers.

Siberian (Chaplinski) Yupik is spoken by the Eskimos of St. Lawrence Island (Gambell and Savoonga) and in the villages of New Chaplino, Siriniki, Uelkal, Wrangel, and Provideniya in Chukotka. Naukonski is spoken in the Chukotka settlements of Uelen, Lorina, and Lavrentia.⁸ Inupiaq, spoken on Little Diomede and the north-west coast of Alaska had in earlier times connected with Chukotka; after 1948, Soviet authorities forcibly resettled Eskimos of Big Diomede Island (speaking Inupiaq and Naukonski) to Naukon, thereby severing the Inuit language connection of Chukotka to Greenland.⁹

In Alaska, Eskimos are the predominant indigenous population along the Bering Strait (with a total statewide population of 25,000): along the Chukotka coast, Eskimos are a minority (population 1,500) compared to the more numerous Chukchi (12,000).¹⁰ It should be noted that there is an intermingling of native peoples in Alaska, including the Tlingit-Haida Indians of the southeastern coastal region, the Athabaskan Indians of the interior Alaskan region, and Aleut-Koniag in the Aleutian Island chain. In Chukotka, the native populations are primarily composed of Chukchi and Eskimos, with smaller minorities including Even, Chuan, Koryak, Yukagir, and Eveni. In general, the Alaskan groups possess very distinct cultures, physical features, and languages, though there has always been an intermingling of people and assimilation of cultural characteristics.

In Chukotka, the Eskimo have a greater interaction with the majority Chukchi population, sharing the same settlements along the

coast, engaging in similar subsistence activities, and combining cultural, linguistic, and artistic traditions. Conforming to the general law of demographics, Eskimo people in Chukotka learned the language of the Chukchi and eventually became minorities within the larger native society: presently, these people represent only a tiny percentage (less than 1%) among the larger Slavic population now resident in the region. Alaskan Eskimos are a minority among the state's caucasian population. It is primarily the language of the last group of inhabitants (the English and Russian speaking people) that facilitates communication among all groups.

The Eskimo in Soviet Society: A Historical Overview

In the beginning of the 20th century, Eskimos living along the coast of Chukotka inhabited approximately 10 beach settlements as well as Big Diomed Island.¹¹ There was regular communication across the Bering Strait with Alaskan Eskimos involving trade and social gatherings. They engaged in traditional subsistence activities within their maritime environment; hunting whale, seal, and walrus, herding reindeer in some places with their Chukchi neighbors, and were involved in various forms of hunting and gathering. They worshiped animistic spirits, submitted to the authority of shamans, cultivated artistic and social customs, and followed traditional methods in their quest to thrive amidst an unforgiving arctic environment.¹² Eskimos did not possess written forms of language, lacked tools of mass media, and as a rule were illiterate.¹³

Chukotka was under nominal czarist control, though in essence, a greater American presence existed as a result of commercial activities.¹⁴ The Russian government slowly stepped up administrative control over the region in response to American activities and began to systematize the conditions of international travel among the Eskimo.

The Revolution of 1917 marked a new stage in the lives of the Eskimo. The Bolsheviks, in their "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia," defined the future participation of these people (and their existence) in the new task of the "building of socialism."¹⁵ This new policy instigated the intensive social development of so-called "backward nationalities" to the level of the "advanced" peoples of Russia, though the notions of communism to which it sought to espouse, made the separate political and cultural existence of the Eskimos dependent on their contributions to the communist cause.¹⁶

Though european Russia was under their control, it would take six years before Soviet power was firmly established in Chukotka. In 1919, the first Soviet underground revolutionary committee was set up in Anadyr (the eventual administrative center for the region).¹⁷ By 1920, Soviet forces were gaining control over czarist elements (Whites) in Chukotka with the assistance of Eskimo volunteers: in that year Soviet administration over Eskimos along the Bering Strait began.¹⁸ In 1923, the Chukotski Raion Revolutionary Committee was organized in Uelen (on the tip of the Chukotka Peninsula).¹⁹ Within that year, Soviet control was achieved through-

out Chukotka.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was formally organized in 1924, and Chukotka was eventually incorporated as a national okrug with smaller districts within it. Eskimos on the northern coast were initially designated into an "Eskimo District," subsequently incorporated into the Chukotski District: most Eskimos presently live in either the Chukotski, Providenski, and Iultinski districts.²⁰

During this year, a government agency was created, known as the Committee for Assistance to the Peoples of the Northern Regions (Committee of the North).²¹ It was conceived by a group of Russian anthropologists who sought to limit the scope of Soviet expansion in the territories occupied by native people and to maintain regional administration using historic tribal models in creating general assemblies and executive committees at the village and district level.²² Officially, the agency was given the task for supervision in the planned economic, administrative, cultural, educational, and health improvement of natives in Chukotka, representing the first step toward implementing Soviet nationality policy.²³ This policy was devised with the understanding that a necessary precondition for attaining socialism was the elimination of "cultural backwardness" among the indigenous peoples of Chukotka and the Kolyma regions.²⁴

At first, Eskimos failed to comprehend the basic foundations of the new Soviet government; the nature of its authority, the implementation of its various goals (ie., collectivization, econ-

omic development, industrialization, self-government, conformity to Party direction), its sociocultural agenda, and its opposition to ancient Eskimo traditions.²⁵ This was readily understandable considering the Eskimo were illiterate and unable to understand the need for a complete reconstruction of their old lives. It can be debated that the ancient communal nature of Eskimos coincided with certain traits of the new communist theory especially in relation to the notion of collectivity. It was easier for some Eskimos to sense a similarity with the goals of the new order, but it was much harder to find this connection among the nomadic Chukchi or Eskimos involved in reindeer herding.²⁶

In time, the Communist Party would eventually shatter tribal unity by promoting the ideas of class struggle, waging wars against religion (both native and Christian) and the shamans, and suppressing those Eskimo traditions which could facilitate the maintenance of their cultural identity.²⁷ Natives who fought against the new authority in protecting their tribal ideology were demoted, jailed, or killed: natives who sought to build collaboration (politically or culturally) with other ethnic nationalities were assailed as instigators of nationalism, and consequently, as enemies of the state.²⁸ Government efforts quickly curtailed travel across the Bering Strait, commercial trade and the consumption of alcohol--remnants of the days of American occupation. The Soviets thus began the systematic development of its educational, economic, cultural, health, and political strategies for the Eskimo.

In 1926, three schools were opened in the villages of Uelen,

Naukon, and Chaplino.²⁹ The organization of schools was often difficult in the beginning because of the lack of trained teachers, and the fact that very few Eskimos spoke Russian (many Eskimos spoke English).³⁰ Eskimo schools were soon started in Siriniki, Uriliki, and Unazik (Chaplino), with some classes conducted in *yarangas* (the traditional skin tent dwellings of the Eskimo). Adults attended school in evening sessions and those who became literate soon became leading forces in the local administration or Party committees.³¹

There was much initial opposition to these schools by some elements within the Eskimo society (especially the shamans) who feared that children would lose the skills needed for maintaining their old way of life. Boarding schools became an instrument which could completely sever young Eskimo's involvement with their traditional life, and was a stage for many struggles between Soviets and those natives who promoted their identity and language.³²

The activity of the various soviets spread to all aspects of life among the Eskimo and gradually became comprehensible to the people. These groups oversaw hunting, engaged in the supply of provisions to settlements, opened trading centers with standardized prices, established medical clinics, and provided material aid to the most needy.³³ Eskimos were organized into cooperatives based on their traditional subsistence activities and agriculture was introduced.

The Party began establishing *kultbaza* (cultural bases) which included a boarding school, hospital, clubs, technical workshops,

veterinary clinics, and study centers.³⁴ The first base in Chukotka was built in Lavrentia (1928), and ultimately became a center of economic and cultural life in the Chukotkski District. Eskimos went there to learn new practical skills and training necessary for modern living, received health care, and were exposed to political information about the Party.³⁵

The Party also expanded their political education efforts through the use of *krasniya yaranga* (red tents). These were travelling political shows, using a yaranga which served as a meeting place for Party workers conducting political and indoctrinational work among the nomadic peoples of the region.³⁶ Essentially, the red tents and cultural bases were major elements in the Party's strategy to eliminate such "backwardness" through activities aimed at developing enlightenment and education.

In 1930, a political rearrangement was applied to the territory of Chukotka: tribal administrations ceased, and government bodies were created, including village, district, and national area soviets. These units were connected to the political and administrative structures of Khabarovsk (transferred in 1953 to Magadan Oblast) and the central government.³⁷ With these events, the philanthropic nature of the Party, through the Committee of the North, changed in character as the influence of the original agency members (ie., Bogaras) waned. This committee ceased in 1935, beginning a process of alienation between Eskimos and the higher echelons of the Party and government.³⁸

On a more personal level, hundreds of young *Komsomol* (com-

munist youth league) members went to Chukotka to assist Eskimos in a variety of activities; teaching Russian, food preparation, basic health care, giving political lectures, etc.³⁹

During the period, Eskimos assimilated gradually into Soviet ways of life, accepting the predominance of the Party, while still remaining somewhat detached from the pressures of Moscow. With the introduction of a new alphabet and textbooks written in the Chaplinski dialect (1933), Eskimos began studying their own written language, while improving their literacy in Russian.⁴⁰ Education was a driving force for bringing these people into the modern era. Collectivization continued in the thirties, and with the introduction of technology and modern methods, the material lives of these people improved.

In Chaplino, Siriniki, and Naukon, sea hunting cooperatives were established: hunters stalked the ocean using walrus-skin boats (later, wooden and steel boats with motors), and their harvests allowed them to prepare fresh meat for themselves and for sale to the government. The sea provided them with materials for clothing and fuel, while money from the sale of skins, tusks, and fat allowed them to purchase tools and modern conveniences. Dog teams often provided transportation in the winter as the deep snows of winter made it difficult for planes, tractors, and trucks to reach villages. The basic material nature and lifestyle was a mixture of old subsistence ways supplemented by new methods as introduced by the Soviets.⁴¹ Their living conditions, while not better than their Alaskan brethren, were roughly comparable.

The Stalin-inspired purges of 1937-38 left a mark on the Eskimo as a brief wave of repressions covered the territory. Some remnants of the native upper class and intelligentsia were swept away.⁴² Territorial administrations (Anadyr, Kamchatka, Magadan) began direct control over the Bering Sea coast, and large government trusts (such as the Dalstroy Company based in Magadan) began resource extraction and economic development.⁴³ These big trusts, along with the central planners from Moscow, did not maintain the same level of interest in native affairs like the Committee of the North had at its inception. The new organizations were governed strictly in accordance with the demands of fulfilling state planning quotas.⁴⁴ Lands (including rich hunting and fishing areas) were seized from the traditional native owners, as well as those belonging to native cooperatives.

Eskimo people, while living distinctly apart from the average Soviet citizen, were nonetheless recipients of Party and government policies which were based on urban models. Strict methods of collectivization often did not work well (especially among Chukchi and Eskimo reindeer breeders) and had to be modified on the basis of private ownership.⁴⁵ Eskimo sea hunters began killing walrus for animal feed at newly developed fur farms--a typical Soviet adaptation at odds with traditional Eskimo ways.⁴⁶

The end result of this situation on government/Party policy toward Chukotka was a consistent inability of planners to develop effective strategies and solutions to the problems faced by native peoples. Progress indeed was being made in bringing Eskimos into

the overall Soviet development scheme, but not without costs.

In the late 1930s, Eskimos from Chaplino, Siriniki, and Uelkal continued to travel across the strait, visiting St. Lawrence and the Diomed Islands, as well as some settlements on the Alaska coast. Alaskan Eskimos could travel over to the Chukotka side as long as they had identification papers completed and did not bring over guns, alcohol, or religious items.⁴⁷

It took 24 hours to row from Gambell to Chaplino in calm waters during the summer months. In 1938, the Soviet administration, while still limiting cross-border visits, did recognize the legitimacy of these actions between the related Eskimo groups.⁴⁸

With the advent of World War 2, a period of warm diplomatic relations existed between America and the USSR, primarily due to the lend lease program in which U.S. aircraft were flown between Alaska and different sites in Chukotka. The Eskimos contributed to the war effort, mainly through reindeer breeding activities, and even as soldiers.⁴⁹ The war years were difficult for many settlements: the normal Soviet supply mechanisms did not provide sufficient food and materials to the villages as most resources were directed to the war front.⁵⁰ Despite the relaxation of tensions, Eskimos in the Providenski District were still under the same basic restrictions as imposed by Party officials, and could not travel easily to Alaska.

Upon cessation of the war, Bering Strait relations worsened for the Eskimo. The dawning of the *Cold War* between America and the Soviets sparked a dramatic cessation of cross-border traffic.

In August 1947, three Eskimos from Chaplino rowed to Gambell (St. Lawrence Island), and upon their return, all travel ended.⁵¹ In the following spring, the 1938 border agreement (a ten-year pact signed earlier between the two nations dealing with native travel) was not renewed.⁵² In 1948, an "ice curtain" arose dividing the waters of the strait with an artificial line that would not be crossed for another forty years.

For the Eskimos of the Chukotka coast, this forced separation isolated these people from the traditions and activities of their Alaskan relatives, pushing them further into the Soviet orbit.

Socialist construction in Chukotka during this period was characterized by further development of the collective farm and co-operative systems, greater participation of Eskimos in Party cells, increased educational opportunities, further modernization, and a concentration of the population into larger areas through a process called *ukrupneniya* (resettlement). The cooperatives expanded their operations in conjunction with state plans: Eskimos began interacting with Communist Party organs on a greater basis, primarily serving on local soviets and executive committees, and assisting the administration of state cooperatives. Educational opportunities for young Eskimos increased, and many began to attend university institutes in Leningrad, as well as technical training schools in Chukotka and other areas of the USSR.⁵³ Better technology was introduced to villages, electrification spread, radios and other modern appliances appeared, and new housing construction began.

Ukrupneniya, as earlier mentioned, involved the forced reset-

tlement of three Eskimo villages to alternate sites (Big Diomede to Naukon in 1948, Naukon to Lavrentia in 1958, and Chaplino (Indian Point) to New Chaplino in 1958).⁵⁴ Regional Party officials dictated the moving of these settlements--located in isolated areas difficult to supply and closest to the American coast--for logistical reasons, however, many elder Eskimos refused to relocate and a number committed suicide.⁵⁵ Eskimos still go back to these sites during the summers as they are prime fishing and hunting areas.

By 1951, most Eskimos were leaving their yarangas and moving into wooden houses, courtesy of loans made by the local government. Construction boomed over the next ten-year period, and by 1961, Soviet sources claimed that all residents had their own modern homes.⁵⁶ In the late 1950s and early sixties, the Magadan Executive Committee set out an ambitious program to establish *kolhozes* (collective farms) in Chukotka, along with the construction of apartment buildings, schools, hospitals, clubs, stores, cultural centers, public bath houses, and facilities for the intelligentsia.⁵⁷ Eskimos adopted many professions; truck drivers, teachers, doctors, writers, artists, radio operators, veterinary workers, mechanics, cooks, and other vocations. Literacy among the population was increased, though later at the expense of the Eskimo language.⁵⁸ Soviet educational use and cultivation of the native dialects continued during the 1950s, but the orientation would change a decade later.

Activities in the maintenance of spiritual culture continued on a more subdued level. The Soviets permitted celebrations of

some national holidays, especially during times of whale harvesting. Singing, dancing, ivory carving, decorative applied art, Eskimo literature (folklore, fairy tales, and lifestyles), and other forms adapted from old Eskimo traditions were now intertwined with the perspective of the new socialist ideology.⁵⁹ Eskimo themes would merge with Leninist applications and synthesize with the new conditions of life in Soviet Chukotka.

A special art school and factory for ivory carving was set up in Uelen, and native dance groups organized in various villages, yet cultural activities would remain under the watchful eye of Party functionaries obsessed with keeping the seeds of nationalism in check.⁶⁰

During the sixties, Soviet central planning accelerated the expansion of the mineral extraction industry in Chukotka, and a dramatic alignment of the population from the western and central regions of the USSR to the Far East took place. Gold mining sites and new settlements expanded around the territory, along with the infrastructure needed to support them (roads, housing, schools, stores, power generation plants, port facilities, etc.).

Eskimos, as well as other natives, quickly became a small minority among a growing mixture of peoples from various union republics, and quickly lost all control over the maintenance of their traditional lands. Ecological conditions worsened and the Eskimo philosophy of respect for the land was replaced by the designs of successive five-year plans and their implementation by industries indifferent to the fragile nature of the environment.⁶¹

These traditional lands were bankrolling the USSR with its vast treasures of gold, yet all funds derived from these operations were directed to the central government with little given back to the native people. Chukotka gold provided the Party with the resources needed for promoting their strategic foreign policies abroad, in addition to propping up their domestic economy. Financial allocations appropriated by the government for distribution to native communities ended up in the budgets of regional Party and executive committees, which subsequently diverted the funds for building up regional centers, Party buildings, and other projects far away from the Eskimo villages.⁶²

Only a trickle of funds made it back to the settlements, and the general living condition of the Eskimos remained extremely poor compared to those of non-natives just arriving in Chukotka. It was easier for Russian workers to find an apartment in a recently built settlement than for an Eskimo man looking for one in his own town.

Eskimo participation in the political realm of the USSR continued to be limited to local, district, and regional participation only. Even within their own districts, political power remained in the hands of non-natives, most of whom were relative newcomers. Eskimo political participation had early on been guaranteed by successive Soviet constitutions.⁶³

The government structure of the time had its highest administrative and legislative level in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which was comprised of two chambers, the Soviet of the Union, and the Soviet of Nationalities. Historically, Chukotka was allowed

one or two native representatives in the latter body, but no Eskimos were elected to the position.⁶⁴

The Communist Party, as embodied by the *Politburo* of the Central Committee, and Party congresses, remained the actual power in the lives of Eskimos through its successive control mechanisms from the central organs in Moscow, down to the smallest Party cells existing in local organizations and work units. Power in this setting always was exerted in a downward vertical direction and the Eskimos were forced to comply with all Party decrees. The order of Party control was as follows: 1) the Central Committee of the CPSU; 2) the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Party Committee; 3) the Magadan Oblast Party Committee; 4) the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug Party Committee; 5) the various district Party Committees; 6) the local village Party committee; 7) the Party cell in every local organization.⁶⁵

In essence, Eskimos have never had any serious input into the political machinery governing their lives and had to rely on initiatives from higher authorities aimed at improving their overall life condition.⁶⁶

It was no accident that Eskimos were conditioned to be politically passive through years of detailed control by Party leaders, government agencies, state security apparat (KGB), border guards, and other elements. The original Bolshevik statements outlining the rights of all Soviet peoples and nationalities ended up an obscure notion for regional authorities assigned control over the Eskimo settlements.

Soviet restructuring: 1985-1991

Soviet power and the condition of the Eskimo remained fixed until the beginnings of *perestroika* (restructuring) in 1985. In the exercise of personal freedom, economic control, and cultural empowerment, Eskimos had conditioned themselves to remain subservient to those forces non-cognizant of these ideas. Eskimos continued to live in a somewhat-isolated fashion within their villages; were involved in traditional forms of employment while engaging in new ones; and were fully integrated with the multifaceted people and elements comprising modern Soviet life. Much of the population was housed in large modern concrete apartment buildings with running water, electric stoves, kitchen appliances, radios and televisions, and everyday items available to the rest of the nation. For others, housing and material access was substandard.

Like Alaska, native language skills had markedly deteriorated among the youth; a result of Soviet educational policies enforcing Russian language in schools, along with successive policies both encouraging and discouraging native language study. Native literature experienced similar ups and downs based on the publishing policies prevalent at different times.

A resurgence of Eskimo identity began to emerge during the *perestroika* period, though this was done on a cautious basis: native dance groups and cultural organizations became more active and began to look across the Bering Strait once again in the hope of reunification.

Economic conditions began to worsen after 1985 among the different villages. Average wages for Eskimos in collectives were among the lowest in the nation, and the rising costs of products and transportation doomed many to living below the poverty line. While foodstuffs were subsidized and supplemented by subsistence activities, Soviet administrative structures were breaking down, central planning efforts did not deliver supplies as in former years, and local initiative continued to be suppressed.

Party authority, while being discredited, continued to make it impossible for Eskimos to devise new methods or activities which could alleviate their position. The Eskimos had no effective input into the greater issues of political involvement, economic development, control over the environment, education, cultural development, or communications.

From the earliest contact with czarist Russia up to this time, freedom continued to be an abstract idea, though it had always been the vital component of their historical existence.

New Beginnings

In 1988, the Bering Strait was reopened, marking another phase in the lives of these Eskimos. Meeting in Provideniya, Alaskan Eskimos came to reunite with friends and relatives from Chaplino, Siriniki, and other settlements. While this will be discussed later in the study, the event opened the eyes of the Chukotkans regarding the overall condition of their lives as Soviet citizens, perhaps for the first time. Subsequent visits to Alaska

allowed for direct comparisons in living conditions, lifestyles, participation in the wider society, economic and political standing, etc.

Clearly, the Chukotkans were far behind the Alaskans in asserting their rights and improving their socioeconomic situation, though it was clear that joint efforts could be conducted alongside the Alaskans for the betterment of their position within the territory and in political circles.

By 1989, the forces of change had given the Eskimos opportunities for establishing greater control with respect to their political involvement in Russia. A "Congress of Small Peoples of the Soviet North," had been convened for the first time in Moscow to represent the demands of 26 indigenous people groups occupying the northern regions of the country." This gathering sought to unite the various nationalities (a clear sign of revolt against old Soviet nationality policies) in the effort to demand greater political rights and special protection from government and industrial actions oppressing their land, culture, and language. In the opening speech to this congress, Chuner Taksami noted:

the bureaucratic command system prevented natives from taking part in local self-government, ruined the conditions for further development of traditional economies, and pushed traditional language, culture, and self-consciousness to the limits of extinction. Northern minorities have come to face a rather alarming choice: to survive or disappear."

With this congress, native associations (political organizations promoting native rights) began appearing throughout the North, including the establishment of the "Association of Native Peoples

of Chukotka and Kolyma," representing all natives of Chukotka to the national congress. District associations, such as the "AVAN" native association, and the "Yupik Society" (representing the interests of Eskimos in the Providenski District) were also organized.⁶⁹

These associations were roughly comparable to native organizations in Alaska such as the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) or regional and village corporations created under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Many politically active native entities have now developed in Chukotka such as the "Society of Professional People," "Union of Reindeer Principals," "National Feminist Union," "Young Mens Association," and "Sea and Tundra Hunters of Chukotka," with most possessing branches in the Providenski, Chukotkski, Schmidtovski, Iultinski, and Anadyrski districts.⁷⁰

These associations theoretically paved the way for greater involvement by natives in the overall administration of their lands within the Russian Republic of the USSR. Two years after the inception of the first congress, coordination of the various groups across the North remained limited due to the inability of native leaders to establish effective communication mechanisms.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many of the former restrictions imposed by Communist authority were swept away, only to be replaced with new destabilizing factors brought on by the current political crisis within the reorganized Russian Federation. The problems remain the same for natives (despite their new opportunities) as they struggle along with the rest of the nation's pop-

ulation reeling from the conversion of communist Russia to a democratic, market-oriented republic.

In the post-Soviet period, Eskimos in Chukotka have found their living conditions even more perilous with regard to the economy. In May of 1992, Eskimo, government, and business leaders from Chukotka met with their Alaskan counterparts in Provideniya for the "Four Regions Conference," an event dedicated to formulating a comprehensive development strategy for uniting the economies and peoples of the Bering Strait. Eskimos from both sides were given the opportunity to discuss a systematic approach to solving their problems.

The conference was but one of many events that would bring together natives and government entities from both nations. Traditional whaling festivals and other activities have been held on both coasts, and individual connections among families and friends are expanding, as well as corporate relations between native cultural and political associations.

As of 1996, Eskimo relations across the strait were continuing in a semi-suspended state, blocked by the logistical problems of financing, transportation, and telecommunication access, though the frequency of visits between villages in Chukotka with those in St. Lawrence Island, Diomedes, and western Alaska are increasing. These problems must be solved if the process of reintegration is to become increasingly dynamic and systematic; and represent a critical juncture in the ability of these people to redefine their existence and future role as participants in the maintenance, dev-

elopment, and administration of the Bering Strait region.

Western Alaskan Eskimos: A Village Perspective

While Alaskan Eskimos share very similar lifestyle traits with their Chukotkan relatives, there is a degree of social integration into modern American society which can be characterized as more sophisticated and participatory than those on the Chukotkan shore. In this brief expose', we will try to focus on those elements which reveal the Alaskan native approach for combining traditional and contemporary lifestyles, and do so from a more recent perspective than was presented for Chukotka.

Alaskan Eskimos along the Bering Strait base their existence on a combination of traditional subsistence activities together with efforts to compete in a cash-oriented, market-based society. For a majority of residents, hunting, fishing, and gathering constitutes a perpetual activity in the pursuit of food and other lifestyle requirements. During the summer season, all villages engage in fishing for salmon and other species--on a personal or commercial basis--and many have traditional fish camps located along the many rivers around the coast. Also, hunting for birds and small animals occurs in summer. As a people dependent on the sea for much of their resources, the Eskimos often risk their lives on both frozen sea and ocean waters in the pursuit of seal, walrus, fish, crab, whale, and polar bear.

While hunters share their game often in a communal manner (most notably with whale harvests), the rules of the hunt and the

division of game is different than Soviet Eskimo hunters who must give his harvest up to the whims of a state cooperative. On land, the Eskimo seeks the caribou, moose, and bear, while trapping for furred animals which provide clothing and a source of money. This differs from the Chukotkan experience, where individual hunting for game animals is prohibited and fur activities are conducted on a cooperative basis at a state farm--rather than by a single man tending his trap line in the wilderness.

It is this adherence to subsistence ways that differentiates these people from the dominant American culture coexisting with them, though fewer and fewer engage in true subsistence living. In return for the benefits of western technology and administration, the Eskimo sacrifices a strict calling to traditional norms, yet this is taken as a necessary condition for living in a modern society--as is true for the Chukotkans.

Aluminum boats, three wheel motorcycles, trucks, airplanes, and snow machines replaced the walrus-skinned umiak and the dog sled for land and sea travel. The Alaskans have more individual options for personal transport as three wheelers, cars, skidoos, and affordable air travel are normally unobtainable across the sea. Rifles, steel knives, and traps replaced the traditional tools of bow and arrow, flint or bone harpoons, and sinew.

Despite the conveniences of these modern tools, the Eskimos still follow the old methods while integrating new technology. This is a classic example of Eskimo adaptability which puts them in the forefront of cultures which display a superior ability to deal with

both subtle and radical change. While Eskimos are sophisticated in the ways of modern American life--with the majority of people engaged in regular occupations--many still sense the need to find a place for the old ways as a necessary counterbalance and guide for reconciling their unique identity as both Eskimo and American. Identity crises confronts those who cannot psychologically adapt.

Spiritual culture remains a vital force for many Eskimos, as evidenced by numerous native dance groups operating throughout the region; native awareness and language classes in public schools; or local and regional celebrations (ie., the whale festivals of St. Lawrence Island, community potlatches, native athletic olympics, Bering Strait Elders Conference). Native culture continues to be passed down by the elders to young people, primarily in teaching life skills and traditions. Eskimo folk mythology continues to be celebrated, and is actively composed and performed in written and dramatic (oral) settings. Native visual arts have experienced a renaissance in recent years, exhibited in the forms of carvings (ivory and natural materials including wood, stone, bone), basket weaving, skin sewing, painting, and other applications.

Prior to colonization, Alaskan Eskimos shared the same animistic spiritual traditions of their Chukotkan relatives. With the introduction of Christianity, large-scale conversion of the population took place, partly in relief to the oppressive spiritual environment propagated by many Eskimo shamans. Russian Orthodox influence was not strong in the Bering Strait, but rather it was the Protestant movement of the late 1800s and early 1900s which made

the most impact on natives of the region. By the 1950s, Christianity played an extremely important role in the lives of villagers, with Eskimo values and traditions somewhat reoriented in conformity with the new faith.

Spiritual changes are once again in the midst of today's Eskimos. A growing movement back to ancient spiritual practices is growing among the young, while Christianity remains firm within the older segment of the population, perhaps a normal development in parallel with trends exhibited across the United States.

Up until the 1970s, the villages of the Seward Peninsula, St. Lawrence Island, and Little Diomedé resembled areas that could be considered impoverished when the issues of basic services and physical living conditions were considered. Only within the last twenty years has there been such items as running water, telephones, reliable electricity, medical clinics, and social services. Even at present, some villages in the study area are without residential water and plumbing. Few villages have a resident doctor or dentist, and the majority are dependent on state and federal funding to maintain existing services. Housing is substandard in some settlements, consisting of log cabins and poorly built plywood frame homes, while most village roads are unpaved.

The history of many villages reveals a struggle to situate themselves in an area prone to environmental changes forced by ocean and weather conditions. In the past, entire villages were relocated after severe storms or because of the unavailability of game. Earlier Eskimo life can be described as a series of strug-

gles against a harsh and unforgiving environment. Adaptation was a requirement in the battle for food and shelter. These are among many elements which forced the Eskimo to develop the resiliency and fortitude necessary for survival in the Arctic. Early Soviet and American government efforts to supply natives were based on a recognition of the feast or famine nature of subsistence food procurement.⁷¹

Despite their physical appearances, all villages possess the modern conveniences which makes life easier and enjoyable. This is a perceived benefit of social integration for people who live in an environment that features seven to eight month winters, temperatures down to ninety below zero with windchill, daylight restricted to a few hours at the winter solstice, and 24-hour daylight at the summer solstice.

Televisions, videocassette recorders, stereos, CB radios, microwave ovens, kitchen conveniences, fax machines and computers are commonplace in homes, with many owning snow machines, motorcycles, cars, boats, and airplanes. Home heating is usually by wood or oil burning stoves. For a majority of villagers, the family food supply is composed of a mixture of store bought items and subsistence gatherings.

It is this reliance on outside products that creates a subtle crisis, and comparisons can be made in how Soviet and Alaskan Eskimos managed the problem. For the Alaskan, the price for entering a cash-based social economy becomes apparent for villages that have no viable economic base. Relying more on goods that require cash

for purchase presents dilemmas for villages that have extremely high unemployment rates. This in turn necessitates an overreliance on state and federal subsidization (mainly through welfare programs or municipal government grants) for the precious commodities of gasoline (for mechanized transport and electric generators, oil (heating and fuel), foodstuffs, and the technical infrastructure for village utilities and facilities.

Chukotkan Eskimos were unable to apply themselves individually to these tasks, and were forced to rely on central planning efforts to deal with these problems. The Alaskan shouldered this problem individually, though persons could be aided by extensive government support programs should he or she fail to obtain the financial resources necessary for living. Unfortunately, a welfare mentality exists among many Eskimos, as with the Chukotkans, and this status is directly opposed to the traditional mindset of the Eskimo as independent and individually responsible for the concerns of life.

In many villages, proper financial management was a problem, due to inexperienced management of native leaders, lack of educational training, fraud by outside financial advisors, depletion of initial cash reserves from government appropriations, and developmental interference from private, commercial, and government sources.

A continuous struggle to maintain and protect traditional land and sea areas from overuse or uncontrolled development remains a major task for Eskimo leaders. It is the land and sea which pro-

vides the food needed to survive, as well as the natural resources (oil, minerals, game) necessary to strengthen the Eskimo position in the political, economic, and social spheres. As previously noted, the Eskimos of Chukotka face the same dilemmas. It is under this forecast that the need for native control over communications becomes apparent in meeting the challenges of the future.

Sociopolitical History and Education: An Overview

Education and political structures have changed dramatically over the past twenty five years. Before the arrival of Euro-American colonization, the Eskimo culture possessed a sovereign governing system based on tribal leadership (like Chukotka), with laws based on the demands of their environment. As the arrival and influence of these outside societies emerged, there occurred a parallel submersion of indigenous governing structures.⁷² Historic precedents (resulting from tribal-U.S. Government treaties and Congressional rulings) had inhibited Eskimo goals for self-determination and other rights.⁷³

Time and continued occupation by non-natives seeking adventure and fortune along the strait limited the ability of native leaders to maintain their historic ruling strength. Land claims were made on their hunting grounds, Eskimo children were forced into schools proclaiming a foreign way of life, cultural identity was denigrated and Eskimo languages were suppressed.

Eskimo knowledge of the land and sea had little place in a world which relied on machinery, canned food, and cash. Even

earlier, the Eskimo relegated himself to a position of servitude during a period spanning from the early Russian occupation, the great whaling efforts in the late 1800s, and the Alaskan gold rush; to the mass relocation operations of the American military during World War 2, and the consequent immigration period up to, and following the establishment of Alaska statehood.⁷⁴

During the 1960s, native political consciousness emerged and collectively organized among diverse native groups in the state, and Eskimos were effective leaders in this development. The Alaska Federation of Natives was founded and major inroads were made in forcing the government to adopt positions promoting Eskimo assimilation into the mainstream of America on an equitable basis.⁷⁵

Concurrent with this was the recognition of native rights, identity, participation in the formulation of government policies affecting natives, and a voice in the management of services provided to the villages. While the geographical separation would maintain a degree of isolation between these remote villages and the outside, the federal government maintained a policy that sought a systematic development of Eskimos through educational, economic, and political methods. Again, there are parallels in this context to the Soviet position of Eskimo incorporation and development.

Improvements in public education were made during this time. The Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), an equivalent to the Soviet "Committee of the North," built elementary schools in a number of villages along the Bering Strait. In Unalakleet, a private high school founded by the Evangelical Covenant Church of America

represented the only high school available for students in the region.⁷⁶ Until this time (1958), students were forced to leave their villages to attend high school, most notably at Mt. Edgecome High School, a BIA school in Southeast Alaska. This trend played a major role in shaping the minds of Eskimo young people toward a western outlook on life, precisely at the most formative time of their lives. Many of the top native leaders were graduates of these two schools, and the opportunities for a university education became more accessible for Eskimo students.

The old traditional passing on of native hunting and mental skills from the elders to the young men and women was inhibited by this process of forced relocation for achieving government-mandated education, and was similar to the Soviet Eskimo experience of forced attendance at Russian language boarding schools.

During the time just prior to 1971, the political power of the Bering Strait region grew as the state began to grant second-class city status to most of the villages. Along with this status came powers of civil administration, taxation, eligibility for the operation and control of federally financed programs, including health care, employment assistance, social services, and tribal operations. This conferral of authority upon local leaders was a recognition of political sovereignty far beyond that given to natives under Soviet administration. Second-class cities contained two local governing boards: the state-recognized municipal government, and the federally recognized tribal councils (based on the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act by the U.S. Congress).⁷⁷

Although each village traditionally recognized the tribal council as the true ruling entity, it was now realized that the people were under a four-tiered government authority (tribal, municipal, state, and federal). The sowing of power struggles emerged throughout these levels: this system was not unlike the Party and government committees set over Eskimos in the Providenski District with its myriad levels of administration.

With the discovery of oil reserves in Alaska's Prudhoe Bay region, the federal government recognized the need to settle the long standing issue of Alaska native land rights and compensation for past claims.⁷⁸ This was seen as paramount to solving certain legal and logistical problems that would be encountered in constructing the trans-Alaska pipeline envisioned for transporting oil from Prudhoe to Valdez. The recognition that native political power could upset this plan remained in the minds of oil industry executives, state officials, and federal government agencies. In essence, the project would be an economic boon to all involved, including the state government and the various native groups who would be recipients of its social services.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon signed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANSCA) which recognized the validity of aboriginal claims to the land and its resources.⁷⁹ The act created twelve regional native corporations which would oversee the distribution and control of over forty million acres of land, in addition to a cash disbursement of nearly one billion dollars.⁸⁰ The money was considered an investment capital base for native people and a

way to promote economic development in rural areas.

In the Bering Strait region, village corporations were established in every settlement to represent local interests while serving as subsidiaries to a regional corporation called the Bering Strait Native Corporation. Under the regional unit was created a non-profit social agency called Kawerak Inc. Each village now had five jurisdictional elements in operation, further blurring the defining line of authority from the tribal to federal level.

The major benefit to villages came as a result of these financial allocations and the new found wealth of the State of Alaska through revenues generated by taxation of the Prudhoe Bay fields. The state began a reallocation of revenues to the Bering Strait in the form of numerous construction projects and social services. Telecommunication interconnection began around the state, providing telephones to villages long denied such service. Education was greatly enhanced with the building of public elementary and high schools in every village that requested them.⁹¹ The University of Alaska expanded into a system of thirteen colleges scattered across the state: all levels of education could be obtained either by attending classes on campus or through distance delivery methods.

During these boom times, expectations among the Eskimos rose dramatically as oil sparked a new phase in their social integration. Money no longer appeared to be the primary problem for implementing services; the problems involved effectiveness and long term success. In the spheres of education, economics, and politics, effectiveness was contingent upon planning efforts that were

designed in ways that reconciled the needs of Eskimos to the outside systems and philosophies that were being applied to those spheres. Eskimo awareness and political clout gained momentum during this period resulting in a vibrant movement seeking to influence all areas of the state.

The State of Alaska and the Eskimo population encountered a period of economic and social upheaval during the late 1980s and early 1990s, partially resulting from years of boom and bust management strategies, fiscal inefficiency and waste, the collapse of world oil prices, and the steadily decreasing output of the Prudhoe Bay fields. Revenue from oil provides approximately 80% of the state's budget, and with the decline of petrodollars, the Alaska government eliminated a number of capital projects, community revenue-sharing programs, state jobs and programs, and forced a number of social service cutbacks throughout rural Alaska.

The study region is now faced with economic austerity based on a number of criteria. The Nome-based Bering Straits Native Corporation has faced continued problems in financial solvency, along with many village corporations. Government subsidies for essential services such as health clinics, police, fire, and housing were reduced, and many past investments by native organizations have failed. While the Kotzebue-based NANA Corporation is now financially sound as a result of the Red Dog Zinc Mine development, most native villages of the area are still struggling with their economic base. Mineral development remains a primary component for ensuring native financial solvency, though access to reserves is

not universal to all native corporations. Further, many native organizations are indecisive on their fiscal and planning strategies, and the fight to maintain essential services for the native constituency continues.

The Eskimo population in the study area is faced with creating new modes of management and operation of their communities which avoids mistakes of the past. To many comes a realization of the need to redevelop native subsistence skills to supplement scarce monetary supplies. In essence, the Eskimos need to redefine how to survive in the land which their ancestors managed to do for the last 4000 years. It is a readaptation quest requiring the cooperation of the western system to which they belong.

While communications in Alaska remains well developed on a technical basis with increasingly new services available, there is a general vacuum existing among the native communities in harnessing the power of telecommunication technologies. Fax and data services are commonly used by Alaska's native corporations, but broadcast capabilities are severely restricted. It is often unclear why this state of affairs exists given the general ability of native leaders to define goals and strategies which lend support to native development.

Chukotka's Eskimos can only dream about the opportunities currently available to their Alaskan brethren, and it is of interest to this study to find out how they might strategize their involvement with communications media in ways different from the Alaskan experience. It is a paradox that in a fiber optic society,

media technology remains underutilized by a people who can easily harness its potential, given the will.

Conclusions

In reference to Stenbaek (1991), who provides a model of indigenous broadcasting based on an interconnected power relationship of economic, political, and communication forces, it is clear that the adaptation and control over broadcasting by Eskimos on both sides must be obtained if these people are to be more effective in their struggle for achieving greater self-sufficiency and power in these spheres.⁸²

It is the hope of this study to comparatively assess the conditions experienced by these unique peoples with broadcast media, in the quest to point out ways for taking control of the mediums which can have a dramatic impact on the direction their lives will take.

NOTES

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8. Vladimir Yatta, former chairman, New Chaplino Village Soviet, interview by author, 20 May 1992, New Chaplino, Russia, tape recording; Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author, 20 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

9. Michael Krauss, "History of the Bering Strait." Lecture presented at the Crossroads of Continents Symposium, Anchorage, Alaska. April, 1991. Tape recording by author.

10. Don Croner, "Chukotka: An Overview," Russian Far East Vol. 1, no. 1 (1991), 25; Haycox, History of Alaska: Studies in Alaska History, 11.

11. G.A. Menovshikov, Eskimos, 13.

12. Tasian Tien, Northwest Complex, Far East Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, interview by author, 8 March 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

13. Tasien Tien, "The Development of Education among the Eskimos, 1992," p. 2, unpublished manuscript, Special Collections, Northwest Complex, Far East Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Magadan, Russia.

14. Hunt, Arctic Passage, 23.

15. M. A. Sergeyev. "THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM AMONG THE PEOPLES OF NORTHERN SIBERIA AND THE SOVIET FAR EAST," in THE PEOPLES OF SIBERIA, ed. M. G. Levin and L. P. Potarov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 487.

16. Richard A. Pierce, "Russian and Soviet Eskimo and Indian Policies," HANDBOOK OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1989), 125.

17. Tasian Tien, "Description of National Politics of the Communist Party of the USSR," p. 3, unpublished manuscript, Special Collections, Northwest Complex, Far East Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Magadan, Russia.

18. Ibid., 1.

19. Ibid.

20. Igor Riga, interview by author, 10 February 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

21. Vitaly Zadorin, interview by author, 11 January 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

22. Pierce, "Russian and Soviet Eskimo and Indian Policies," 126.

23. M. A. Sergeyev, "The Building of Socialism among the Peoples of Northern Siberia and the Far East," 491.

24. Ibid., 498.

25. See Tien, Pierce, Sergeyev, and Zadorin. These authors comment on the early impact of Soviet authority upon the Eskimo.

26. Alexander Omripkir, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

27. Pierce, "Russian and Soviet Eskimo and Indian Policies," 125.

28. Ibid., 126.

29. Tien, "Development of Education among the Eskimos," 1.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., 4.

32. The problems of the early boarding schools were often discussed by a variety of people and sources during this author's interviews with Eskimos in Chukotka.

33. M. A. Sergeyev, 493.

34. Ibid., 498.

35. Menovshikov, Eskimos, 13.

36. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording; M. A. Sergeyev, 499.

37. Alexander Nikolayev, Northwest Complex, Far Eastern Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, interview by author, 8 March 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

38. Pierce, 126.

39. Nikolayev, interview by author.

40. Menovshikov, Eskimos, 13. The first Eskimo alphabet was based on a latin script, but a later Party decree forced the transition of the alphabet to a cyrillic script. Eskimo philologist and journalist Ludmilla Aynana noted that it was too difficult for Eskimo children to learn Russian with its cyrillic script, while studying Eskimo in the latin script at the same time. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author, 20 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

41. Menovshikov, 14.

42. Pierce, 126.

43. Vladimir Silchenko, interview by author, 19 November 1991, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.
44. Pierce, 126.
45. Ibid.
46. Observation made while this author visited the settlement of New Chaplino, Russia, May 1992.
47. Michael Krauss, "A History of the Bering Strait."
48. Ibid.
49. Sergeyev, 509.
50. Vitaly Zadorin, interview by author.
51. Vladimir Yatta, interview by author.
52. U. S. Department of State, VISITS TO SIBERIA BY AMERICAN ESKIMOS, memorandum of the Ambassador of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to the U.S. Department of State, 26 March and 18 April 1938, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State files.
53. Tien, "Development of Education among the Eskimos," 6.
54. Vladimir Yatta, interview by author.
55. Ibid.
56. Menovshikov, Eskimos, 2.
57. Ibid.
58. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.
59. Tasian Tien, "Eskimo Spiritual Culture," p. 4, [1992] unpublished manuscript, Special Collections, Northwest Complex, Far East Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Magadan, Russia:
60. Tasian Tien, interview by author.
61. Arkady Kudrya, Novosti Press Agency, Moscow, Russia, "Soviet Northerners begin to take matters in Hand," Anchorage Daily News, 11 May 1990, B7.
62. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.
63. Sergeyev, 488.

64. Chuner Taksami, interview by author, 10 May 1992, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.

65. This hierarchy was made known to this writer through personal visits to Russia, and conversations held while meeting various Party and government officials over the course of three years between 1988-1991.

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67. Jens Dahl, "Introduction: The 26 Small Peoples of the Soviet North," International Work Group For Indigenous Affairs 1 (July/August 1991): 11.

68. Chuner Taksami, "Opening Speech at the Congress of Small Indigenous Peoples of the Soviet North," International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs 1 (July/August 1991): 25.

69. Alexander Omripkir, Chairman, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

70. Ibid.

71. Vladimir Yatta, interview by author.

72. Tasien Tien, "Description of National Politics of the Communist Party of the USSR," unpublished document, Special Collections, Northwest Complex, Far Eastern Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Magadan, Russia, 1992.

73. Stephen Haycox, History of Alaska: Studies in Alaskan History (Anchorage, Alaska: University of Alaska Anchorage, 1991), 25.

74. Alaska was granted statehood in 1959, thus solidifying the U. S. Government's administration over the Bering Strait region.

75. For a good overview of native Alaskan political efforts in the 1960's see; Lael Morgan, The Life and Times of Alaskan Howard Rock (Fairbanks, Alaska: Epicenter Press, 1988). This book details the emergence of this native political movement, but the assertions in this study have been made by personal observation through years of contact with many Eskimo leaders across Alaska.

76. This information was gathered while this author served as a high school teacher at Covenant High School, Unalakleet, Alaska from 1982-1984.

77. Haycox, 38.

78. Ibid., 45.

79. Ibid., 43.

80. The total sums allocated by the ANSCA act was approximately \$962,000,000.

81. This act was due to the "Molly Hootch" court case which resulted in the state offering to build public high schools in villages which had at least 15 high school aged students.

82. Marianne Stenbaek, "The Politics of Cultural Survival: Towards a Model of Indigenous Television," in Communications in the North, ed. Marianne Stenbaek (Montreal: P.S. Presse, 1992), 100.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Background to the Literature Search

Given the fact that this study is international in scope, the following section will make references to databases obtainable from sources in the United States, Canada, and those located in Russia. In seeking materials delineating the Soviet experience of Eskimos and media, information relating to this study was primarily obtained from interviews with participants in the Soviet-Russian mass media, since no Soviet analyses were found which specifically addressed the research questions posed by this study.

Some materials were accessed from the Chukotka State Government Archives, located in Anadyr, Russia, in addition to source material located at the Pushkin Library in Magadan, Russia. Because of the inherent secrecy by those in charge of the region's communication systems, including state security (KGB) and military administrations, some archives possessing material of relevance to the study were closed to this writer, forcing a reliance on personal interviews of primary sources to fill in missing data.

The research period on the Russian portion was begun one month following the August 1991 coup in Moscow, and continued for five years, allowing this writer to witness the dissolution of the USSR and the subsequent reorganization of media in the Russian Republic. Many of the interviews conducted with leading officials in charge of different communication and mass media systems in the

region came at a time when these same officials were being forced from their Party-appointed positions. On numerous occasions, these officials declined to provide detailed answers regarding the supervision of their operations since the questions posed sought explanations for the rationale and implementation of now-repudiated Communist Party policies in communication and mass media operations for which they carried out. Further, early archival material outlining the beginnings of the press in Magadan Oblast were allegedly destroyed by fire in a Magadan state archive.¹

With these points in mind, this study hopes to be as exacting as possible in setting out dates, actions, and characteristics of the media in Magadan Oblast and Chukotka, given the described difficulties in collecting reliable information. Subsequent interviews in the interim period (to 1996) with many of the same individuals surveyed in 1991 and 1992, revealed more in-depth material of a previously sensitive nature.

Since there is no authoritative study outlining the history of broadcasting in the Russian Far East to the present time--or of the role of Eskimos in this development--this dissertation can make a tangible contribution to understanding the historical dynamics of mass media in the region, as well as its impact on these people.

There are numerous writings by American and Soviet scholars outlining the development and general characteristics of the Soviet mass media, ie., Schramm (1956), Markham (1967), Conquest (1967), Hopkins (1970), Hollander (1972), Ivanova (1974), Mickiewicz (1979), Washburn (1992), the Large Soviet Encyclopedia, as well as

numerous reports in the Soviet, American, and European press.² Sections of these works provide comparative references between Soviet and American positions on press foundations and operations which are useful for this study. Further, these studies provided a clear background of central media up to the period of *glasnost* (openness) beginning in 1985, and many authors have undertaken analyses describing the transition of media during this period, ie., Mickiewicz (1988), Young and Launer (1991), McNair (1991), Muratov (1991), Vartanov (1991), Androunas (1991), and others.³ These analyses were finished before the August 1991 coup and are consequently dated: there is much reorganization of media since their writings, yet their contributions do provide relevant background to analyze ongoing press developments.

Between September 1991 and January 1996, this writer gleaned information from central television reports, the English version of Moscow News, The Moscow Tribune, The Moscow Times, and The St. Petersburg Times; various Russian language newspapers and magazines, as well as personal interviews in the effort to assess the role of media during the study period. The transition of mass media has been striking, both in its restructuring and operations since the demise of the Union, hence the relevancy of this study in providing up to date material on current media in the Far East.

Telecommunications and Broadcasting in Chukotka

This issue can be roughly divided into three basic phases: early telecommunication/telegraph efforts from 1865 to 1923; the

Soviet period from 1924 to 1987; and 1987 to the post-Soviet era. The first phase can be defined from the beginnings of the Western Union Telegraph Extension project, as amply discussed by Vivier (1959), Hunt (1975), and Leontiev and Novikova (1989), which heralds the advent of telecommunication efforts in the region and the subsequent adaptation of telegraphy on both coasts of the Bering Strait.⁴ Riga (1992), Dikov (1974, 89), Hunt (1975), and Zhurakov (1992), provide historical sketches of telegraph and telephony development on the Chukotka Peninsula and western Alaska up to the beginnings of the Soviet takeover of Chukotka in 1923.⁵

Continuing with the second phase of Soviet communications and press in Magadan Oblast and Chukotka, Ivanova (1974), provides the only overview of mass media development in Magadan Oblast, focusing primarily on print developments, though some descriptive material on the introduction of radio and television is presented.⁶ Chukotka was just at the initial stages of television introduction when Ivanova concluded her study, and native participation with the medium was still in a developing stage. Dikov and Riga added to the literature regarding communication developments during this period, though their information consisted of short descriptive references concerning historical dates in communication history as elements within wider treatments outlining the political, economic, and sociocultural history of pre and post-Soviet Chukotka.

The bulk of information from Soviet sources during this period takes the form of various newspaper, magazine, and government reports written chiefly (though not exclusively) by administrators

in charge of the various Party, media, and communication committees within the Magadan territory.' Silchenko, Radchenko, Chuganov, Ivanov, Riga, and a few other individuals represent the main contributors to public knowledge concerning the technical and administrative developments of radio, television, and telecommunications of Magadan and Chukotka from the late 1970s until 1988.'

It must be noted, however, that a majority of these reports were written in response to directives issued by Party organs responsible for overseeing the implementation of the *pyatiletka* (five year economic plans formulated by Party congresses), or as part of media campaigns celebrating national holidays or events, ie., the Day of Radio (May 7) and others. In addition, reporting on communication systems and their operations were within the realm of state secret protection elements, and given its proximity to Alaska, special measures were taken not to reveal the true condition of broadcast and telecommunication systems.

Western scholars must be careful in placing too much credence into the accuracy of these reports, as over-estimation of capabilities and negative comparisons directed at capitalist countries emerged as common themes throughout. While this state of affairs existed across the USSR as a normal compliment to Communist Party press policies, the trend of falsified reporting seems to have included Magadan Oblast, though perhaps on a lesser scale. Many reports obtained were written within the framework of stating future plans and the current measures aimed at achieving them.

The third phase--characterized by increasing relaxation of

press controls during the latter stages of perestroika and glasnost, and the reestablishment of American-Soviet relations across the Bering Strait in 1988--created new working conditions for Soviet journalists in state print and broadcast media, while ushering in new broadcast and telecommunication developments between Alaska and Chukotka.

The conditions of the former, ie., the new media environment emerging within state structures, has been the focus of many scholars mentioned previously, though they are not specific on the Soviet Far East and other regions. These studies provide general descriptions concerning the operational realities of print and broadcast media under the climate and definitions of glasnost. They also address the implications presented by the telecommunications revolution within the USSR, and take note of structural changes in the country--encompassing media, societal, and ideological systems.

Guilder (1987), assesses how new communication technologies act as change agents upon the Soviet media system and larger society: he describes how personal access to western ideas via this technology functions within a growing process of replacing traditional Soviet collectivist values with individualist, western values.⁹ Shears (1988), presents a lucid critique on the boundaries and limitations of glasnost-era media, detailing the paradoxical nature of Soviet attempts to fuse democratization with a political structure bent on maintaining Leninist-style press controls.¹⁰

This aspect of media in transition has been given treatment by Soviet writers and journalists on a national level. When apply-

ing this to the district and regional level, Sovietskaya Chukotka (Anadyr, Russia) and Vostok Rossii (Magadan, Russia), emerged early on as champions of a democratic press (1989) and contributed reports assessing the role of media within the transition of the USSR and its impact on local press conditions. Considering the pressure exerted by Communist Party elements against democratization of the press in these cities, their reports add substance to the literature available to scholars interested in understanding mass media from a macro to microcosmic level in the former Soviet Union.¹¹

We now approach the second development in this third media phase, namely, the impact of the border opening along the Bering Strait on international communication developments. To date, there has been no systematic study of the role of mass media in this process, nor of the participation of Eskimos in this context. The reader should be aware that this writer was the first to propose satellite broadcast coverage of the initial event which opened the border (the "Nome-Provideniya Friendship Flight"), and initiated numerous broadcast projects linking Magadan Oblast and Chukotka to Alaska.

A series of articles appearing in the magazine Alascom Spectrum, published by Alascom, Inc. (Alaska's main telecom carrier) has detailed the use of satellite communications in covering the first series of events initiating the border opening and the later telephone interconnection linking both sides of the Bering Strait.¹² Literature in the form of news reports can be found in Alaskan papers and magazines, as well as newspapers in Chukotka and Magadan

which narrates Soviet-American interaction through rapidly expanding political, economic, educational, and cultural exchanges.¹³ Some papers have written about broadcast exchanges across the strait, primarily in connection with a series of satellite earth stations constructed in the towns of Provideniya, Anadyr, and Magadan by this writer.¹⁴

Timakov and Bikmuhametov (1990), have compiled a historical synopsis of the beginnings of the Alaska-Soviet Far East relationship, tracing the activities of a few of the key personalities in this context.¹⁵ While no other book-length analyses have been published at the time of this study, it should be noted that a few television news documentaries have been produced which cover specific aspects of this development.¹⁶

Eskimo Broadcasting in Chukotka

At the time this study was initiated, no literature in both Soviet or American databases could be found which analyzed the development of Eskimo language broadcasting and print media in Chukotka, as well as its general interaction within the Soviet broadcast system. While Alaskan, Canadian, and Greenlandic Inuit have been the subject of diverse analyses over the past twenty years, there has been silence among northern communication researchers in addressing the Eskimos of Chukotka until recently. This dissertation was begun in order to provide benchmark data in the comparative study of media utilization by Alaskan and Chukotkan Eskimos to partially fill this information void. The reader should note that

Soviet political policies were partially responsible for this state of affairs as Chukotka was off limits to westerners seeking such data. The most recent addition to the literature from a comparative perspective comes from Michel Perrot (1992), who has included a brief expose' on Chukotka native broadcasting within his analysis dealing with radio and television in Inuit societies across the circumpolar North.¹⁷

The Soviet media has always maintained an interest in describing the life of Eskimos, undoubtedly because of their unique culture, yet Eskimos were most often connected in media reports to the general socioeconomic development of Chukotka.¹⁸ Regional media tended to devise programming about Eskimos (whether by natives in Yupik, or non-native journalists) centered on themes related to culture, or socioeconomic and political issues. Information detailing Eskimo coverage in national and regional media could not be found in communication databases, so this study obtained relevant facts through interviews with Soviet central television correspondents assigned to Magadan Oblast (ie., Gerosimov, Radchenko); and regional journalists responsible for Chukotka (Berling, Shmelova, Ljubosh, Haliuleen, Ivanov, Omruvie, Aynana, Verbitskaya, Togiak, Enmenkow, Karablova).¹⁹

There was no literature found which investigates Alaskan Eskimo utilization of Soviet broadcasting in the Yupik language, nor of Soviet Eskimo utilization of Alaskan broadcasting in Yupik. This is interesting in that both groups have had access to each other's radio services sporadically over a number of years, yet research

has not been done to address questions pertaining to the role of radio in the reintegration process of these peoples. In addition, since television programming in the Yupik language was not available to Chukotka Eskimos from state broadcast services (but is now emerging), new areas of investigation looking at the impact of native language programming on cultural autonomy, national development, and language preservation can present themselves. Also, new initiatives in private media (ie., cable networks, and local origination of radio and television services) will merit analysis.

The lack of literature available on Chukotka Eskimo media was a stimulus to this researcher in addressing the future development of cross-border Eskimo media activities, as well as the task of applying past media research on northern natives to a better understanding of Chukotka's communication and development scenario.

Broadcast System Developments Along the Bering Strait (Alaska)

This section is concerned only with identifying sources in the literature which provide information on broadcast infrastructure developments in rural Alaska impacting the Bering Strait region.

Radio

Radio was the first broadcast medium to reach Eskimos along the strait. Regional radio specifically targeted to the Eskimo population in the study area began in 1960, and expanded through combinations of government, private, and public enterprise.²⁹

Fondell (1992), gave this writer an account of radio on the Seward Peninsula, describing the operations of KICY Radio (Nome), its programming, listener base, and impact on inter-village communication.²¹ Renner (1985), provides a biographical sketch of radio in support of Catholic missions in the Bering Strait through the work KNOM Radio in Nome.²² The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission has published comprehensive guides on the establishment of public radio stations in Kotzebue, Bethel, and Barrow, giving the reader a brief look at the implementation and character of state-supported public radio.²³

Gordon Scott Harrison (1972), assessed the expansion of radio services available to Eskimos in northwest Alaska in a study on the use and impact of mass media in native villages.²⁴ He described general conditions of radio utilization and programming by stations located in Nome, Kotzebue, Bethel, and Anchorage, suggesting that radios were not symbolic expressions of modernity, but tools playing a pivotal role in interpersonal and social communication.

Since there are only four "free dispersion" radio broadcast stations serving the specific region under study, the previous references can provide the reader with a good view of radio development. Numerous surveys have been conducted over the last fifteen years, but these provide assessments on listening patterns and programming rather than on system developments.²⁵

Hudson (1977), provides a comparative look at the introduction of radio services to Eskimos in the Canadian North, describing the beginnings of community stations (under the "community access

approach"), the role of government in establishing such services, and radio's utility in the development process affecting this population.²⁶ Stenbaek (1992), adds further comparisons of radio development among the Inuit from the perspective of Greenland, via her description of the emergence of radio services leading up to the creation of *Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa* (KNR--Greenland Radio).²⁷

Television

John Thomas Duncan, in his study "Alaska Broadcasting, 1922-77: An Examination of Government Influence," provides a composite view of broadcast development in Alaska, touching upon experimental television projects and state telecommunication policies which led to the establishment of satellite television services to rural villages previously untouched by the medium.²⁸ Madigan and Peterson (1974) describe the introduction of television to a small village on the Bering Strait (Wales) while numerous authors provide information on isolated telecommunication projects (namely some of the early television experiments) and subsequent distribution of services to rural Alaska, ie., Orvik (1977), Filep (1977), Porcaro (1977), Foote (1977), Rainery (1984), Forbes (1984), Johnson (1986), Daley and James (1992).²⁹

Additional literature on systems development can be found in documents from the State of Alaska (Department of Administration Division of Telecommunications; House Special Committee on Telecommunications; Office of Management and Budget; Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission), and media consulting firms. Using these

sources, an overall framework of systems development in western Alaska can be formed. Orvik, et al. (1978), and Forbes, et al. (1984, 1985), generated early longitudinal studies on the social and cognitive effects created by initial and subsequent viewing of television in rural Alaska, and other writers have produced impact assessments on television services to the state in both private-commercial and state-sponsored modes.³⁰

Coldevin (1976, 1977, 1979), O'Connel (1977), Granzberg, et. al (1977), Caron (1979), Ganley (1979), and Coldevin and Wilson (1985), provide initial historical and longitudinal effects analyses documenting the establishment of television in the Canadian North, beginning with the CBC Frontier Coverage Package (1967), the Anik A-Frontier Television Service (1972), and the "Inukshuk" Inuit broadcasting project.³¹

Numerous writers have added to the literature concerning the developmental status of television in its early and later stages directed toward and manipulated by Eskimos in Canada, as well as the impact and effects of such services. Their analyses provide relevant background information in developing comparisons on the utilization of broadcast services by Eskimos in Chukotka and the Canadian arctic.

Pearson (1991), provides a useful survey of cable television penetration into rural Alaska, in a study assessing Alaskan's use of communications media.³² Other descriptions of cable penetration are available in reports by previously mentioned State of Alaska agencies, though they are dated. Cable television is emerging as

an important factor in determining the future of state-supported television broadcasting to the Eskimo villages, yet the literature base is negligible at present.

Perspectives on Communications
and the Eskimo

It has been noted that there exists a wealth of literature concerning the introduction and impact of broadcast media on non-western, traditional societies, along with subsequent developments by these societies in participating with and harnessing the power of mass communications.

Of relevance to Eskimos of Alaska, the literature on broadcasting roughly covers the following issues: theoretical treatises on communication and development; development of radio, television, and satellite broadcasting to remote regions; social and behavioral effects of broadcast media; state-sponsored broadcasting services; government telecommunication-broadcast policies and administration; native participation in broadcast services and programming; telecommunications in education; media and cultural dependency, integration, autonomy, and replacement; descriptive analyses of programming directed to rural Alaskans; anthologies of broadcasting in Alaska; problems in commercial versus state-sponsored broadcasting; as well as other issues not directly touching the scope of this study.³³

While not expressly the focus of this investigation, it should be noted that Canadian research on mass communications in the Far North provides abundant materials of relevance for under-

standing the nature of broadcasting upon the Eskimo in Alaska and subsequently, Chukotka. Canadian studies have greatly expanded the knowledge of media from a variety of perspectives, and some will be touched upon in this study.

Communications: National Development

General research trends began with the early communication and development paradigms, ie., Lasswell (1952), Lerner (1958), Schramm (1964), and Rogers (1962), which analyzed the process of modernization through the introduction of mass communications to third world nations.³⁴ Their theories were not expressly directed toward development within the United States, ie., to Eskimos of Alaska encountering modernization, but some aspects would apply.

The dominant paradigm espoused through these scholars was based on American and European models of development transplanted to the emerging nations: such models sought economic growth through industrialization and urbanization based on the importation of capital-intensive technology. Samarajiva and Shields (1990), described the paradigm's tendencies: from the standpoint of communications in this development process, technological innovation and central mass media planning were designed to convey information from central agencies to opinion leaders and then down to the masses, transforming "traditional" habits of thinking and behaving, achieving literacy, promoting the adoption of western belief systems, values, and modes of social, economic, and political organization.³⁵

Schramm (1964), emphasized the centrality of mass communications to successful social change, focusing on how media could function in a manner cognizant of existent mobilizing factors affecting integration.³⁶ Katz and Wedell (1977), describe radio listening and newspaper reading as the psychological bricks of nation building.³⁷ Again, these scholars present their models based on a one-way media orientation of the old development paradigm, assuming the processes (as conceived from western theoretical foundations) could properly guide the forces of integration to the satisfaction of those within the society.

Soviet communication and development models--based on Marx's materialist theory of history, Lenin's understanding of propaganda and its channels of dissemination, and Soviet nationality policies reflected some similarities to the paradigm in the effort to direct modernization efforts aimed at Eskimos within Chukotka using print and broadcast media.³⁸

Alaskan Eskimos would eventually fit the prescriptions of the paradigm via their consumption of radio and television--deemed by government authorities as vital tools for extending the activities and social orientation of the larger American society to the remote native populations. Instilling social, cultural, political, and economic cohesion between these Eskimos with a homogenized multi-racial American society seemed a logical outcome of the designs of this paradigmatic construct. However, the attainment of cohesion was not without costs for the Eskimo society.

To scholars such as Friere (1970), the dominant paradigm no

longer provided a useful benchmark because of its underlying notions of economic domination and cultural imperialism: its predictions did not hold true for emerging societies still unable to develop in conformity with western expectations, and media technologies served as an element in the process of cultural replacement.³⁹

Canadian researchers came to different conclusions regarding the direction that mass communications were taking in the process of modernization and integration of native peoples in the Far North. Innis (1951), challenged the view of the old paradigm from its inception, concluding that central mass media acted to expand the interests of the powerful via a "cultural shift," ie., one culture based on time-binding modes of communication becoming dominated by another adhering to space-binding media.⁴⁰ Social change through the interface of cultures was defined by terms conditioned through the communicative mode of the larger non-native society.

Valaskakis (1991), documents the recognition by Canadian scholars of an emerging "dependency paradigm" of integration. This rested on an understanding of the symbiotic relationship between dominant and peripheral peoples in the modernization process and the role of media in this context. Communications technology, institutions, and images were seen as generators of marginalization (rather than integration), economic centralization, cultural fragmentation and dependency--while effecting political control.⁴¹

Rogers (1976), earlier noted the emergence of a new "diffusion" paradigm, formulated as a result of alternative ways of

conceptualizing the development process, and stressing a decentralized, participatory approach. Development was now seen as a widely participatory process of social change intended to secure social and material advancement by gaining greater control over one's environment. Increased responsibility for self-development and media control on the village level was construed as the best solution for adapting mass media to the conditions of development as defined by the indigenous populations themselves.

This model would ultimately find expression in the modern-day development of mass communications among the Eskimo/Inuit of the circumpolar North, though to a greater degree in Canada and Greenland than in Alaska.⁴²

Since mass communications serve as connecting agents between Eskimos and the governing societies administering their lands--as well as technological tools for facilitating cultural cohesion within their own social environment--the reader should note that relevant analyses examining communication in the process of socio-cultural autonomy, integration and indigenous broadcasting are abundant, and can reveal the complexities which this study purposefully will not dwell upon.

Much literature exists concerning the impact of broadcasting on non-western traditional societies. When applied to the native people of Alaska, the wealth of scholarly research narrows roughly down to reports on television effects, initial developments of satellite communication to remote regions, histories of broadcasting, overviews on cultural adaptation to television, and the inte-

gration of state efforts to develop viable telecommunication services within the rural regions.

While many studies have developed concepts related to indigenous participation within existing media structures (typically in third world scenarios), the literature search does not reveal studies that develop a systematic paradigm for the western Alaskan and Chukotkan Inuit communities which, a) identifies the internal dynamics between state-subsidized broadcasting policy and Inuit community participation, and b) specifically elucidates possible strategies for these two groups in the context of seeking a redefinition of existing policies and native decision making, and the creation of new broadcast and information services.

From a more general perspective, Filep (1977) and Orvik (1977),⁴³ foresaw the need for native involvement in communication policies as a result of their analysis on the 1974 ESCD-Alaska satellite demonstration which experimented with social and educational innovations in rural Alaska. Numerous analyses were provided to the Alaska State Legislature and Department of Administration offering guidelines and suggestions for improvement of utilization of existing services (ie., RATNET and APRN), and the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission was the recipient of analyses which touched upon constituent control.⁴⁴ Daily and James (1992), would later analyze the failure of previous media participation models instituted on behalf of Alaskan natives by the Alaska state government, however, using a Marxist reference point as defined by Habermas to describe such failure.⁴⁵

From a Canadian perspective on participatory models, Valaskakis (1991), described how the introduction of the Anik satellite program did not incorporate planning to effectively reduce prior problems of media access which only served to override native authority, restricted information flow, and promoted cultural replacement in native villages. Numerous studies commissioned by the Canadian government, combined with policy statements (ie., the 1980 Therrien Report, the 1983 Northern Broadcasting Policy, the 1990 Native Broadcasting Policy--which represented landmark policies for aboriginal communications participation) combine with academic reportage to make a sizeable body of literature on the status of native broadcasting in Canada.⁴⁶

There have been studies which allude to and identify some of the aspects characteristic of Eskimo media endeavors in Alaska, although most do not fully investigate the implications of such efforts including: the effects of mini-television transmitters on village functions and identity; the role of local television in promoting regional and statewide native communication networks; funding procedures which are mandatory for the survival of such a collective endeavor; and specific policy routes which ensure government compatibility with cultural efforts.⁴⁷

Cultural Autonomy and Synchronization

For the sake of brevity, the following section will provide a rough sketch of some theoretical concerns touching upon cultural autonomy and synchronization issues which are relevant to and nec-

essary for understanding native media in the North.

Starting from an Alaskan perspective, Madigan and Peterson (1974),⁴⁸ via their "Project Wales" study speculated on television viewing perceptions and indices of children's behavior between an Inuit village with first time exposure, and an unexposed village. In terms of cultural autonomy variables, this study investigated the notion of television as a force in delineating the erosion of the traditional Eskimo culture, and as a hastening agent in the decline of village autonomy. Noting that cultural shifting elements such as electricity, education, public assistance, etc., each play a role in this overall scenario, it remains to be seen how these elements oscillate with the variable of cultural consensus as it relates to autonomy and synchronization arguments over media.

In looking at a caucasian (American-Soviet) failure to program television for the Eskimo, an early study providing useful comparative data comes from de Sola Pool (1961)⁴⁹ who evaluates the condition of media dissatisfaction in dual-transitional societies and identifies the conditional problem associated with the programmer-receiver relationship. This is based on a cognition that the western-educated programming elites are often unable (or unwilling) to address the needs of the mass, and often appear in conflict with that mass.

The Tsai study (1970), and Caron's investigation of Inuit children's cultural images, reveal how television increases the cultural perception of outside groups--with no accompanied increase in their own cultural awareness.⁵⁰ Both suggested that while cen-

tral beliefs were kept intact, peripheral attitudes in tune with the new programming would eventually change to a different attitudinal orientation if exposure continued for long periods. It should be noted that these types of studies are not easily comparable from one developing or tribal society to another, due to vast differences in cognitive abilities, cultural derivatives, environment, and contact with outside influences--to name a few. Saloman (1985), confirms this observation by noting:

The culture-mediated subjective experience of television interacts with cognition and behaviors, and these form a reciprocally deterministic' or 'interactionist' relationship that can only be understood against a backdrop of expectations and experiences within each culture.⁵¹

Thus noted, Alaska's (and especially Chukotka's) cultural experience with television remains a subject that has yet to be exhausted by comparative research for Saloman's reasons. While still contemplating the device of television as a technological entry into the struggles of autonomy and cultural synchronization, this study asserts that cultural autonomy is crucial to the process of indigenous media development.

In looking at this from a more extreme position, Olson's 1985 study on devolution and indigenous mass media and the role of media in Inupiat nationalism, focuses on Inupiat use of media to promote nation building through communicating devolution imperatives.⁵² While this study investigates Inupiat media usage in the context of unifying the Inupiat nation, it falters in developing a workable paradigm that can lead the Inuit to a more viable independent position of local and regional broadcasting: the basis

for cooperation with the dominant society realistically should function in tandem with the pluralistic doctrines of the ruling state and federal government, rather than emphasizing Inuit political separation and total self-determination.

While these last two variables are inherent in the ideology of native mass communication goals, the realization comes that Eskimos may never have total separation or absolute self-determinism, nor must these ideas become ends in themselves, because they are opposed to the framework of being equal citizens belonging to a mutual American or Russian society. Native media goals obviously must be pragmatic and avoid pitfalls that may arise from an unrealistic theoretical position.

It is by utilizing the best elements of a governing system and the resources they offer, along with a distinct degree of independence that allows a minority subculture to develop within the culture which surrounds them. This context can help to ensure a peaceful cohabitation where both entities flourish. In reality, this approach is more viable in Alaska, where the native people are in fact better positioned to reach goals than minority cultures in other countries (primarily based on financial and organizational capabilities, along with advanced penetration into governing structures). Chukotkan natives face a developmental situation which more clearly approximates a *fourth world* status.

Hamelink (1983),⁵³ offers a sublime characterization of television as a culture bridging device when he discusses media in terms of a destructive process--whereby communications technology

is offered to the world with the suggestion that the expression of cultural diversity is definitely guaranteed. The basis for this observation lies in a paradoxical arrangement of subcultures receiving communication access, with a resulting exodus into global synchronization at the expense of indigenous identity.

Referencing this to the Eskimo people, we see a shift in utilization patterns leading to full adoption of media technology. This shifting movement gravitates Inuit ideals toward a position in which western interests emerge paramount. A parallax view into Inuit access of television reveals a subtle sidetracking of Inuit directions from a historic course which is no longer controlled by ancient foundations. Television's potential to generate strong impressions of western society effectively replaces these foundations in the minds of many Inuit youth.

Observation into television's capacity to diminish Inuit language learning and cultural values can reveal long range acculturation efforts that exist in the media policies of the state and federal government. Often this can be achieved by simply not conducting thorough research into the elements of psychological and sociocultural impact which occur via media technology.⁵⁴ Where Alaska state policy makers have seen television distribution as a beneficial service for the Inuit, Hamelink and Gordon (1965),⁵⁵ earlier identified this as a tradeoff, implying the evidence indicates that centrally-controlled technology (including educational television) has become the instrument through which cultural diversity is being destroyed and replaced by a single global culture.

The dialectic between native perception and western cognition regarding the past use of television makes the previous assertions valid to a sizable portion of Chukotka and Alaska's native population. Focusing on Alaska, Loew (1984), reported the difficulties of adapting media technology to distance delivery systems for taking on the task of merging western methods of educational instruction with traditional knowledge transferral methods. While the intent sought to provide western offerings for natives, philosophical and technical clashes made this intertwining of western/native cooperation a never ending process of refining strategies, eliciting compromise, and reidentifying the fine line between cultural acceptance and rejection. Lowe's conclusions identify a microcosm of the dilemma:

If the innovators have respect for their own culture and for that of the receiving society, there is greater chance that the technologies introduced will be culturally appropriate. Change is inevitable and the advantages of new technologies undeniable. The question is how to protect cultures from being damaged or destroyed as they strive for new ways to confront their problems...the role of the mediator is to define and preserve the core elements of the culture(s) under pressure to change.⁵⁶

Looking at this concept of "pressure" in the cross-utilization of tools from one culture to another, Dicks' (1977),⁵⁷ exploration of socioeconomic effects of telecommunications in the Eastern Canadian Arctic found that the development of this system created new options for the Eskimo and facilitated personal contact, but at the expense of placing stress on the Inuit way of life. Ganley (1979)⁵⁸ followed a similar investigation of this system by gauging Canadian border residents concern over cultural influence via the inundation

of Canadian channels with American programming. The implications of this concern translates over to the "cultural border" that characterizes the Eskimo position.

In the sense of clarifying the implications of television and its relational role within the inner mechanism of a single or dual transitional culture, Fiske and Hartley (1978),⁵⁹ make reference to a concept labeled "bardic television," which delineates seven functions based on audience-message interaction. From articulating the main lines of established cultural consensus about the nature of reality, to minutely defining the undercurrents characterizing the ebb and flow of those conditions which television negotiates and expresses, the Eskimo finds his place in the society and culture via the bardic-type codes that permeate through the viewing and listening experience and the local conditions surrounding him.

The notion of resonance characterizes how Eskimo communities have assimilated somewhat into an American or Soviet cultural identity by referencing the local experience of daily life to the one which the viewer-listener assumes is practiced by all other members of the larger society. The resonance process occurs every time broadcasts are personally received, and the desire to stay "native" is constantly tempered by the non-native perspective that is voluntarily consumed. This condition describes a form of self-imposed cultural dependency which is identified by Gerbner (1975),⁶⁰ as countries (composed of individual viewers) under the influence of values and images which are extraneous and not representative of their needs. His concern is primarily directed toward an under-

standing on how visual symbols and cultural images affect a society's quest to continue in traditional ways.⁶¹

The Eskimos of Chukotka and Alaska have long existed within the orbit of modern society, and the degree to which the individual viewer mentally engages the trappings of the materially modern society via television becomes a variable which assists the calculation of cultural dependency.

This writer feels that Inuit culture can impact television and radio through the idea of reciprocal determinism, where personality cognition, and behavior can affect the experience of television. Coldevin has confirmed this rationale in a circumpolar setting by noting that Inuit elders choose to expose themselves to Inuit program offerings rather than "southern programs." This selection process (due to the elder's cultural traditions) influences the dynamics revolving around television impact.⁶²

What the Eskimo perceives and what he or she feels can lead to a subjective solution in dealing with media influence. However, Martel and McCall (1964),⁶³ show a parallel to this observation by relating that portrayals of subgroups not included within the majority social group should be treated with suspicion as being more indicative of majority stereotypes rather than valid reflections of the subgroup's orientation. This argument would have relevance for native Indian groups in the lower forty-eight states where there is at least some representation of this group in television (regardless of the accuracy of the portrayal). For the Eskimo population, there is little portrayal, save for scarce in-state pro-

ductions. With programming based on American network or Russian central television offerings, the Eskimo has a primary diet of non-native norms which are understood only in a context of contact with caucasians and utilization of western technology. In short, a Hollywood or Moscow-based reality is out of context with an Eskimo perspective.

This study is interested in the balance of Inuit and American-Russian mainstream influences generated by radio and television programming and how those balances are determined and maintained. When the consuming Eskimo is given one or two channels controlled by the same outside entity, the questions of influence and dependency should be ascertained. With village access to broadcast media, the influence is not forced, but manifests itself by default when no other communication outlets are available.

In tracing native examples of television exposure and the dynamics of this voluntary "consumerism," one particular study on the nature of television among Canadian Indian villages by Granzberg, Steinbring, and Hamer (1977)⁴ suggests that television cannot be considered a uniform phenomenon cross-culturally, and notes that these previously unexposed societies (pre-television Inuit communities) could conform the medium to fit in with other regularly utilized traditional forms (ie., TV as a complementary format in showing native dance performances, or in the extreme--TV as a "medium" capable of sending messages similar to those sent by a shaman).

Since the Inuit are spread throughout the circumpolar North, the present study sees Canadian research on this issue as vital,

since television began at an earlier time frame than in many Alaskan and Chukotkan Inuit communities and the exposure and culture variables are nearly identical. In terms of television studies on the Inuit, the Canadian research resembles Alaskan research, despite the fact that some political and socioeconomic variables differ. Unfortunately, the lack of Soviet-Russian research on the subject makes a comprehensive overview of Inuit interaction with television across the North problematic. To this end, this study endeavors to fill in the gaps where possible.

NOTES

1. This information was revealed by Raisa Fyodorov, an early writer on Soviet mass media in the Far East, and confirmed by this writer.

2. For reference, check bibliography under: Wilbur Schramm (1956); James Markham (1967); Robert Conquest (1967); Mark Hopkins (1970); Gayle Durham Hollander (1972); Raisa Ivanova (1974); Ellen Mickiewicz (1979); Philo T. Washburn (1992).

3. For reference, check bibliography under: Ellen Proper Mickiewicz (1988); Marilyn J. Young and Michael K. Launer (1991); Brian McNair (1991); Sergey Muratov (1991); Elena Androuanas (1991).

4. Charles Vivier, "The Collins Overland Line and American Continentalism." Pacific Historical Review, August 1959, 113-22; William R. Hunt, Arctic Passage (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975); V.V. Leontiev and K.A. Novikova, Toponymic Dictionary of the North East of the USSR (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, 1989).

5. N. N. Dikov, Essays of History of Chukotka from the Most Ancient Times up to the Present Days (Novosibirsk, Russia: Nauka, 1974); N. N. Dikov, History of Chukotka (Moscow: Muisel, 1989); M. Vladimir, Director, Provideniya (Russia) Museum, interview by author, 5 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

6. Raisa Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zhizen (Companions of our Lives), (Magadan, Russia: Izdatelstvo Magadan, 1974).

7. Central Statistical agencies of the USSR published regular reports about overall broadcast and telecommunication structures in the Russian Republic (RSFSR), but these reports were never specific about Magadan Oblast. In addition, correspondents from Moscow-based magazines or Party organizations may have covered media use in Chukotka as part of larger stories written about the region, though this writer was unable to find any.

8. See reference check in bibliography under; Vladimir Silchenko; George Radchenko; Vladimir Chuganov; Valeri Ivanov; Igor Riga.

9. Eric Guilder, "An Enigmatic Embrace: Problems of Regulating the Effects of New Communication Technologies in the Soviet Union," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, November 5-8, 1987, ERIC, ED 289187.

10. Nicholas Shears, "Political Criticism and the Media in the Age of Glasnost," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (71st), July 2-5, 1988. Portland, ERIC, ED 295200

11. The Editorial board of Sovietskaya Chukotka, the regional paper covering all of Chukotka, became staunch supporters of democracy, and there was a steady withdrawal by its journalists from membership in the CPSU. By the August 1991 coup, the paper had formed an independent relationship from the Party and devoted its pages during the coup to denouncements of national leaders and those responsible for the Chukotka Autonomous Area; Valeri Ivanov, Editor, Sovietskaya Chukotka, interview by author, 10 March 1992, Anadyr, Russia; This writer was the Editor of the English language edition of Vostok Rossi (Magadan) from 1991 to 1992.

12. Sean Reid, "The Alaska-Siberia Connection." Alascom Spectrum, (Vol.4, No.3) August 1988, 9-20; Steven Smirnoff, "The Alaska-Siberia Connection Part II," Alascom Spectrum, (Vol.4, No.4), November 1988, 9; Steven Smirnoff, "The Alaska Siberia Connection: We'll connect you now," Alascom Spectrum, (Vol.5, No.4), November 1989, 6.

13. The Anchorage Daily News, Anchorage Times, Fairbanks News Miner, Nome Nugget, and other Alaskan papers have all contributed articles characterizing the normalization of relations between Alaska and the Soviet Far East. Soviet papers, including the Polarnik (Provideniya, Russia); Sovietskaya Chukotka (Anadyr, Russia); Territoria, Vostok Rossii, Magadanskaya Pravda (Magadan, Russia), have extensive reports on the emerging Alaskan-Russian relationship.

14. This writer was responsible for setting up the first television exchanges between Alaska and the Soviet Far East, by constructing earth stations capable of delivering Alaskan television from the State of Alaska Satellite Television Project to viewers in Provideniya, Anadyr, and Magadan. Daily programming and occasional video conferences between citizens of both countries were available through these systems.

15. Timakov, Victor, and Rafael Bikmuhametov, Arctic Sisters or Date-line (Magadan, Russia: Magadan Book Publishers, 1990).

16. A brief list of video documentaries on the Alaska-Far East relationship includes:

"The Friendship Flight Stories." Produced by KIMO Television, Anchorage, Alaska. May, 1988.

"Through the Ice Curtain." Produced by KTUU Television, Anchorage, Alaska. August, 1988

"Provideniya-The Friendship Flight: The Alaska-Siberia Connection." Produced by Alascom, Inc. Anchorage, Alaska. November, 1988

"Prospects for Peace: A Continuing Series." Produced by the Northwest Campus of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Nome, Alaska. December, 1988. Directed by Daniel Johnson.

"Chukotka Video Project." Produced by University of Alaska Anchorage Instructional Development/Production Services, and Mimi George Ph.D and David Lewis M.D. Anchorage, AK. 1989.

"The Arctic Series." Produced by NHK Television, Tokyo, Japan. 1989-90.

17. Michel Perrot, "*La radio et la television dans les societies inuit: Groenland, Canada, Alaska et Tchoukotka*," Etudes/Inuit Studies 16, (1992): 257-289.

18. Upon numerous interviews with Soviet Central Television correspondents assigned to Chukotka, and broadcast directors based in Anadyr, it was clear that Eskimos have always received media attention...sometimes in connection with solving their problems, other times, as an example of their cultural contributions to the diversity of the Soviet Union's ethnic base.

19. For reference, check bibliography under: Valentin Gerosimov; George Radchenko; Evgeny Berling; Alexander Ljubosh; Valeri Haliuleen; Valery Ivanov; Ivan Omruvie; Ludmilla Aynana; Antonina Verbitskaya; Sveta Togiak; Nina Enmenkow; Olga Karablova.

20. KICY Radio, Nome, Alaska, began broadcasts in 1960 and continue today. Information about this operation was obtained while this writer served as a volunteer at KICY from 1984-1988, and as board member of Arctic Broadcasting Association, the owner of KICY, from 1994-present.

21. See bibliography for Ralph Fondell under "Works Cited." KICY produced a periodical titled, "The KICY Call Letter" which defined the operations of the station on a regular basis beginning with 1960 to the present (1996).

22. Lewis Renner, The KNOM/Father Jim Poole Story (Portland: Binford & Mort Publishing, 1985).

23. Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, Public Broadcasting in Alaska: A Long-Range Plan, 1989 edition (Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 1989); This publication was typical of analyses produced for or in conjunction with the APBC.

24. Gordon Scott Harrison, "The Mass Media in Native Villages of Alaska," Journalism Quarterly 49 (1972): 376.

25. Surveys have been done by a variety of academic researchers, students, and consulting firms. For an example of a survey conducted by a broadcast organization see: Ted Haney, "A Stratified Random Sample Personal Interview Audience Survey in Western Alaska," The Far East Broadcasting Company, August 1976. This writer also conducted surveys on television viewing and awareness in villages around the Bering Strait region in 1987.

26. Heather E. Hudson, "The Role of Radio in the Canadian North," Journal of Communication 27 (Autumn 1977): 130-139.

27. Marianne Stenbaek, "Mass Media in Greenland," In Models of Aboriginal Survival: An International Perspective, ed. Steven Riggins (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1992), 44.

28. John Thomas Duncan, "Alaska Broadcasting, 1922-77: An Examination of Government Influence," Ph.D diss., University of Oregon, 1982.

29. For reference, check bibliography under: James M. Orvik (1977), Robert T. Filep (1977), Michael Porcaro (1977), Dennis R. Foote (1977), Norma Forbes (1984), Daniel Johnson (1986), Patrick J. Daily and Beverly James (1992).

30. James M. Orvik; Lawrence A. Gooding; Norma E. Forbes, The Social and Behavioral Effects of Broadcast Television on Previously Untouched Audiences (Fairbanks: University of Alaska, Center for Northern Education Research, 1978); Norma Forbes and others eds., Social and Cognitive Effects of the Introduction of Television on Rural Alaskan Native Children (Fairbanks: University of Alaska-Fairbanks Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, 1984); Numerous studies in connection with State of Alaska support for television in rural Alaska have been conducted, often directed to the State Legislature, the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, the University of Alaska, and other entities involved with the overall state-supported television and radio systems.

31. For reference, check bibliography under the following: Gary O. Coldevin (1976, 1977, 1979); Sheldon O'Connell (1977); Andre H. Caron (1979); Oswald H. Ganley (1979); Gary Granzberg, Jack Steinbring, and John Hamer (1977); Gary O. Coldevin and Thomas C. Wilson (1985).

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33. Numerous authors will be mentioned in the subsequent chapters who are involved in defining these various aspects of broadcasting.

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36. Wilbur Schramm, Mass Media and National Development (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

37. E. Katz and G. Wedell, Broadcasting in the Third World: Promise and Performance (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), 20-21.

38. Vladimir Lenin, Collected Works of V.I. Lenin (New York: International Publishers, 1927; Lewis Feuer, Marx & Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1959); N. Tarasenko, "The Implementation of the Leninist Principles of Nationalities Policies," Pravda, 16 December 1983, 6-7.

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59. J. Fiske and J. Hartley, Reading Television (London: Methuen, 1978)

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CHAPTER 3

FOUNDATIONS OF PRESS AND BROADCAST DEVELOPMENT IN THE USSR

The Soviet Press Model: A Historical Perspective

The task of evaluating the historic strands of thought and actions which eventually formed the fabric of Soviet broadcast media begins with a brief look at press under a czarist context, as well as the writings of Karl Marx. As the Soviet mass media would eventually operate within a framework of thought and social restrictions which reflected interpretations of society and man, it is crucial to understand how such interpretations and resultant functioning of the press were arrived at from both traditional Russian attitudes as well as a partially artificial Soviet national mentality.

Given Russia's monarchical status under the Romanov dynasty, where the czar was seen as given his power and sovereignty by God, the idea of the power of the individual had never found widespread expression or realization in a land where the populace was taught to believe in Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationalism. Separated from the West by geography and culture, Russia did not participate in the intellectual movements of the 17th and 18th centuries which promulgated free inquiry, individual pursuit of truth, skepticism, and doubt. To this degree, the power of the rational individual, and the opportunity for free individuals to challenge the nature and authority of czarist government remained an issue to be kept in check up to the twilight years of Romanov power.¹

The Russian press in czarist days reflected the structure of society, in this case, being directed primarily toward the intelligentsia, nobility, and government officials--those representing the most literate and educated sectors of the nation. There were vast gaps between the privileged classes and the peasantry in living conditions and educational opportunities, and press served the needs of those most able to access it. From 1783 onward (when the czar granted individuals the right to engage in publishing), the Romanovs enacted varying degrees of censorship over the press and codified censorship provisions in later years. To surmount such restrictions, Russian writers became skilled in the use of Aesopian language to get their views expressed, a trait which continued on through the later days of Soviet power.

Russian press--unlike the American model of the time, based on libertarian values laden with the power of the rational individual--lacked a heritage of popular democracy and did little to promote the individual. Catering to society's elite--who maintained their own power through the beneficence of the Romanovs--Russian press cadres did little to criticize the government, instead being allied with monarchy, and exhibiting few tendencies which could provide a means for effective checks on government power. The status quo would remain until the days of Marx and Lenin.²

The Influence of Marx

Though Marx did not specifically address questions of telecommunications, his theories regarding the press, the power of

ideas, and the process of their dissemination laid the groundwork for subsequent adaptation of broadcast media and the definitions underpinning the functions of press under a communist-totalitarian model. These tenets would eventually take final form in the Soviet Union through reinterpretations of Marxist doctrine as espoused by Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin.

Karl Marx had a vision which implied a radical change in human nature: *materialistic determinism*. Emerging from the notion that a society's economic system (as controlled by one class) primarily determined its legal and political institutions, Marx labored to construct a systematic doctrine to show how man is a product of, and conditioned by his social environment, with the result that a "new" man can emerge through the process of engineering a new environment.³ The Marxist revolt involved the devaluation of ideas where political, legal, religious, and other "forms of consciousness" were part of the superstructure of society, which in turn were determined by economic relationships. In his view, it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness.⁴ To this end, ideas and theories could be utilized in a practical way to organize, mobilize, and transform society.⁵

Marx sets the goal: a classless, stateless society. In his quest to analyze the process of social change, he finds a foundation in Hegel's concept of the *dialectic*, through which two opposing forces (thesis and antithesis) resolve their differences in a synthesis.⁶ This process repeats itself throughout the history

of man's relationships, illustrated by Marx via differing stages of production by which man gained power over nature--primitive community, slave state, feudal state, capitalist state, and as yet achieved, the socialist state.' Marx used this "dialectic" and man's progressive status to interpret history as a succession of class struggles. The "synthesis" Marx deifies is social change leading to a classless state as a result of struggles between the proletariat working class (antithesis) against the *bourgeoisie* owners of the means of production (thesis).

Capitalism provided Marx with a model to base his paradigm against, leading to the conclusion that the proletariat would overcome the capitalist forces, take control of the means of production, replace the government and administration, and work toward the preconditions leading to a pure communist society.' Man's social transformation would have to be brought about by a revolution of ideas. Hence, as the press functions as a "mouth-piece" for the dissemination of ideas in this regard, so it must also be readapted to serve in the overall process of transformation.

Marx is unequivocal that control of the press rests with those who owned the facilities--a reference to his contention that as long as the press resides in the hands of capitalists, workers will never have fair access to the means of communication.' Since the ideal state functions in the process of delivering power from the *bourgeoisie* to the proletariat (and thereafter withering away), true freedom of the press occurs in the classless state. Workers

would thus possess the material properties of the press and consequently have no further fear of control by capitalist owners. Freedom of expression for the individual within collective society would theoretically be guaranteed.

Ironically, Marx speaks against the censored press: "The censored press, a bad press, remains bad, even when giving good products." Yet his concept of unity (total subservience in thought and deed to the goals and attainment of communism) and the distinction of right and wrong opinions ultimately negates the position of free press in functioning as a *fourth estate* capable of criticizing the established ideological order and serving as a forum for freedom of thought.¹⁰

Lenin and the Press

Throughout the period preceding the Russian Revolution, the main task of Lenin and his followers focused on the issue of seizing power. As philosophy provided the underpinning for political activities, Lenin labored early in life to propagate Marx's understanding of revolution, while reconfiguring it in a Russian context. One of his first tasks was to clarify the Marxist paradigm; whereby the new society presupposes the new man, who must therefore be artificially created.¹¹ The future process of Soviet thought control sensed this "creation" as its ultimate purpose and adapted press as an instrument toward its realization.

Lenin acknowledged that political activity necessitates the utilization of ideology, postulating that ideas become a force when

they get hold of the masses.¹² He proposed that a newspaper could be the center of revolutionary thought and action--while simultaneously representing an institution--and a means of communication and persuasion. To this end, Lenin utilized the forces of the press to accelerate the Russian working class movement by the promotion of a revolutionary class consciousness as formulated by scientific Marxism.

During this period (1905-1917), Russia attempted a degree of societal reform as western notions of human rights and democratic government found acceptance among the literate class and those in positions of influence, though such reform was relatively unsuccessful and only fueled Lenin's growing Bolshevik movement. The instrument of the press was wielded by Lenin in the effort to unify revolutionary efforts while destroying the remnants of czarist authority which prevented true reform in Russia.

From this perspective--representing the ideological component of the Bolshevik strategy--press would play the role of collective propagandist, agitator, and organizer of the people. While this label was originally assigned as a definition for the Leninist-conceived newspaper, it would eventually provide a framework for the future Soviet broadcast communication system.

Lenin practiced his journalistic craft in support of the Bolsheviks amidst the restrictive press environment created by czarist authority.¹³ He often circumvented the limits of press freedom imposed by the Romanovs by circulating published materials from secret domestic presses and presses located abroad. In a 1905

article, Lenin spoke of his personal aims to establish (in his determination) a free press, yet held deeply-rooted reservations from his belief that no press can be totally free of its social milieu.¹⁴

Lenin admitted that the press, as a tool of the government, could not be independent of it. Freedom of the press, construed (from a western view) as the absence of state restrictions along with guarantees for individual ownership and the expression of a diversity of opinions, was anathema to Lenin, who demanded it be subordinate to the political movement which he himself oversaw.¹⁵ Through his experiences as a journalist and editor with the early Bolshevik newspapers Iskra and Pravda, he eventually formed the opinion that the press could never be considered an independent institution, but served as an instrument and expression of political strategy.¹⁶

A political newspaper (and its later radio paper version) both informed and educated, and provided reports of current events as formulated from a specific ideological viewpoint. It could form a united movement with common outlooks and goals. From a Leninist point of view, people would be fed with such information as deemed necessary, and content would be formulated in response to preconceived ends.

As Lenin was set on creating and administering an elite, and highly disciplined political party, he took a hard line on publishing activities by demanding total subordination of print operations to Party authority. Bolshevik and Menshevik press during the pre-

revolution stage believed in the principle of suppression of opposition views whether expressed by government or political rivals.¹⁷ Sparing no toleration of dissent from his interpretation of Marxism, Lenin would eventually destroy even those Menshevik elements which disagreed with his political strategy or stance on press control. This was perhaps a mandatory step for Lenin who employed all tactics of manipulation in guiding the revolution: to him being understood as the remodelling of society, the abolition of private property, and the modernization of the country under Party supervision.¹⁸

**Establishment of Soviet Control:
Press during the Revolution**

Following the Bolshevik triumph in the October Revolution of 1917, Lenin promptly signed a decree (The Decree on the Press), which prohibited the publication of all opposition newspapers, and transferred private print facilities to newly established Party organs.¹⁹ To appease public opinion at home and abroad, Lenin's decree attached a proviso noting that the ruling was only of a temporary nature, stating:

As soon as the new order becomes stabilized, all administrative restrictions on the press will be lifted and complete freedom of the press will be established...²⁰

The decree was never revoked and subsequently created a precedent for official state control of the press in the USSR. The Soviet government soon adopted measures which laid the foundation for the "socialist" organization of communications. A government decree in December 1917, authorized the development of a press system and

the establishment of government publishing houses.²¹ Accordingly, the means of communication were nationalized and put under the administration of the People's Commissariat for Posts and Telegraphs (their duties also included the distribution of printed press).²² Press control aided their efforts for consolidating power across the former Russian empire, a process which would consume thousands of lives over a period of six years, ending with Soviet control over Chukotka.

The legal parameters of press operations were further codified in the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) of 1918, which guaranteed to the proletariat freedom of the press and access to communication facilities.²³ Its press clause read:

In order to guarantee workers genuine freedom to express their opinions, the RSFSR abolishes dependence of the press on capital and assigns to the labor class and poor peasants all technical and material means for publishing newspapers ...and guarantees their freedom of distribution throughout the country.²⁴

While freedom of speech and access to the press continued to be affirmed in subsequent Soviet constitutions, these rights were effectively denied by the philosophical and practical orientation Lenin mandated upon the Party-controlled media structure.

To understand the function and control of the press at this juncture, we must now look at the role the Communist Party (CPSU) assigned to itself as director of the Soviet state. The Large Soviet Encyclopedia described the essence of the new Party by stating:

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is the tried

and tested militant vanguard of the Soviet people, which unites, on a voluntary basis, the more advanced, the politically more conscious section of the working class, collective farm peasantry, and intelligentsia of the USSR...The party exists for, and serves, the people. It is the highest form of sociopolitical organization, and it is the leading and guiding force of Soviet society.²⁵

Given this definition of political existence, the CPSU developed a symbiosis of power, simultaneously identifying the state with the Party, creating a mechanism of government paralleled by an overseeing self-proclaimed political elite. It was to be a state where no important political or organizational question could be decided by government without the guidance of the CPSU Central Committee.²⁶ Such political organization would make it possible for the Party to dictate the course of every sector of society, acting according to foundations laid out by Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

Concerning the development and daily operations of the press by the CPSU, press was conceived and operated as an integral part of the state (though in reality, control belonged to the Party rather than the government). As such, the state functioned by simultaneous and coordinated programs of coercion and persuasion, and press was to be utilized as an instrument for securing Soviet power while carrying out the Party's organizational tasks in constructing a communist society.²⁷

Theoretically, the press and emerging mass media were deemed an integral component of society, intimately connected with the arts, music, literature, while working in conjunction with the economy and all other elements of the Soviet state. Yet despite this, forces aligned against such press constructs did emerge.²⁸

Challenges to the Implementation of the Soviet Press

Opponents of the new regime were effectively blocked from influencing the channels of information. Lenin dictated the Bolshevik's attitude toward political criticism and press participation by the enemies of socialism stating:

Why should a government which is doing what it believes to be right allow itself to be criticized? It would not allow opposition by lethal weapons, and ideas are much more fatal than guns.²⁹

Lenin deemed general discussion in the press by various sources (an equivalent to a "marketplace of ideas") as superfluous. He withheld the right to press access by those who would maintain alternative viewpoints in politics, economic development, legal theory, and other pressing issues of the day.³⁰

Soviet people could possess freedom to express themselves only within the bounds and limits of the state. Ultimately, the state cannot be criticized, and this theoretical assumption provided the means for constructing a press system designed to alleviate criticism by the citizenry against Soviet power.

If factions and dissent were to be tolerated within the political sphere, the press would reflect this disorder, assume a different orientation, and thus weaken Soviet order. In the minds of Lenin and later, Stalin--press would have to remain under central control to circumvent this possibility.³¹

Strengthening of press control

In 1920, the Central Committee of the CPSU created a department of agitation and propaganda, known as Agitprop, which func-

tioned across all levels of Party authority.³² The agency was concerned with promoting political themes as well as cultural and educational programs in government and Party organs. Ultimately, Agitprop would guide and direct the press by taking political direction of every press outlet through its representative Party organs. The government of the USSR had no department of information; Agitprop usurped this role. Since the majority of newspapers were publishing organs of Party committees, control over information dissemination was effectively maintained.

By 1922, the Chief Administration for the Preservation of State Secrets in the Press (*Glavlit*) was established.³³ A government agency, its main function was to "exercise all aspects of politico-ideological, military and economic control over productions of the press, manuscripts, photographs, movies, lectures, and exhibitions," eventually encompassing radio and television broadcasting.³⁴ Though this organization would undergo reorganization several times, it sought to prohibit the issue, publication, and distribution of works which "contain agitation and propaganda against the Soviet Union and the dictatorship of the proletariat; disclose state secrets; arouse nationalistic and religious fanaticism; and have a pornographic character."³⁵

To a large degree, Glavlit was concerned with keeping certain information out of the mass media. The organization's policies would eventually define the principles of press content and dissemination for mass media operations in the Far East (Chukotka). It worked in tandem with Agitprop (representing the intermixture of

Party and state control bodies) and developed an extensive mechanism for the systematic surveillance and censorship of press output on a nationwide scale. Glavlit, however, had no censorship function over publications of the Party, in effect, diminishing its responsibility over much of the Soviet press.

By 1926, the press and information departments of the CPSU assumed total authority over the Soviet press network, maintaining ideological conformity to guidelines set by the Party, and working to stimulate the press in actively implementing Party decisions.³⁶ Once again, these departments endeavored to tightly maintain control over the flow of information and to manipulate public opinion as conceived by the Kremlin.

Party influence over the press would gradually overcome obstacles presented by the logistical and bureaucratic requirements of press operations, and once in place, the nation's press would echo the views of the Party leadership. The pinnacle of power in the now-secured Soviet order rested with the Central Committee of the VCPD (Bolsheviks), and those individuals who exercised influence over this body would, in effect, command control of the press as well as all other sectors of Soviet society.

Developments during the Stalinist Period

Following the death of Lenin, Stalin (as leader of the Politburo), singlehandedly dictated the process of organization which would typify Soviet press control from 1924 until the days of glasnost. While his contributions to press theory were meager in com-

parison to Lenin, he nonetheless devised a highly restrictive interpretation of the press, and constructed a press and broadcasting system under extreme state censorship and Party control.

Stalin's version of the press held it as a weapon of struggle, a means of surveillance and information contributing to ultimate victory.³⁷ Marxist-Leninist press philosophy was recontextualized in order to address the myriad factors facing Soviet administration in the political, economic, and social spheres. Since the 1920s were years of political conflict and social experimentation, press developments mirrored these events. Stalin elucidated the general direction which the Soviet press would take:

The press is the most powerful instrument with which the Party daily, hourly speaks with the laboring class in its own vital language. It is not only that the press agitates and criticizes, but above all that it has a large network of workers, agents and correspondents throughout the country, in all industrial and agricultural areas, in all districts and villages, so that the thread from the Party, through the newspaper, extends to all worker and peasant districts without exception, so that the interaction of the Party and state, on the one hand, and industrial and peasant districts, on the other, is complete.³⁸

Stalin adapted the press as an element of political strategy in trying to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party's policy. It was to do the job as assigned by the leadership and promulgate the party line and state directives. Such a construct would apply to the future infrastructure of the press in Chukotka.

Structure, Characteristics, and Control Parameters

Soviet press was a planned and specialized press, with centralized administration and distribution control operating through-

out the country. The system was designed to ensure efficiency in its role as organizer, propagandist, and agitator, while attempting to meet the special interests of society's various segments.

A Party decree of 1926 structured the press system in a vertical fashion--composed of the national press, followed by those in union republics, autonomous republics, oblasts, okrugs, raions, and further down to local press (in settlements, factories, collectives, universities, and various organizations).³⁹ Accordingly, the press is organized politically--beginning with the Party and government press at the national level, ie., organs of the Central Committee (newspaper Pravda), and the Supreme Soviet (newspaper Izvestia)--down to those at the regional and local level. Other divisions included nationally circulated labor newspapers, followed by the trade union, military, farm cooperatives (*solvhoz*), peasant, economic, youth, women's, and native language press, among others. *Soyuzpechat* (Union Press), was responsible for the nationwide circulation of all printed media.

Official Soviet references assert that the Communist Party created a high-principled Party-Soviet press and made it a concern of general Party affairs. Press operations and content revolved around seven general points: *partinost* (Party-mindedness or unconditional Party loyalty); *ideinost* (high ideological content); *otchestvenost* (patriotism); *pravdivost* (truthfulness [to Leninist theory]); *narodnost* (having a popular character); *massovost* (accessibility to the masses); and *kritika i samokritika* (criticism and self-criticism).⁴⁰ Soviet media output at all levels was engineered

to insure compliance with these characteristics.

To oversee Party dominance while ensuring compliance with these stated characteristics, the CPSU devised three basic control devices in regulating the press. First, the Department of Propaganda and Agitation at various levels appointed editors, with confirmation approved by the Central Committee's Agitprop section. Political reliability rather than professional ability was the first requirement of the appointee, and editorial skill often took a back seat to the candidate's training in Marxist theory and Party history. Editors had to be members of the CPSU.⁴¹

Second, the Party issued--via Agitprop--numerous directives concerning content of the press and how it should be presented. Much press output consisted of letters from high Party officials or government figures, as well as public addresses and government documents. Information flow in the USSR moved in a top down fashion, with the first priority of local and regional press to be coverage of information supplied by central authorities.

Third, the Party reviewed and criticized the press. Each level of Party authority provided staff for reviewing press output and for giving criticism of editors and journalists. In relation to this study, Eskimo radio journalists were required to meet Party review committees who criticized their work: rarely did these committees convene to praise journalistic efforts. Through this process, most journalists were effectively kept in check from reporting news of a critical nature, or investigating circumstances which could portray Party administration in a bad light.⁴²

Information control--TASS

Soviet press control was attained through myriad levels, including the administrative machinery at each press level as well as the censorship organs (Agitprop and Glavlit) as earlier described. In addition, a third element was devised by the CPSU in order to effect greater control over the actual dissemination of news reaching the Soviet people: *Telegrafnoye Agenstvo Sovietskavo Soyuz*a (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union--TASS). Officially, TASS headed the state information system of the USSR upon its founding in 1925, overseeing control of the information agencies of all Union republics.⁴³

TASS acted as a gatekeeper of news over the large volume of information circulating throughout the USSR. Its activities could be described by four categories: its domestic functions; its supervision of world news for Soviet consumption; its function as disseminator of Soviet information to the outside world; its role in assisting the intelligence system.⁴⁴ Internally, TASS distributed news stories from Pravda to the domestic press and broadcasting network: this served to administer daily political directives by the CPSU, as well as official government pronouncements to Party organizations and the public at large.⁴⁵ In addition, TASS served as a central agency for internal transmission of regional and local information prepared by its correspondents throughout the USSR.

Responsible to the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Agitprop sector of the CPSU Central Committee, TASS expanded its activities and organization to provide news gathering from around

the world for select distribution to various segments of the Soviet press, Party, and government. All mass media output was carefully subject to conditioning by the interaction of TASS in conjunction with the other elements described previously. In 1961, a secondary national news service, *Novosti* (news), was formed.⁴⁶

Mass Communications: Soviet Conceptual Model

Soviet mass communication concepts were based (to a wide degree) on the following premises:

- (a) mass communications are instruments of the state and the Communist Party
- (b) mass communications are integrated with other elements of state power and Party influence
- (c) they serve as agents of unity within the state and the Party
- (d) they are used as instruments of state and Party "revelation"
- (e) they primarily serve as agents of agitation and propaganda
- (f) mass communications are structured around strictly enforced responsibility.⁴⁷

These theoretical positions did not exist in a vacuum, however, as mass communication structures and functions altered to varying degrees depending on changes within Soviet institutions.

Various problems related to the development and improvement of the press were reflected in many Party documents--resolutions of congresses, conferences, plenary sessions, and specially adopted resolutions of the CPSU. As the mass media system expanded in systematic fashion (including the later development of radio and television), so too did the degree of control by the Party increase via the demands set forth by these documents.

Soviet media was notable in its degree of regulation and centralization, a system designed to ensure absolute conformity and rigidity among press operations from the highest level to the lowest, from Politburo control of Pravda, down to the local wall paper issued by agricultural cooperatives in Eskimo villages. To a large degree, Soviet society placed a priority on public harmony and uniformity, and where the press found itself at odds with specific policies of the Party, or where conflicts arose, the overriding tendency of the leadership was to moderate each situation to achieve a position of unity.

In reality, while this element of control existed, human flaw permitted the exercise of deviation throughout the system. Perfect regimentation could not be attained, partially due to the unpredictable nature of media in interaction with other social institutions and forces. Individual expression beyond the boundaries of defined limits could find its way into the press, but only through concealed forms, exemplified best through the still-employed means of Aesopian writing.⁴⁹

Consequently, the parameters of control in confrontation with individual expression and changing social conditions provides this study with a context in which to judge later Eskimo utilization of, and participation with the Soviet broadcast system.

Broadcast Media Development in the USSR: Radio

Broadcasting represents a phenomenon which predates the existence of the Soviet Union. Soviet historians credit Alexander

Popov with the discovery of radio in 1895 (rather than Marconi), and claim other firsts in its development.⁴⁹ The reader must note that available literature on the history of Russian radio development (from Soviet sources) does not lead one to a high degree of confidence in the setting down of undisputed facts and dates, especially when confronted by alternative evidence from western analysts.

Popov was, nevertheless, the primary force in promoting radio's possibilities inside Russia during the first decade of the 20th century. He was reputed to have demonstrated long distance voice broadcasts in 1904, as well as setting up a national broadcasting company in 1910. News of radio's potential was circulated widely during this time, and quick in sensing this medium as an alternative form for his idea of an all-Russian newspaper, Vladimir Lenin noted radio as a solution to solving existing communication problems which were inherent in a print-only mode of dissemination, calling the invention a "newspaper without paper and without distance." He prophesied radio as the tool which could spread the message of communism throughout Russia and the rest of the world, and saw its fulfillment on November 7, 1917, as his decrees were transmitted to the world from the cruiser Aurora in St. Petersburg on the first declared day of the Russian Revolution.⁵⁰

While other nations had begun broadcasting before this event, Russia would stand out for developing radio as a government-oriented medium. Sporadic radio telegraphic transmissions continued in 1918 and the Soviets conducted a number of political broadcasts

designed for reception in other parts of Europe in the attempt to clarify its positions while promoting the international communist movement abroad.⁵¹

By 1919, Lenin recognized the necessity of improving the medium's technical and distributive capabilities, and promptly supported research on its development. A radio laboratory was established in Nizhni Novgorod and soon began experimental voice broadcasts. By 1922, a 12 kilowatt transmitter--touted as the most powerful in the world--began operations in Moscow, and within two years, a network of ten radio stations operated throughout Russia.⁵²

Radio represented a medium which could be designed systematically according to the aims of the Party--which needed every means of communication to supplement its power base, especially in convincing the Soviet people to abide by the political and economic platforms espoused by its leaders. To facilitate this end, Lenin remained a stalwart advocate for radio within the Politburo.

Printed press had long served as the primary weapon in the Party's information strategy--and would continue to retain its position as the most authoritative of all mass media--however, radio opened up new opportunities which the Party could capitalize on. From the outset, its task mirrored that of existing press--agitation, organization, and propaganda while adding new possibilities for military utilization.

Improving on the printed press, radio was well-suited to instantaneous control, and its ability to disseminate information over large areas in a timely manner was a distinct advantage given

the inherent obstacles of print distribution across the country. While a major goal of the Party centered on total penetration of the population by an extensive information and propaganda broadcast network, the technical means to achieve this was not yet in place.⁵³

In 1924, the Council of the Popular Commissars issued their "Freedom of Broadcasting" decree, which yielded permission to private organizations and collectives who wished to establish radio stations. At the same time, supervision of radio was placed under the authority of a joint stock company formed by the Russian Telegraph Agency and the People's Commissariat for Postal Services and Telegraph.⁵⁴ All of the entities engaged in radio were in fact arms of the government or Party (trade unions, etc), so the notion of independent operation free of state influence remained a spectre.

In 1925, a Party directive promulgated the creation of a national "Society of the Friends of Radio," which formulated basic ideals for radio's utility in the Party's agitation and propaganda campaign. This type of organization would later surface in Chukotka as the initiator of radio and TV services. By 1929, twenty transmitters would beam broadcasts throughout the european section of Russia.⁵⁵

Early broadcasts from Moscow and other sites focused on political education and cultural development of the listening audience, primarily in the genres (using Soviet terminology) of reportage, radio discussion, and radio commentary. Radio newspapers (newscasts), magazine formats, and entertainment fare (ie., musical

concerts, children's shows, sporting events) represented the main elements within early program schedules. Distribution of signals reached only a small segment of the total population in these first few years.⁵⁶

During the last half of the 1920s, radio became more sophisticated in its programming and diversification. New standards of broadcast journalism emerged, while programming continued to highlight music, drama, and features on daily life across the nation. The prime component of broadcasts, however, remained political in nature.⁵⁷

Problems in the expansion of radio

Soviet radio faced numerous obstacles in its development across the country, primarily for both political and technical reasons. Politically, radio was equated with the printed word (in reference to Lenin's call of Russia listening to a newspaper read in Moscow) instead of being viewed as a fundamentally different medium of mass communication. This idea was entrenched across Europe primarily because wireless radio originally relayed Morse code to distribute news reports.

With the newness of the medium, implementation of its capabilities was limited by the vision of those responsible for its operation. Radio's practical benefits and uses were somewhat unclear in the beginning, and the medium would continue to be viewed as a public address system subservient to print. The greater share of resources would be directed toward expanding the network of

papers, rather than radio because of this philosophical perspective on the efficacy of print held by Bolsheviks, as well as the fact that a basis for press networks already existed.⁵⁸

The USSR, with its expansive territory, was faced with an enormous investment in developing a nationwide radio network. The expansion of radio service was dependent on electrical power systems which were comparatively undeveloped throughout the country. The government simultaneously launched campaigns for industrialization, electrification, and radio installation in all cities and rural areas.⁵⁹ In addition, radio required new industries for the manufacture of transmitting equipment and receivers; forced research and development; and necessitated a wide-scale expansion of the centralized bureaucracy assigned to coordinate administration, financing, technical operations, program production, information control, and state-Party directives. The condition of the Soviet economy during the 1920s was such that government funding of radio development would remain restricted.⁶⁰

Paradoxically, Soviet authorities were hard pressed to extend their political management over the millions of citizens in rural Russia and the Far East via print media. With illiteracy predominant throughout these areas, radio could serve a special function in maintaining Soviet control, however, since electrification was absent in regions where illiteracy was greatest, corps of political agitators provided an alternative method of communication such that central planners could wait on radio expansion until sufficient resources could be commanded. For areas without radio, newspapers

would continue in its role for educating, informing, and mobilizing the citizenry.⁶¹

At the end of the decade, roughly 92,000 receivers existed in the USSR, primarily in cities possessing only a sixth of the nation's population.⁶² In 1931, the All-Union Committee for Radio Broadcasting was assigned administrative control over radio: it remained under the auspices of the Central Committee of the CPSU and its Department of Propaganda and Agitation, and was assisted by local radio committees.⁶³ Over a ten-year period, radio penetration advanced remarkably, with over ninety stations broadcasting to approximately seven million receivers by 1940.⁶⁴

The Soviet broadcasting system used a combination of radio receivers and diffusion networks (broadcasts carried by telephone lines to loudspeakers). Receivers usually fed into loudspeaker systems which were placed in meeting halls, clubs, factories, apartments, and along streets. Diffusion systems were installed for both economic and political reasons, first, because it was much cheaper to install networks of loudspeakers through cities already possessing telephone and other communication links (as opposed to individual radio receivers), and second, it was amenable to maintaining tight control of information as this system could not pick up over-the-air radio signals coming from non-Soviet sources.

Radio continued to be an urban phenomenon, with the vast majority of the USSR to remain without it until the early 1950s.⁶⁵ The advent of radio reception would occur even later in sections of the Soviet Far East.

The impact of World War II necessitated a vast reconstruction of the Soviet mass media system. Print media suffered declines in its productive capacity with facilities, circulation, and print material levels vastly diminished. Radio broadcast stations suffered equally, with an estimated 50 percent destroyed from warfare.⁶⁶ The recovery period was very slow--due principally to the general destruction in many areas of the Soviet economic infrastructure.

Unlike earlier decisions regarding radio development in the late 1920s, the Soviets chose to reconstruct the broadcasting system before print media. This resulted more from the need to re-establish communications quickly since radio's chief advantages lay in its immediacy and low cost. By 1946, pre-war broadcast levels had been achieved.⁶⁷

Further Radio Development: Post-War

The 1950s represented a period of expansion for Soviet radio, noting a concerted effort to extend broadcasting throughout all rural areas. Administratively, radio broadcasting was placed under the Ministry of Culture in 1953 (while retaining CPSU control).⁶⁸ This change would represent one of many future changes in supervisory control over Soviet broadcasting, reflecting shifts in political organization, as well as developments within the medium.

From a technical system perspective, the trend toward diffusion networks began to decrease during this decade in favor of standard radio receivers. A revitalization of the Soviet commun-

ications industry during the post-war period eventually increased the availability of transmitters and reliable, low cost receiving equipment. These factors were partially responsible for a reorientation of the broadcast system to receivers--despite the problems connected with foreign influence by western radio. To defeat this threat, Soviet shortwave receivers were built without 16 meter, 19 meter, and other bands.⁶⁹

Radio equipment manufacturing diversified in providing both types of reception equipment, however, production of radio transmitters remained slow, thus forcing continued reliance on the wired and wireless systems. By 1956, the country had 22 million loudspeakers and approximately 7.4 million receivers: over half of the diffusion systems were operating in remote villages and by 1960, the figure increased to 31 million loudspeakers and 27 million receivers.⁷⁰

The rise of Cold War tensions between America and the USSR brought on serious implications regarding the use of standard receivers. U.S. transmissions into Soviet territory made the receiver an object of propaganda: the Soviet government enacted jamming measures (as early as 1948) to counter these broadcasts despite the fact that their own policies had made the widespread reception of these signals possible.

The original political decisions for creating a diffusion system were reinforced by this ideological battle of the airwaves. Only diffusion systems could guarantee Party control over broadcast information to those segments of the population reliant on this

mode of reception, with the result of the dual system continuing on even to the present time. The Soviet Far East represented a prime example in the shift back to diffusion networks (during the seventies and eighties) as the later development of broadcasting in this region reflected the political considerations inherent in diffusion technology.⁷¹

During the 8th Petaletka (government five-year plan between 1970-75), the Soviets developed a system of three channel broadcasting via cable which was ultimately incorporated across the country, providing for greater listening options through the diffusion and over-the-air systems.⁷² For reference, final statistics compiled by the Soviet government listed 83.7 million radio receivers, and 113 million diffusion outlets in 1989.⁷³

With radiofication of the country effectively achieved, the Communist Party possessed the means to saturate the Soviet population with a highly controlled information service, functioning through an interconnected bureaucracy of government and Party agencies, with supervision ensured from the national to local level.

All-Union Radio from Moscow served as the primary radio voice for the nation, and its broadcasts were delivered to every radio point, supplemented by inserts from radio committees at the republic to city level. By 1980, All-Union Radio broadcast five program services: Program 1, represented the main national service, including information, sociopolitical, educational, and artistic programming; Program 2, called *Mayak* (beacon), served as a round-the-clock music and news-information service; Program 3, was designed as a

general educational, literary, and music service; Programs 4 and 5 provided information and music to a domestic and external Soviet audience.⁷⁴ Only Programs 1 and 2 were available to the majority of the nationwide audience which listened via the wired radio sets.

By the end of the 1980s, Soviet radio (at all levels) transmitted in 71 languages, with hundreds of programming hours each day on long wave, medium wave (AM), shortwave, and FM frequencies, as well as cable and direct satellite feeds.⁷⁵

Broadcast Media Development: Television

The development of television constituted a revolution in the overall process of information flow and assimilation, greatly amplifying the ability of the Party to assert its leadership through the dissemination of messages to every level of Soviet society. In 1931, Soviet television came into reality with an experimental broadcast of motionless pictures to a select audience in Moscow.⁷⁶

The Soviet Union took much time in recognizing the potential force of television for the political, cultural, and aesthetic education of its vast population. Research and development coincided with the expansion of radio and press operations, resulting in the introduction of low resolution mechanical scanning moving images by 1932.⁷⁷

Two years later, sound broadcasting was introduced and the number of stations increased to seven. In 1936 (according to Soviet statistics), roughly 300 programs were broadcast, and within the next few years, technical breakthroughs enabled a shift to the

utilization of higher resolution electronic scanning television.

Experimental electronic transmissions continued and scheduled broadcasts began in Moscow and Leningrad in 1939. Basic programming included movies, concerts, theater drama, and features celebrating Party congresses and organizations. Such program fare would define the content of Soviet television for decades to come.⁷⁸

Television stopped during World War 2 and resumed regular broadcasts on May 7, 1945 (May Day). Further improvements in technology allowed a transmission standard of 625 lines by 1949. The **Central Television Studio** (Central TV) was built in Moscow in 1951, though its transmissions were confined to the city and its suburbs.

Understanding its role in the Party's propaganda apparatus, Central TV cultivated its programming to reflect sociopolitical and public themes. The studio was eventually divided into separate departments for propaganda, industry, agriculture, science, and sports. Documentary broadcasts covering various aspects of Soviet life were staple program fare during these days.⁷⁹

A major problem facing television planners was the distribution of this medium across the vast confines of the USSR, and for a number of years, funding priorities were given to other sectors of the economy--to the detriment of television's nationwide expansion.⁸⁰ There is speculation among western scholars that central planners were not yet convinced of television's efficacy, considering that printed press and radio was established and growing while television required massive funding--which at the time seemed inappropriate considering the needs of heavy industry, agriculture,

the military, etc.⁸¹

Television slowly was introduced to all of the union republics (including autonomous republics, regions, and territories) but without systematic interconnection from Moscow. Later developments in satellite and cable technology would provide solutions to this dilemma (note: to be discussed in subsequent sections).⁸² At the end of the 1950s, TV was extended across the nation and in 1960, 103 studios and retranslators broadcast 276.5 hours daily.⁸³

Despite these numbers, television was still an unknown medium to large segments of the country, including Magadan Oblast and the Chukotka Peninsula. By 1960, a major change in attitude regarding the primacy of television over radio emerged in the highest political organs. In that year, a CPSU Central Committee directive, "About Future Development of Soviet Television," described the greater role of TV in the ideological work of the Party stating:

Television, together with the press and radio, is called to play an important part in educating the Soviet people in the spirit of Communist ideology and morals, of implacability towards bourgeois ideology and morals, in mobilizing the workers to complete the Seven-Year plan successfully. Television opens up great new possibilities for the daily political, cultural, and aesthetic education of the population, including those of its sections which are least covered by mass political work.⁸⁴

The decree, however, lamented television's current status, with its general underdevelopment, lack of imaginative programming and trained staff, and the failure of its technical expansion.⁸⁵ The directive suggested a plan for extending television's reach, and with improved conditions in the national economy for such development, the Soviets instituted a rapid expansion of the medium.⁸⁶

During this year (1960), the first national channel, dubbed "First Program," began operations with approximately 5 percent of the population able to view broadcasts.⁸⁷ Within eight years (1968), a dramatic expansion in the number of programming centers, retransmission stations, and individual television sets occurred. The terrestrial transmission network expanded to large areas in the western USSR, as well as to urban regions in the central Asian republics, Siberia, and the Far East.⁸⁸

The construction of the *Ostankino* television tower in Moscow (operational in 1967) served as the central beacon of Soviet broadcasting, housing the various studios of Central Television, while transmitting the main national channel in color. In addition, the network saw the expansion of channels, then up to five, with the completion of Ostankino, though most viewers outside of Moscow, Leningrad, and the capitals of the various union republics could only receive the first national channel.

"First Program" carried news, sociopolitical, artistic, and general information broadcasts for the nation, adhering to strict Party-defined norms of acceptable format and content. Overtly political and lacking in spontaneity and creativity, Central TV experienced little change in programming from its inception to the days of perestroika. Program themes across genres tended to coincide with Party propaganda outlines which celebrated the Soviet way of life in the political, social, cultural, and artistic realms, with programming continually affirming the achievements made by the nation in socioeconomic and cultural construction.⁸⁹

Satellite Television

Satellite developments by this time were providing the final solution for effecting total saturation of the nation with central television broadcasts, and represented the breakthrough made for the case of television's superiority in the minds of Kremlin planners. Satellite TV was a natural consequence of Soviet efforts in space, and its implementation was aggressively pursued as technical improvements and sufficient financing warranted.

In the 1970s, Soviet television solidified its position of preeminence and grew to comprise a system which would reflect the administrative and control parameters erected by the Party. Central Television broadcasts (produced solely in Russian) extended to the republic and local levels, which by 1975, consisted of 132 television program centers, each engaged in local programming coordinated thematically and formatted similarly to Central Television, and inserted into the daily program stream from Moscow. All Union and autonomous republics originated programming in the various languages existent within its territory, and regularly provided materials to Central Television. Television set ownership increased from 3.6 million in 1965 to over 60 million in 1975, though none could be found in Eskimo villages.⁹⁰

The reader should note that television set saturation figures were not arrived at by actual counting methods within homes, but by receipts of television sales, thus opening up opportunities for overstatement of actual levels by Soviet statisticians. Ten years later, the figure rose to 90 million sets, with the estimated

television audience across the USSR totaling approximately 270 million people--roughly 95 percent of the country's population.⁹¹

Up to the days of perestroika (1985), Soviet television operated 270 TV and radio centers, 500 large and 6000 small transmitting TV stations, 90 major satellite communication stations, and 6000 small television receive-only (TVRO) satellite sites.⁹² A daily count of television programming from Moscow comprised 149 hours, with broadcasts on 14 channels, including the two national channels, "First Program" (described earlier) and "Second Program," (which was created in 1982 by request of the 26th Congress of the CPSU).⁹³ Across the country, 45 languages of the various nationalities were broadcast on republic and local channels.

The system's overall technical expansion was impressive by any standard, with Soviet claims for possessing the world's largest system of satellite TV broadcasting meriting consideration. The ability of the Party to directly input messages into the lives of every citizen through this system was thus essentially achieved. As a result, operation of the network would remain under the tight systematic control of those occupying the highest posts within the Politburo, a natural consequence of the philosophy of press control formulated by the original mind of the state--Lenin.

All-Union Broadcast Administration and Structure (Pre-1991)

In 1970, the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting (Gosteleradio) was established. As a government agency within the Soviet Ministry of the USSR, this committee was respon-

sible for constructing the infrastructure for nationwide coverage, as well as the systematic administration of all operational broadcast stations in the Union.⁹⁴

Gosteleradio maintained its authority over broadcasting on a territorial basis through a network of state television and radio committees, from the national (All-Union), to republic, oblast, okrug, raion, and local levels. Gosteleradio assigned its central broadcasting department with responsibility for nationwide domestic broadcasts, and for local broadcasting to the Russian Republic (RSFSR). Like printed press, every broadcast committee was also responsible to the Agitprop press sector as well as the executive authority at each level.

Gosteleradio was headed by a chairman, and organized into various committees or departments for television; radio; creative sections; propaganda; technical administration; planning, finance, and accounting. Gosteleradio was primarily concerned with the logistics of programming, while supervision over broadcast plants and signal distribution facilities was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Communications.⁹⁵

The various 15 Union republics (except the RSFSR) originated their own full-time program service, in addition to receiving the national channels from Moscow. Regional and local broadcast committees served as affiliates of the national networks, rather than acting solely as independent production and transmission facilities. As for television, the lower committees would transmit locally produced materials during selected timeslots on the second

national channel.

The State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Television and Radio also created special sections responsible for international broadcasting and program exchanges with eastern European nations via Intersputnik, and with western European states via Eurovision.⁹⁶

TABLE #1 Communist Party Agencies for the Mass Media

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE (CPSU)
Secretariat**

Department of Propaganda

S E C T O R S

Newspapers	Magazines	Radio-TV	Printing Plants	Publishing & Distribution
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REPUBLIC CENTRAL COMMITTEES

**Departments of Propaganda
and Agitation**

S E C T O R S

Press	Radio-TV	Other Media
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Oblast Party Committees

**Department of Propaganda
and Agitation**

Sector for Press, Radio, TV

City Party Committees

Sector for Press, Radio, TV

Raion Party Committees

**Sector for Press,
Radio, TV**

**Elemental Party Units
(factory, cooperative)
school, etc.**

Printed and Wall papers

NOTES

1. Mark Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union (New York: Pegasus, 1970), 116.
2. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 117.
3. James Markham, Voices of the Red Giants (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1967), 53.
4. Wilbur Schramm, "The Soviet Communist Theory of the Press," in FOUR THEORIES OF THE PRESS, eds., Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 108.
5. Janusz Bugajski, Fourth World Conflicts: Communism and Rural Societies (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 16.
6. Schramm, 108.
7. Rius, Marx for Beginners (New York: Pantheon Press, 1979), 127.
8. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto, (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1988), 32.
9. Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, 382.
10. Markham, Voices of the Red Giants, 101; T. Z. Lavine, From Socrates to Sartre: the Philosophic Quest (New York: Bantam Books, 1984), 263. Note: Marx's statement about the censored press is perhaps more a reflection from his earlier Prussian experience with press censorship under King Frederick William III. Marx was opposed, along with his fellow Young Hegelians, to the state's efforts to restrict freedom of thought and those forums which facilitated it. It is a paradox that he redevelops thought control for the purpose of achieving communism in a manner which he earlier reviled.
11. Robert Conquest, The Politics of Ideas in the USSR, 13.
12. Vladimir Lenin, Collected Works of V.I. Lenin, Vol. 26 (New York: International Publishers, 1927), 104.
13. Markham, Voices of the Red Giants, 48.
14. Ibid., 102.
15. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 62.

16. Ibid., 61.
17. Markham, Voices of the Red Giants, 61.
18. Bugajski, Fourth World Conflicts: Communism and Rural Societies, 17.
19. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Press."
20. Markham, 23.
21. Ibid., 68.
22. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Communications."
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1973 ed., s.v. "CPSU."
26. Ibid.
27. Hopkins, 21.
28. Markham, 68.
29. Encyclopedia Britannica, 1960 ed., s.v. "Vladimir Lenin."
30. Hopkins, 73.
31. Ibid., 74.
32. Gayle Hollander, Soviet Political Indoctrination (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1972), 146.
33. Conquest, The Politics of Ideas in the USSR, 43.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Hopkins, 77.
37. Ibid., 74.

38. I.V. Stalin, O Pechati (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Proletarii, 1925), 13.
39. Hopkins, 83.
40. N. Bogdanov and B. Vyazemskiy, Spravochnik Zhurnalista (Leningrad: Lenizdat Publishing House, 1961), 159.
41. Wilbur Schramm, "The Soviet Communist Theory of the Press," Four Theories of the Press, 132.
42. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 4 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
43. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Tass."
44. Markham, Voices of the Red Giants, 126.
45. Hollander, Soviet Political Indoctrination, 32.
46. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 286.
47. For an indepth view of these points, see, Schramm, "The Soviet Communist Theory of the Press," 121.
48. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 4 April 1992.
49. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Radio."

Note: While Soviet historians recognize Popov's 1895 invention of a crude radio receiver, Marconi had in fact demonstrated a similar radio transmitter and receiver in 1894, and is properly credited as the "inventor" of radio, though his work in fact derived from the theoretical and experimental work of Maxwell and Hertz and other later investigators in electromagnetics and physics. The Soviet claim is characteristic for a society which assumes superiority in advancing human science, and false claims were abundant in the USSR as the Party crafted its propaganda campaign across all sectors of human activity in order to convince its citizens of the Party's leading position as guiders of Russia and ultimately, the rest of mankind.

The reader should note that there are rival claims concerning the date of the first experimental radio broadcast in Russia, with the Soviet Encyclopedia using the 1919 date, and Soviet journalist manuals stating a 1920 date.

50. Philo C. Washburn, Broadcasting Propaganda: International Radio Broadcasting and the Construction of Political Reality (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1992), 2.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., 3.

53. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Radio."

54. Markham, Voices of the Red Giants, 76.

55. Ibid.

56. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Radio."

57. Ibid.

58. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 244.

59. Hollander, Soviet Political Indoctrination, 101.

60. Hopkins, 245.

61. Vladimir Chuganov, director, Chukotka Office of the Russian Republic Ministry of Communication, Informatics, and Space, interview by author, 5 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording; Vladimir Nikolaivich, Historian, Northwest Complex, Far Eastern Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, interview by author, 1 March 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

62. Statistics on radio receivers are quoted from Soviet and American sources, ie., USSR Ministry of Communications, Transport i Sviaz SSR (Moscow: Finance and Statistics, 1990); Hopkins (quoting from the Soviet publication Forty Years of Soviet Power); Markham (quoting World Communications, 3rd edition). None of the estimates from these sources match exactly, and it can be assumed that official Soviet statistics are often inflated due to reasons relating to the fulfillment of state plans and quotas.

63. Markham, 76.

64. Hopkins, 246.

65. Much of Magadan Oblast (Chukotka) was without electrification from 1950 until the 1980's, so radio penetration was sporadic and only in settlements with electric generators; see, Vladimir Silchenko, Director, Magadan State Communications Committee, interview by author, 20 October 1991, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

66. Markham, 78.
67. Ibid.
68. Hollander, 103.
69. Victor Luktianov, chief engineer, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 23 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
70. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 247.
71. Magadan Oblast had numerous radio jamming stations in operation to counter the Voice of America, Radio Liberty, and other western broadcasts. Accordingly, all towns and settlements in the Magadan Oblast have radio reception based on diffusion networks, though radio receivers have a high penetration rate--primarily for reception of Soviet shortwave broadcasts in remote locations.
72. Raisa F. Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zhizen (Magadan, Russia: Magadan Publishing House, 1974), 26.
73. USSR Ministry of Communications, Transport i Sviaz SSSR, 198.
74. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Radio."
75. Ivetta Knyazeva, "This is Radio and Television Moscow," Soviet Life, May 1988, 10.
76. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Television."
77. This date is noted by the Large Soviet Encyclopedia. In the journal Soviet Life (May 1988 issue), published by the Soviet Embassy in the US in conjunction with Novosti Press Agency. Then-Chairman of Gosteleradio, Alexander Akseyonov, claimed that the Russian physicist Boris Rosing made the first laboratory TV broadcast in 1911, and that Leon Theremin demonstrated a TV transmission device in 1926 at the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute. These "facts" were not stated in the Large Soviet Encyclopedia, demonstrating the conflicting evidence given by various Soviet sources in developing an exact account of broadcasting's inception.
78. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Television."
79. Ibid.
80. Hopkins, 251.

81. Scholars such as Mickiewicz and Hopkins come to conclusions that the Soviets were slow to grasp the potential of television for varying reasons, whether it relates to TV's potential for effective mass persuasion, or to the financial utility of developing an expensive technical network at a time when government funding was prioritized on other sectors of the economy which were redeveloping in the aftermath of the Second World War.

82. Ellen Mickiewicz, Media and the Russian Public (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1979), 19.

83. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Television."

84. Conquest, The Politics of Ideas in the USSR, 88.

85. *Sovyetskaya pechat v documentakh* (Soviet press in documentation) (Moscow: State Publishing House, 1961), 136; Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Press."

86. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 251.

87. Ellen Mickiewicz, Split Signals (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3.

88. Hopkins, 252.

89. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Press, Radio, and Television."

90. Hopkins, 252; Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1981 ed., s.v. "PRESS, RADIO, AND TELEVISION."

91. Hopkins, 252.

92. Novosti Press Agency, "TV Fact and Figures," Soviet Life, May 1988, 2.

93. Pravda News service, "Vo vsei strani," Pravda, 24 December 1981, 6.

94. Mickiewicz, Split Signals, 6.

95. Alexander Rushev, Magadan State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 3 April 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

96. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1981 ed., s.v. "PRESS, RADIO, AND TELEVISION."

CHAPTER 4

BROADCAST MEDIA SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT IN CHUKOTKA: 1900-1986 (A TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE OVERVIEW)

This chapter deals primarily with the development of the means of broadcast media in Chukotka, including larger developments of the Magadan Oblast region, of which the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug was a part. Analysis of the political and managerial aspects of these operations will be provided in later sections.

Telecommunications in Chukotka (Pre-Soviet Era)

The first strategies for the interconnection of Chukotka with the central regions of Russia and across to North America were developed by the Western Union Telegraph Extension Project (WUTE) from 1865-67.¹ This grand scheme was the result of competition between Western Union and Cyrus Field--the promoter of the first undersea telegraph cable across the Atlantic connecting America and Europe. In a race against time, Western Union began survey operations and line construction from Plover Bay, Chukotka (near Provideniya), down along the Chukotka coast to the Anadyr River, over to the Sea of Okhotsk, and finally to the Amur River where connection with lines from central Russia would be achieved.²

Field was successful with the Atlantic Cable in July 1866, and WUTE ceased construction in Chukotka in 1867. However, a number of stations had been set up, in effect, representing the first actual working stations which would ultimately impact subsequent telecom developments in the region.³

With the excitement of gold discoveries made in Nome in 1899, the next phase of telecommunication development began. Searching for Chukotka gold and trade markets, numerous American businessmen and adventurers plied the Russian coastline of the Bering Strait. The old Plover Bay station still operated as well as an American-built site in Anadyr, and by 1909, a radio station (of the spark type) was installed by Alaskan traders, operating until 1917.⁴

Earlier in 1908, General Governor Unterberger conferred with Russian Prime Minister Peter Stolypin about the necessity for creating a network of radio stations in Chukotka.⁵ His views represented the first Russian government strategy for developing state operated radio facilities in the region. This action was made as a counter to the growing influence of Americans operating in Chukotka, and for the need to establish the means for assisting the administration of the government in this territory. By 1910, a small spark station was set up, allowing local military personnel to communicate with the Russian Navy. In 1911, Billy Thompson and the Hudson Bay Company installed another station in Provideniya to coordinate their business and the movement of vessels coming from Nome, Alaska during the short navigation period.⁶

A complex of spark radio stations was constructed in Anadyr and began operations during the summer of 1914. This complex was one of the four most powerful civil stations in Russia, utilizing a 7.5 kilowatt long wave transmitter made by the Telefunken Company of Germany. It had a range of 3000 kilometers.⁷ All of these stations provided basic wireless telegraph services throughout the

region.

In 1917, Mr. Charles Thompson (who moved to Chukotka in 1901) was writing articles for the American press about the events of the Bolshevik Revolution using the Provideniya station.⁹ Soviet power would take six years to consolidate their control over Chukotka, and communication was critical to this process. During the autumn of 1919, the Bolsheviks sent two men to take over the Anadyr radio complex (Mandrikov and Berzin), and by December of that year, a revolutionary committee was established, using these facilities for communication with Moscow.⁹

After these events, the American presence along the Chukotka coast steadily declined. Telegrams continued to be sent from Nome to Provideniya and Anadyr for those Alaskan businessmen still operating in the area, with the American station in Provideniya maintaining operations until 1924.¹⁰ This was the year marking the final victory of Soviet power in Chukotka, resulting in the forced eviction of the remaining Americans from the region.

It should be noted that the primary impetus for concerted improvement of communications in Chukotka was a function of enacting government control over the region, and the effort to develop the mineral extraction and fur industries. Even from the days of the Alaskan penetration into Chukotka, there had been a need for communication systems, and with the later Soviet discoveries of gold, tin, mercury, and other metals, it would be the mining industry which provided the highest financial sums to develop modern communications throughout the territory.¹¹

The Eskimo population remained unaffected by these early telephony developments, with intravillage communication depending on traditional means of transportation (foot, baidar, dog sleds, etc.) for conveying news and information. Russian vessels arriving during the summer navigational periods often brought news from the outside, and villages shared information on a frequent basis due to regular visitation by residents from different communities. At this stage, Eskimos were practically isolated from active communication (via electronic means) with the outside world.¹²

Soviet Power and the Development of Radio in Chukotka

Despite the introduction of regular broadcasts from Moscow and Nizhni Novgorod in 1922, radio broadcasting would remain an unknown entity for most of Chukotka's population for decades to come. The primary reasons for this was the short range of early transmitters, the lack of electrification in the region--a mandatory requirement for reception--and the availability of receiving equipment. The few isolated spark stations were the only available sites for receiving central radio transmissions, and their technical base was still oriented toward telegraphy. Eskimos' first contact with radio listening was through facilities located at cultural bases.¹³

Regional mass media came to the Far East only in the 1930s, together with the active opening of the region and the development of its productive capacity. Reception of the "radio papers" was available in Chukotka and Magadan to a few electrified sites

after 1931.¹⁴

The settlement of Magadan was founded in 1929, eventually to become the central administrative center of Magadan Oblast and Chukotka. The Bolsheviks incorporated a government trust, known as *Dalstroy*, which would organize the development of the entire region. In one of its first moves, Dalstroy constructed a oil-fired electrical generator, and installed a 500 watt radio transmitter to establish regional telegraph service throughout the oblast (1931).¹⁵

In 1933, Dalstroy began construction of a radio center near Magadan which would ultimately house a radio telephone, telegraph, and radio broadcast studio. That year, a regional news broadcast was produced on a periodic basis and by 1934, antennas for radio telephone connection with Vladivostok and Yakutsk were finished.¹⁶

During this period (1931-on) Dalstroy, responsible for numerous administrative functions in the region (including the gold mining operations) installed small electrical generators at various sites which made radio reception possible.¹⁷ In 1935, new equipment and a 50 kilowatt transmitter were installed in the Magadan radio center, allowing the city to connect with Khabarovsk and Moscow. That year, 100 wired radio sets were installed in the city for reception of local news.¹⁸

As with other regions of the country, radio reception for individuals was primarily through the use of wired radio sets (radio diffusion), using telephone and electric cables for distribution to simple loudspeakers. This approach--relying on wired

radio rather than receivers--was born out of three considerations: first, where communication lines (sites) already existed, it was much less expensive to install loudspeakers than radios and multiple sets could be connected to a single receiving source; second, the country had a shortage of radio transmitters which could effectively broadcast throughout all regions of the country to individual receivers; and third, it was much easier to control the flow of information by the Communist Party to the citizenry while eliminating the possibilities for individuals to pickup foreign transmissions which could contain information contrary to the opinions of the Party.¹⁹

On May 1, 1937, broadcasts from **THE VOICE OF MOSCOW** were accessible in Chukotka and the Kolyma region.²⁰ People heard from hundreds of loudspeakers which were placed in tents, apartments, and organizations, the sounds of the Kremlin clock towers.²¹ In July 1938, Magadan communication authorities conducted experiments for radio broadcasting to all areas of the oblast including Chukotka.²² By November, radio broadcasting began on a systematic basis, though for only short periods each week, and by 1942, broadcasts were conducted daily during a two hour time slot.

It is difficult to render an exact date for the initiation of radio broadcast transmissions in Chukotka (namely in Anadyr, the territorial center). Available archival material does not point to a firm date, nor is there consensus among the various government officials from the Anadyr State Television and Radio Committee or USSR Communications Ministry regarding this question. Most agree

that broadcasting commenced from Anadyr sometime in the late 1930s using a low power transmitter which served this town as well as some villages along the banks of the Anadyr River.²³

While radio communication facilities had been constructed in the Providenski and Chukotski districts by 1935 (Provideniya and Uelen), there is no evidence to suggest that they were engaged in radio broadcasting, though they could receive broadcasts from Moscow.²⁴ These stations--utilizing Morse code and later radio telephony--provided basic services for Eskimos in relaying messages between villages, to doctors, reindeer breeders, etc.

The first reference for a broadcast station in Chukotka is described by Russian historian Igor Riga. He noted that radio broadcasts were organized by the Markovski Region Party Committee in May 1937 (a region later to be incorporated into the Anadyrski District of Chukotka).²⁵ Most sources consulted ascertained that from the very first, broadcasting from Anadyr was done in both Russian and Chukchi languages.

There is no indication of Eskimo language broadcasts at this time (first mention of this notes sporadic reports beginning in 1956, but no Eskimos would be hired for broadcasting for another thirteen years after).²⁶ Local Party and government radio officials were responsible for these operations though it was nominally under the control of Dalstroy radio communication authorities.²⁷ The Anadyr station was eventually known as Chukotka Area Radio and would undergo title and administrative changes in the decades to come.

By 1942, a few settlements around Chukotka could listen to broadcasts from Anadyr, Magadan, Petrovlovsk Kamchatski, Khabarovsk, and Moscow. The number of radio receiving sets that year was over 15,000.²⁸ Expansion of radio broadcasting increased during the years of World War 2, as well as the rapid construction of small radio facilities along the Bering Strait, called *polarniya stansia* (polar station).²⁹ Eskimo villages, such as Chaplino, had these stations installed, partly to assist Soviet efforts in the Lend Lease program which transported nearly 7000 American planes across the strait for use on the western war front. Chaplino's radio facility contained a meteorological station with several radio operators who launched weather probes and provided basic communication services for the area.³⁰

These polar stations provided Eskimos the opportunity to listen to radio broadcasts in their own settlements.³¹ Village residents could go to the station and listen to Moscow radio using headphones. During the war years, natives listened regularly to the radio program "Inform Bureau," with Moscow announcer M. Levitan providing details about news from the war front.³² As Chukotka's native communities supplied reindeer meat for Soviet troops, radio provided a link which helped encourage them to participate in the war effort.³³

Eskimos of Chaplino would wait until 1948-50 before receiving wired radio sets in their homes, though there are reports that even earlier, radio sets were used in traditional yarangas near the settlement of Naukon.³⁴ Native villages were usually the last ones to

receive such services, though by 1946, there were still only 56 radio retranslation centers in operation throughout Magadan Oblast (including Chukotka).³⁵ In many centers, Moscow broadcasts could be received four hours daily and Magadan broadcasts for five and one half hours.³⁶

In 1950, there were more than 9.6 million radio reception sites in the USSR.³⁷ By this time, radio reception was available in a majority of native villages in Chukotka. In 1952, Magadan radio transmitted throughout the region using shortwave frequencies and from approximately 1956 on, Chukotka Radio Service (based in Anadyr) utilized a 15,000 kilowatt shortwave transmitter for coverage across the okrug, effectively reaching all Eskimo settlements.³⁸

Radio development and programming in the oblast accelerated during the late 1950s and early 1960s, especially in the power of transmitters and the availability of both wired radio speakers and radio receivers in the remote areas.³⁹ Radio served a special role in the region because of its ability for widespread and immediate coverage. Newspapers, being the favored medium for political communication, were widely developed throughout the oblast, but transportation problems created many difficulties for reaching remote areas effectively. Radio provided immediate news while papers concentrated on indepth analysis and commentary.

The Magadan and Anadyr Radio committees increased the scope of their operations by 1965. Magadan Radio broadcast 10 hours daily and Anadyr Radio constructed a new studio complex on the site of the old Russian-American wireless station which operated before

the Revolution."⁴⁰ The studios were provided up to date equipment of Soviet and eastern European manufacture (East German, Hungarian, Czechoslovakian).

Programming was, from the start, on a lower order than broadcasts from Moscow. Lack of well-trained journalists and analysts were the primary reasons for this, though during the 1960s, the editorial departments at Magadan and Anadyr labored to provide comprehensive programming across all genres, from political or ideological courses to children's fare.

Of highest priority for local programming efforts, was support of those industries which were operated across the oblast. Regular program features from Magadan included the following titles; "Our North Region, Our Miner's Region," "For Geologists," "The Scouts of Gold Places," "For Those who are in Tundra and on the Farm," "For Reindeer Breeders," "Hello Youth," "For People of Regions of the Oblast Center," "Magadan's Week," and "For the People who Work in the Public Economy."⁴¹ Such titles were typical for Soviet radio, reflecting the ideological order and socioeconomic divisions of people.

Similarly, the Chukotka radio programs had equivalent titles, but directed more toward specific conditions in the okrug. Obligatory broadcasts included reviews from the Anadyr-based newspaper Sovietskaya Chukotka, followed by an hour of Chukchi programs--later including Eskimo reports at the end of the decade--and then local political, agricultural, cultural, and musical items. Every evening ended with a news broadcast called "Novosti Nasha Okrug"

(News of our Region), which reviewed regional events, and included a wide range of topics and features for discussion.⁴²

By the 1970s, Magadan and Anadyr became primarily retransmission sites for central radio broadcasts, and accordingly decreased their daily program output to three hours, which was then inserted into special timeslots during the Moscow broadcast. Listeners across the okrug thus got information from all three services over one frequency, composed of 12 hours from Moscow, three from Magadan, and three from Anadyr for a total of 18 hours daily.⁴³

With this change, the editorial boards ceased production of specialty programs and focused mainly on specific issues affecting the oblast's industries, as well as news and local cultural items.⁴⁴ Both radio committees increased the size of their editorial staffs, even though there was less air time to be responsible for.

The most active listening times for radio programs in Chukotka according to Soviet analysts was from 7-8:45 a.m., and from 1-2 p.m. In years prior to television access, an active time for listeners of regional broadcasts was from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. Listening levels diminished with the availability of television in different parts of the territory. Radio listening remained a staple for residents of tundra areas far from settlements, while a fair component of the audience was represented by the Soviet fleet which operated along the Northern Pacific and Bering Seas.⁴⁵

For those with receivers, radio listening opened up more than the traditional information supplied from Anadyr, Magadan, or Moscow. As the Cold War between the U.S. and USSR expanded, radio

broadcasts from American government and private radio became elements of concern for regional and central radio authorities, with the end result being a concentrated effort to jam the signals from an installation built in Magadan.⁴⁶ The **Voice of America** (VOA) and other U.S. state-funded signals (ie., **Radio Free Europe**) were targeted for jamming as early as 1948, but the Soviets left radio frequencies from Nome and other Alaskan sites untouched, though their reasons for this are unclear to this writer.

Further system developments

By 1970, there were seven transmission centers for broadcasting radio in the oblast (including retranslation sites), with 135 total hours of broadcasting per day over these stations--including two programs from Moscow (with the Magadan and Anadyr timeslots inserted).⁴⁷ There were over 100,000 wired radio sets and 30,000 radio receivers in the oblast, with statistics based on estimates of set sales and subscription fees paid for wired radio reception on a monthly basis.⁴⁸

The last available statistics for Magadan Oblast (1974) noted a ratio of 351 *radio tochkas* (radio reception sites) per 1000 residents: this was a higher radio saturation level than the rest of the country with 221 per 1000, though city/rural population parameters may not be comparable.⁴⁹ No estimates on these figures were available for the oblast by 1992, partially because the registration requirements for individual radio receivers was ended and no personnel undertook recent surveys to determine the numbers of

wired radio sets. The last statistics for radio ownership in the USSR (1988) gave a figure of 83.7 million receivers with a ratio of 292 radio receivers per 1000 people.⁵⁰ However, it is safe to assume that practically every housing unit was equipped with a wired loudspeaker or radio receiver operating on Soviet frequency bands.

In the drive to facilitate better telecommunication interconnections (telephone, telegraph, radio) throughout Magadan Oblast and Chukotka, while providing links across the entire northern border of the USSR, the Soviet government began construction of tropospheric scatter radio relay stations.⁵¹ This system, known as *Sever* (North), was similar to the *White Alice* communication line which formed the basis for the U.S. and Canadian government's Distant Early Warning System (DEW Line) across Alaska and northern Canada. Magadan and Anadyr were connected to the system between 1969-70, and subsequent links were made to all other district centers in Chukotka (Provideniya, Lavrentia, Bilibino, Pevek, Schmidt, Beringovski, Egvikinot) with additional installations near the villages of Siriniki and Uelkal.⁵²

Upon completion of the system, Magadan and Anadyr Radio distributed a single combined program (All-Union Radio with local inserts) to all regional centers using two connected telephone circuits. This service was eventually increased to a three channel format in the early 1970s. The system immediately improved reception quality of the signals and were promptly inserted into the wired radio diffusion networks in all villages and district centers

possessing telephone interconnections.⁵³

These tropo links cemented the continuing concept of broadcasting through diffusion methods (maintaining the Party's concept of informational conformance through established state communication channels). However, the tropo system did not connect every settlement in the sparsely settled areas, so both stations continued a dual transmission format using high power shortwave frequencies along with the wired network. Reindeer herders, miners, and others working in the tundra could receive radio only through terrestrial reception.

In many district centers and settlements, local radio studios (*radio uzel*) were created for disseminating news, announcements, and other information over the local diffusion network. These studios were housed in a small room within the local post office (containing mail, telephone, telegraph, and radio reception facilities) using simple equipment for its operations.

Correspondents from the district centers contributed to regional radio newscasts while serving as coordinators of the local studios. There were no radio uzels in the main Eskimo settlements at first, though some had access to radio signals from the Provideniya studio.⁵⁴

THE BEGINNING OF ESKIMO RADIO BROADCASTING

As noted earlier, radio programming in the Eskimo language did occur on Anadyr radio during the late 1950s and early 1960s, but not on a systematic basis. According to Ludmilla Aynana,

Eskimo broadcasts were heard in 1956 over regional radio, and periodically, Eskimo students studying at the Anadyr Pedagogical Institute or the School of Agriculture would participate in these.⁵⁵ The reader should note, however, that there is no unanimous consent among Eskimo journalists about the situation of Eskimo broadcasting during this early period, especially in identifying the very first Eskimos preparing broadcasts at the Anadyr studios. Only with the establishment of an Eskimo Radio service do the details of these journalists coincide.⁵⁶

The first regularly-scheduled Eskimo language broadcasts to be heard in Soviet Eskimo settlements most likely were Siberian Yupik programs produced by KICY Radio in Nome, Alaska.⁵⁷ Many elder Eskimos in these villages acknowledged listening to religious and music programs but did so on a clandestine basis.⁵⁸

Soviet broadcast policies toward the various nationalities of the Union were formulated on the basis of population totals. Though there were over five different native ethnic nationalities resident in Chukotka, radio had previously served only the Chukchi language because they were the most populous.⁵⁹ The Eskimo population had been estimated at 1,500 and thus were next in line to receive broadcast services once sufficient funds were allocated to the Anadyr station for such purposes.

The first concerted attempts to formalize Eskimo language broadcasts began in 1968. As previously noted, directors of the Chukotka Area Radio station invited Eskimo students attending the local institutes to experiment with Yupik programs, and Zoya

Nenlumkina, a Naukonski Yupik speaker was one of these students who would come to join the station on a permanent basis. Eskimo listeners in the Providenski and Chukotski districts became more aware of the broadcasts and support for the experimental broadcasts increased.⁶⁰

In 1969, the Soviet government and Party press organs began preparations for the nationwide celebration of the 100th anniversary of Vladimir Lenin's birthday (April 1970).⁶¹ Events of importance to the Communist Party, such as historic dates connected with the Revolution, Party congresses, holidays, major government events and directives were carefully researched by all press organs and preparations for broadcasting on those days were made many months to one year in advance.⁶²

These preparations (as well as the success of Nenlumkina's programs) played a role in the decision to implement regular Eskimo broadcasting as a partial fulfillment of nationality policy goals for the region. Ideological work would feature heavily in this development as there would be an additional "channel" to explain Soviet/Leninist national political policies to the indigenous population.⁶³ Hence, Party authorities were extremely careful in the selection process of potential candidates for the Eskimo journalist position; only those whose political reliability was unquestioned could be considered.

The age of regular Eskimo language radio broadcasting commenced in September 1969, with the establishment of an Eskimo Editorial Department within the Chukotka State Radio Committee. Nina

Sergeyevna Enmenkow, a Naukonski Yupik speaker, was designated the first Eskimo radio journalist.⁶⁴ Initial broadcasts were aired 15 minutes per week and contained news materials translated from the Russian editorial staff. Many of these early broadcasts, including the first regular program series, entitled "*Polarniya Zvezda*" (polar star), featured reports on native life within Eskimo villages, musical programs (Eskimo and Russian folksongs), as well as news and other materials translated from the Russian Editorial Department's broadcasts. Early program content placed an emphasis on the explanation of Soviet perspectives on the political, economic and cultural development of Magadan Oblast and the Chukotka Area.⁶⁵

In 1971, Anatoly Seleko, an Eskimo journalist from Siriniki, joined the fledgling staff, along with Provideniya correspondent Ludmilla Aynana. The new group developed broadcasts featuring positive stories on native successes in agriculture, hunting, various aspects of socialist competitions among Eskimos, culture, traditions (songs and tales), and progressive life conditions of the region's Eskimo population.⁶⁶ More detail concerning the initiation of broadcasts will be presented in the following chapter.

With the introduction of their own program service, the Eskimo population could receive news and officially approved information about specific conditions of their life in their own language, in addition to the regular Russian language broadcasts produced by the main editorial staff. This programming strategy served to enhance the government's efforts to communicate policy

and deliver administration throughout Chukotka's dispersed native settlements.

For Chukotka state radio in general, the overall station administration, personnel, and program format (in Russian, Chukchi, and Eskimo) would undergo little change from this period until the end of 1991, with the only major developments related to the expansion of the radio signal to most settlements in the territory. The technical means for attaining complete saturation have yet to be realized, despite utilization of shortwave and tropo/telephone distribution. From the 1950s to 1986, Anadyr Radio transmitted shortwave directly from the town with a power of five kilowatts.⁶⁷

The western section of Chukotka had more difficulty picking up broadcasts as the antenna system was oriented in an eastward direction to cover the majority population living in the district centers along the Bering and Chukchi Seas.⁶⁸ The antenna's orientation provided Alaskan Eskimos on St. Lawrence Island and the western Alaska coastline with sufficient signal coverage so listeners could pick up the broadcasts of the Eskimo Department.

After 1986, the Anadyr transmitter was turned off (being antiquated and providing poor signal distribution) and signals were relayed via tropo to Magadan for subsequent retransmission back via a 100 kilowatt station with antennas directed to the western part of Chukotka.⁶⁹ This action ended reception for Eskimos listening in Alaska, primarily those residing in Gambell and Savoonga, who were active in recording Anadyr's Eskimo broadcasts and desired information about their relatives living in Chaplino and other

settlements.⁷⁰

The Anadyr Radio Committee sought to obtain an East German-built shortwave transmitter from the Soviet military in 1987 to redress this problem, and possessed the funds for its purchase. At the time, however, local Ministry of Communications officials (who owned and controlled the radio transmission network), refused to purchase the transmitter sensing no profit out of the transaction. The transmitter was sent back to another site in central Russia, and in the following few years when the communications office began seeking ways to purchase a transmitter, inflation had put such a purchase beyond the ability of both the state radio committee and Ministry of Communications branch to afford.⁷¹ As of 1991, radio services were available to ninety percent of Chukotka's settlements with the existing technical network.

Radio would remain the only broadcast medium utilized specifically for Eskimo programming in Chukotka, despite TV broadcasts available in the Chukchi language. Though later on all Eskimo villages would be provided Central TV broadcasts from Moscow, no opportunities for local or regional TV programming (in Russian or Eskimo languages) would be available to the Eskimo audience, and this condition continued to exist up until 1991.⁷²

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELEVISION IN MAGADAN OBLAST AND CHUKOTKA

The development of television is a history of centralized political control in tension with the centrifugal forces of audience demand.⁷³ From its introduction in 1931, it would take twenty-

nine years before such images would reach the coast of the Okhotsk Sea and forty-five years to the shores of the Bering Strait.⁷⁴

A major problem facing television planners was the distribution of this medium across the vast confines of the USSR. Television slowly was introduced to all of the union republics but without systematic interconnection from Moscow.

Television across the nation developed primarily on a local or regional basis and would await further technical developments for its ultimate centralization.⁷⁵ At the end of the 1950s, TV was extended across the nation and in 1960, 103 studios and retranslators broadcast 276.5 hours daily.⁷⁶ Despite these numbers, television was still an unknown medium to large segments of the country, including Magadan Oblast.⁷⁷

1957: Television Penetrates Magadan Oblast

The first tests of television broadcasting in Magadan Oblast were initiated by a group of local enthusiasts in the city of Magadan.⁷⁸ Amateur producers, communication engineers, and others interested in "TV Magic" (a Soviet term for the technology) set up a small studio room with equipment obtained by the engineers. They installed a low power transmitter with a range of five kilometers and began broadcasts, though there were only 24 televisions available. Programming consisted of movies and news.⁷⁹

Journalists came to the studio to learn the specifics of production, and local residents became familiar with the black and white images, prompting the rise of television set ownership. In

1960, the small studio was incorporated into the Magadan Regional Committee for Broadcasting (a government television operation under control of the All-Union TV Committee) and the amateurs turned it over to a professional staff."⁰

Construction of a new studio building was finished in 1965, and by 1967, 10,000 individual sets could pick up transmissions along a 30 kilometer radius around the town."¹ Broadcast standards remained below that of Moscow-based efforts, yet attracted the attention of enthusiasts from Anadyr and other villages in Chukotka who viewed the transmissions while in Magadan."²

Television in Chukotka

In April 1963, the Communist Party Secretary of the Chukotka Okrug, the Chairman of the Regional Executive Committee, and the Chief Editor of Chukotka Radio wired a document to Deputy Chairman Charnishov of the State Committee of the Soviet Ministry of the USSR for Radio and TV Broadcasting. In it were the demands of local working people in Anadyr to establish a "Committee for Fans of Television" (*Komitet Telelubiteli*)."³

The document stated, "The necessity of television in Chukotka is obvious and the life demands it. It is connected with the rapid development of culture in this remote area." The idea of an Anadyrski television center to serve the city and surrounding settlements was the central theme of discussion, even though its scope of operation would only reach approximately 26 percent of the okrug's population.

If Anadyr could develop television--according to these officials--it would represent a prelude to the wider expansion of service across the entire region. This aspect alone provided a suitable justification for approving Anadyr's request as it complied with the directives of the Party for promoting the nationwide expansion of television.⁸⁴

Chukotka symbolized the furthest reaches of the Soviet empire, and it represented one of the final obstacles to be overcome in the drive for interconnectivity of the Union.

The Anadyr committee had a varied composition; radio engineers, teachers, students, workers in government and Party organizations, representatives from some native communities, and people from diverse vocations. The station was envisioned as an amateur operation, with the committee being founded on a volunteer basis.⁸⁵ The Anadyr city executive committee promised studio space, but the first problem faced was the acquisition of television equipment.

In that first communique to the State Committee, Michael Filetski requested assistance for procuring the needed technical facilities from the central parts of the country, acknowledging that there was used equipment which could be obtained from the Magadan TV studio, but in fact was not desired because of its condition.⁸⁶ Due to their inability to negotiate successfully with Moscow for funding, the local committee would eventually acquiesce to the necessity of accepting used equipment from Magadan, though it would be four years before Anadyr would see the commencement of local broadcasts.⁸⁷

Comrade Mikhailenko, chief of the Chukotka Communications Committee became the driving force for implementing the new studio. He secured three rooms in a former agricultural technical school as well as black and white production equipment from the Magadan TV studio.⁸⁸

Local television made its arrival with an experimental broadcast on October 30, 1967.⁸⁹ The official inauguration of service was on November 6, despite the fact that there were only two television receivers in the city. Twenty personnel (primarily technicians from the local communications department) initiated the programming and after one year of broadcasting, approximately 2,000 television sets were placed in the city.⁹⁰ Programming included informational stories, news reports, chronicle programs, and interviews.⁹¹

Void of trained broadcast professionals, the Anadyr station was supplemented with reporters, directors, and operators from the Magadan studio who worked two month shifts assisting the fledgling operation. This scenario further solidified Magadan's administrative and technical oversight of Chukotka-based TV broadcasting.

After the first year, two cameras and a telecine were installed and the program format expanded to include concerts, movies, and children's programs. The local format developed in the first two years would remain basically unchanged until the introduction of central television broadcasts.⁹²

In 1969, a directive issued by Chief Editor of Chukotka Area Radio (Filetski) changed the status of the amateur studio into a

professional affiliate in association with the existing radio group.³³ The order appropriated technical staff from the radio station and appointed them to positions with a new Anadyrski Studio of Television, now under the organization henceforth known as Chukotka Area Radio and Television Broadcasting.³⁴

By early 1970, this organization was still functioning as an affiliate under Magadan's Radio and Television Broadcasting Committee, though later that year, the All-Union Committee for Radio and Television Broadcasting would be reorganized--an action with subsequent implications for central and regional broadcasting in Chukotka.³⁵

In a move to facilitate centralized control from Moscow over the region, the Anadyr station was reorganized again. Over a two year period, tensions arose between Anadyr and the Moscow State TV and Radio Committee over the matter of legal jurisdiction, with Moscow asserting that the local Chukotka studio was an illegal entity under existing law. Subsequently, a decree on February 28 1972, by the Chukotka Area Executive Committee established the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, operating under the umbrella of the All-Union Television and Radio Committee.³⁶ This move placed Anadyr in a participatory role with Moscow for the purpose of maintaining central control while equipping the Anadyr studio with the means to provide material on Chukotka for central TV broadcasts.³⁷

Anadyr was designated on a separate basis from Magadan, though the Magadan committee still had oversight powers in connec-

tion with programming."⁹⁹ The newly formed committee had a chairman, two deputies, department directors, editors, journalists, and technical staff. During this year, the radio and television staffs had a total of seventy personnel each."⁹⁹ Reflecting its commitment to native broadcasting, the TV committee assigned Tatiana Ochirgina (an Eskimo), as senior editor for political broadcasting, and V. Raktilin (a Chukchi), as senior editor for native broadcasting.¹⁰⁰ Television and radio facilities were located in separate buildings, though under the same administration.

The scope of operations for this new committee would be region wide for the radio staff, however, TV broadcasts would remain limited to the city and a few villages along the Anadyr River. With Anadyr's function as the regional center of government, the TV and Radio Committee was deemed vital in collecting information from around Chukotka for subsequent dissemination to the political leadership and various government organizations based in Anadyr, as well as those situated in Magadan and Moscow. Now properly organized and funded, the stage was set for managing Chukotka's expanding media opportunities made possible by the Party's broadcast development policies.¹⁰¹

CENTRAL TELEVISION IN MAGADAN OBLAST AND CHUKOTKA

In 1965, the USSR had over 125 programming centers and 780 relay stations which were capable of delivering central television broadcasts from Moscow.¹⁰² Television expansion rested on an interconnected network utilizing cables and retransmission sta-

tions, however, this network stretched only to the Ural Mountains, thousands of miles away from potential viewers in Chukotka's Eskimo villages.¹⁰³

During this year, the Party hierarchy--in conjunction with the All-Union Television and Radio Committee--took advantage of Soviet space achievements in the quest for attaining complete saturation of signal coverage across the USSR. Five years after launching the first artificial satellite *Sputnik*, the Soviets experimented with TV broadcasts from space using the *Vostok 3* and *Vostok 4* platforms in 1962.¹⁰⁴ The decision was made to devote massive funds for the construction of satellites and earth stations across the country--a recognition of the power television now possessed in the minds of the Party.

From 1965 through 1968, seven satellites of the *Molniya*-series were launched into space in an elliptical orbit and a system of earth stations called *Orbita*, were constructed across the country.¹⁰⁵ Central television broke the isolation of the Far East in 1965 with a series of broadcasts to Vladivostok using the *Molniya-1* platform.¹⁰⁶ The satellite network would relay the "First Program" of Central TV to all parts of the USSR from the *Ostankino* studio complex in Moscow, giving viewers in each union republic a national service. Each republic maintained its own television channel, however, operating in the various languages found within its territory.

In 1967, construction of the Magadan *Orbita* station was completed, allowing the first broadcasts of Central TV from Moscow to

that region of the Far East.¹⁰⁷ Moscow took note of time zone considerations across the country, and designed a second edition of "First Program" specifically for viewers in the Far East and Siberia.

Immediate construction was made of microwave links for retransmitting the signal along the Kolyma region, with the first line to the settlement of Sokol completed that year. The Orbita earth stations would eventually be placed in the district centers of Chukotka and the first completed installation was in Bilibino. December 31, 1970, is given as the date for the first reception of Central TV in Chukotka (Bilibino).¹⁰⁸

Construction of these stations was a long and laborious process. It would take two more years before an Orbita station was placed in Anadyr (1972). The first pictures relayed to Anadyr via satellite were scenes of the Winter Olympic games from Sapporo, Japan.¹⁰⁹ The Soviet plan for Chukotka was to construct these earth stations (using an antenna of 12 meters) for the major district centers and then progressively expand the system to all settlements.¹¹⁰ The costs were staggering as the facilities had to be equipped with complex tracking capabilities; this was due to the elliptical orbits of the Molniya satellites. A series of "birds" were assigned to cover the polar regions, each carrying the signals for a segment of the broadcast day before disappearing over the horizon. The earth station had to track each satellite, momentarily shut down while repositioning the antenna for the next appearing satellite, and then continue this tracking process every four

hours.¹¹¹

The manpower and facilities needed for each of these stations would provide explanations for why television was introduced so late in the various Eskimo settlements. Launch vehicles at the time were not powerful enough to lift these satellites into a geostationary orbit, thus forcing the construction of this type of satellite series and reception facilities. Given the position of Chukotka's latitude, the Molniya series would eventually prove valuable because of the inability of later geostationary satellites to deliver a "footprint" to the area.¹¹²

In 1975, Central TV appeared in the Providenski District in the town of Provideniya. Upon its completion, the local Orbita signal was relayed across Provideniya Bay via a ten watt transmitter to the city and nearby settlement of Uriliki (a former Eskimo settlement now converted into a military outpost).¹¹³ In 1976, the signal was relayed to New Chaplino, representing the first introduction of television to the Eskimos of Chukotka.¹¹⁴

The remaining native villages along the Bering Strait would have to wait as long as ten years before receiving broadcasts from Moscow. The final Orbita site in Chukotka to be completed was at Lavrentia in 1985, a date long after television reception by their Alaskan relatives in Kotzebue.¹¹⁵

The Soviets soon found the means to upgrade its television expansion plans by developing geostationary satellites with high power transmit capabilities. This step would ultimately provide for cost-effective distribution of Central TV to all settlements,

including the remaining villages along the strait using small, fixed focus antennas. The *Raduga*-series of satellites were launched in 1975, providing signal footprints to the USSR and Europe.¹¹⁶ The *Ekran*-series was added a year later to provide coverage to the Far East (including Magadan Oblast), and by 1978, the *Gorizont* system of satellites was launched into orbital positions which provided effective coverage throughout Chukotka.¹¹⁷

It was the responsibility of the Magadan Oblast Communications Committee (and its Chukotka affiliate in Anadyr) to oversee construction of small earth stations in various native villages for reception of the new *Gorizont 140* satellite (which provided Chukotka's coverage). Small 2.5-meter antennas and a satellite receiver model called *Moscva* (Moscow), were used for bringing down Central TV to the settlements, while the same receivers were installed at existing orbita stations in the district centers for reception of a newly developed "Second Program" channel from Moscow.¹¹⁸

By 1986, 78.4 percent of Chukotka's population could receive the "First Program" through the *Orbita* and *Moscva* systems.¹¹⁹ This contrasts with a statistic of 92 percent coverage in other regions of the USSR for reception of the channel.¹²⁰ Regional telecom planners sought to achieve the goal of delivering the "First Program" to at least 97% of Chukotka's population by 1990, with a much lower figure for reception of the second channel.¹²¹

For Magadan Oblast overall in 1986, TV broadcasts by the *Ekron* system were functioning in forty-nine settlements, and twenty

seven with the Moscva system. Sixty-eight percent of the oblast could receive two channels, though this consisted mainly of coverage to people living in the district centers.¹²²

Despite the claim of having the densest network of TVRO satellite facilities in the world, Soviet television would lag behind the American or Canadian systems in providing service to their resident Eskimo population. The factors of financing, location, population, and bureaucracy were responsible for these conditions.

While Anadyr officials claimed they had the equipment and personnel to install satellite downlinks in all villages they were delayed in completing their tasks because villages had to have separate funds assigned from Moscow for constructing special buildings to house the equipment. As typical of Soviet planning, the communication services had to cooperate with other agencies and were not given necessary funds to complete their tasks independently, thus village television installations would take much longer than planned to complete.¹²³

By the middle of the decade, the main national channel was available along the Bering Sea coast in the following villages with Eskimo inhabitants: Lavrentia, Neshkon, Lorina, Uelen, Provideniya, Uriliki, Siriniki, Shaktorski, New Chaplino, and Wrangell Island. Ratmanov (Big Diomed Island), a former Eskimo settlement since replaced with a Soviet military installation, also had television service and its transmitter most certainly could reach the Alaskan Eskimo population on Little Diomed--just four kilometers away.¹²⁴

The Soviet television installation targets were generally

met, though Eskimo settlements were still limited primarily to one Central TV channel (as was the case for most Alaskan Eskimo villages). Many sites in Chukotka were still without facilities for receiving the second national channel in 1990. By 1993, a few settlements in Chukotka were still without central or local TV service.¹²⁵

REGIONAL BROADCASTING: LOGISTICAL LIMITATIONS

After the initial reorganization in 1972, it was assumed by state authorities that the Anadyr studio's signal would be transmitted throughout Chukotka, providing viewers with local, regional, and central broadcasts.¹²⁶ This assumption was based on declarations made by the *Obkom* (Oblast Committee) CPSU committee, as well as the 24th Congress of the CPSU which sought the full saturation of TV and radio broadcasts across the oblast.

This conceptual outlook would have provided the regional Party organizations with the means to disseminate its information to all settlements, while increasing the role of existing broadcast media "in the mobilization of the working people of the Chukotka region on taking into daily life the decisions of the 24th Congress of the CPSU."¹²⁷

Though it was important to get Moscow's signals properly distributed, Anadyr's broadcasters viewed this proposal not only as a means to aid in the construction of the Chukotka territory (one of its official functions) but to also provide viewers with programming reflective of Chukotka's unique lifestyles and interests.

While Anadyr could reach much of Chukotka with its radio signals, television was another matter.¹²⁸

Since the Anadyr station had historically broadcast television to the city (population 16,000) and a few settlements on the Anadyr River, there seemed to be no original justification for funding a large facility with such a small reach (200 km). The total saturation strategy called for by the congress was dependent on satellite distribution for its realization, and the Anadyr studios were dependent upon the regional and All-Union Communications Committees for setting up the technical means of distribution to accomplish this, since the TV committee only controlled production of information and not its distribution.¹²⁹

The major problems appeared to be related to the lack of channel capacity on the Gorizont satellite serving Anadyr, and the technical problems of uplinking at the Orbita site. The earth station, while originally designed for television reception, was not properly equipped with transmission equipment which could interact with the telephone and data signals then being processed. In addition, lack of available capacity would force the antenna to be redirected to a second satellite, thus severing all other communications from the original Gorizont.¹³⁰

Since Anadyr served as the closest military installation for Soviet forces protecting the border with America, and the earth station provided communications for various air force and army divisions, the procedure of changing the station's configuration to provide local television uplinking was deemed inappropriate.¹³¹

Originally, monies were set aside to cover potential uplink costs for the studio, but the combination of technical and (later) financial problems would prove unsolvable even up to the time of this writing.¹³² Thus, regional broadcasting to the entire Chukotka Okrug from Anadyr via satellite remained an idea on paper only.

Despite this failure, the Chukotka broadcast services were eventually expanded in their facilities and personnel. In 1982, by resolution of the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet Ministry of Russia, plans were made to build new broadcast centers in Anadyr and Magadan, however, because of declines in the national, republic, and regional budgets, the monies needed for construction were never delivered. Only in 1987--when the Central Committee again issued a resolution concerning the improvement of Soviet nationality (native) policies via the promotion of native language broadcasting--was the needed money sent to Anadyr for constructing a new broadcast center. When the facility was completed in 1991, however, there had been no additions made to the Eskimo Radio Department staff, nor was there any creation of an Eskimo television service.¹³³

Television's Introduction to the Eskimo

At the beginning of television's introduction in the Eskimo villages, only a few sets could be found. Television ownership became a priority for all families, though prices were high and it was often difficult for local stores to acquire the supply needed to meet demand. Televisions were placed in central meeting places

or *dom kultura* (houses of culture) to accommodate village viewers. Most televisions in the beginning were black and white, though color broadcasting had come to Magadan Oblast by 1972.¹³⁴ The Gorizont system carried color broadcasts from Ostankino so it was natural for many purchasers to buy color systems.

While there are no statistics on television set ownership among Chukotka's native peoples, it is safe to assume that ownership in settlements served by Moscow broadcasts (by 1986), was significant, with most apartments possessing a set. These saturation rates, however, often took roughly ten years to achieve after the initial introduction of broadcasts.¹³⁵

This accessibility to national television provides a parallel to the situation of television penetration as experienced by the Alaskan Eskimos: where Moscow broadcasts made an impact on the linguistic and societal assimilation of the Eskimos into the greater Soviet society, American network broadcasts via satellite to western Alaska accomplished the same. Further, the appearance of television precipitated a natural decrease in community gatherings, attendance at local movie theaters (the primary source for visual entertainment), newspaper reading, radio listening (to a lesser degree), and in-home visiting on both sides of the strait.¹³⁶

Being isolated in their villages and with much less cultural or leisure activities available than in urban areas, Eskimos tended to be among those viewers nationwide who consumed the most television in terms of daily hours viewed. This state of affairs mirrored somewhat the situation of their relatives in Alaska. Soviet

viewing habits came closer to American habits when comparing rural, lower income individuals. According to Soviet researcher S. A. Iosifyan, during the mid-1970s, the rural male television viewer in the USSR consumed on average 13 hours 18 minutes of programming per week, while women watched roughly 9 hours 55 minutes--with the highest viewing totals averaging 19 hours per week. Shortly after TV's introduction to New Chaplino, Siriniki, and other villages, Eskimo viewers could be categorized in the higher levels of consumption.¹³⁷

With the increase of programming time in the 1980s (ie. the broadcast day beginning at 6 a.m. lasting until 12 midnight), viewing rates rose proportionately. The lure of television for Soviets had increased so much during this decade that some media scholars noted TV being classified as an "inelastic type of utility," with the amount of time Soviet citizens spend watching television being exceeded "only by time spent on the job and sleeping."¹³⁸

Such an assessment of viewing correlated similarly to the Eskimos in Chukotka, with the result of an incessant exposure to non-Eskimo-oriented information being the daily lot for natives seeking alternatives to normal modes of communication and interaction within the village.

Language and Eskimo-oriented programming on Central TV

Though not perceived as a primary cause for the loss of Yupik language capability among Eskimo viewers in Chukotka (youth were practically without the language before TV's initiation due to the

process of school education in Russian), television from Moscow certainly strengthened the language environment for Russian in homes to the detriment of Yupik.

The only times when Eskimos might view programming about their own life situation or culture on central television would be from documentary films (few were made) or newscasts. News reports were sent to Moscow by the local Chukotka studio, the Gosteleradio Central TV correspondent for Magadan Oblast (Valentin Gerosimov), or by journalists assigned by Moscow to cover some event dealing with Chukotka.

These reports were sent monthly to the "First Program" news show "Vremya" (time), and occasionally featured stories shot on location in Eskimo settlements. In the 1970s and early 1980s, central television planners--in keeping with government directives aimed at improving the life of northern natives--actively solicited stories from Magadan region journalists which showed both positive and negative conditions of life in Eskimo settlements.

Gerosimov noted that the high point of reporting on Eskimos occurred between 1974 and 1978 (at a time when most Eskimos could not view such reports). During this period, the CPSU took active measures to address social and economic problems in villages which were originally brought to light via the reports sent in to Central TV. This provided a great stimulus to journalists who gained satisfaction in seeing beneficial results from their reporting.

The frequency of reports broadcast slowly decreased after journalists saw the old problems formerly addressed in villages re-

occurring; this time without effective results from the side of the government. Further, there was an apparent and continually growing lack of interest by Central TV in reports concerning natives and about Chukotka in general, especially from the times of perestroika onward. Televised reports on Eskimos were usually not produced by native journalists, though they were often asked to assist in the preparation of them, if needed.¹³⁹

While criticism of existing conditions was a natural component of program content, these televised reports could not address the primary issues (as perceived by natives and their sympathizers among the Chukotkan population) which created such problems. The few Russian journalists who risked their careers in exposing the true conditions faced by natives ultimately ceased conducting this style of reporting due to pressure from authorities within the broadcast and CPSU administrations.¹⁴⁰

From the standpoint of language in these reports, all materials sent to Moscow demanded voiceovers in Russian whenever an Eskimo interviewee did speak in Yupik (most usually spoke Russian), so it can be said that the opportunity to hear programming in Yupik over national television broadcasts has never existed.¹⁴¹

While central programming had been provided to all Eskimo villages, their participation with state television can be characterized as passive, specifically, as viewers only--void of the opportunity to view materials cognizant of their unique culture and lifestyle--and with no direct input into the programming they consume.

Media Resource Availability Among Eskimos

The isolated Eskimo communities were unable to take advantage of opportunities afforded by the worldwide media technology revolution of the early 1970s, such as the introduction of the portable videocassette recorder, video camcorder, various multimedia devices, and other peripheral equipment which would allow for the possibilities of self-production. From the perspective of audio production, portable equipment could be found in the USSR, but was not generally available to the villages.

Lack of facilities hampered the efforts by those interested in native media (at the regional level) to establish a basic corp of trained native media specialists and journalists. The traditional method of sending native students across the country for journalistic training had not been successful as most who attempted this process failed.¹⁴² This condition was directly opposite for those Eskimo villages across the strait in western Alaska, who had access to these tools from the beginning of their general nationwide introduction; who could study within their own regions; and who in fact had adapted media tools in a variety of ways for the benefit of their communities.

Without such tools, and without effective organization in the villages for utilizing even simple audio equipment for producing materials for broadcast over the local wired radio system, Chukotka Eskimos were bereft of the basic means for developing programming on their own.¹⁴³ Further, there appeared to be few advocates among the state mass media who solicited funding agencies within the

Party or state broadcast organs for the equipping of Eskimo villages with the simple technology which was available.

As with the general trend of inadequate state financial subsidization toward Chukotka's native community, the distribution of media tools across the numerous villages was not considered a sufficiently viable expenditure of government funds, and leaders continued to assert that there were few within these communities who had the skills to utilize such technology, thus justifying perpetual inaction in solving this deficiency.

One bright spot concerning Eskimo access to radio was the development in 1986, of short Yupik broadcasts over the Provideniya wired radio system. Though conducted on a sporadic and informal basis, Eskimo reports consisted of news and cultural items, as produced by the few active volunteers in the city, ie., Ludmilla Aynana, and others interested in promoting the Yupik language. Still, these activities were regulated by local authorities and the participants were careful to stay within the bounds of acceptable expression.¹⁴⁴

Ultimately, state monopolization continued to define broadcast program availability and technical development among Eskimos in Chukotka until the advent of new laws on mass media during the last half of the 1980s.

These conditions precluded opportunities for native villages to receive unrestricted programming dealing with their way of life or to discuss general concerns, yet Soviet communication policies (in addition to funding) would prevent Eskimos from developing

their own independent services.

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF BROADCASTING IN CHUKOTKA: REGIONAL CPSU AND GOSTELERADIO CONTROL

The administration and oversight of Chukotka broadcasting by the CPSU further reveals the labyrinth of Party, government, and state broadcast bureaus, though in reality, broadcasting, as a function of Gosteleradio, was thoroughly controlled by the CPSU via its central, oblast, and Chukotka region organs.

Being within the jurisdiction of Magadan Oblast, and ultimately, of Moscow-based Party-government authority, supervisory control over radio and television had to be assumed by the Magadan State Television and Radio Committee in conjunction with Gosteleradio. These organizations in turn, were responsible directly to the CPSU committees overseeing their administrative operations. As a result, independent ruling authority by the Chukotka broadcast committee was ruled out, though a modicum of control over personnel and program content was retained. ¹⁴⁵

After the 1972 incorporation of the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee within the All-Union Television and Radio Committee, the Magadan Oblast CPSU Party Committee was charged with supervising mass media throughout the entire oblast (including Anadyr), and affected this control through the creation of two departments; namely, the Department of Press, and the Department of Agitation and Propaganda. ¹⁴⁶

In essence, this implied a triumvirate of Party press oversight at the oblast level which was then duplicated at the auton-

onomous okrug level in Anadyr. The Obkom Party first secretary (with approval from the Politburo) remained the final arbiter of commands to the media, followed by the director of the Oblast Committee Agitprop Department (whose job description included oversight of all press, radio, and TV operations in the oblast), and finally, by the director of the Oblast Department of Press. The chairman of the Magadan TV and Radio Committee, who was appointed by Gosteleradio in Moscow (with CPSU Central Committee approval), was subject to the authority of these secretary-directors and served as their agent in supervising Chukotka.¹⁴⁷

The third layer of CPSU oversight (after Moscow and Magadan) was at the regional level centered in Anadyr (as administrative center of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug). The highest tier of this final layer of CPSU oversight was represented by the *Okruzhnoy Komitet* (okrug party committee), responsible for the overall governing of Chukotka, followed by the *Anadyrski Raikomparti* (district committee). The lowest tier was represented by the *Anadyr Gorodskoy-komparti* (city committee), which oversaw local municipal government. Both the *Okruzhnoy* and *Raikom* committees had a department of press, as well as Agitprop sector, with the local city committee possessing only a press department.¹⁴⁸

At the okrug level, ultimate authority over press was held by the *Okruzhnoy Komitet* first secretary, followed by the Okrug Agitprop director. The Party's chief administrative officer within the Chukotka TV and Radio Committee was the chairman, who was appointed by the Okrug Party Committee, and confirmed by Gosteler-

adio. The chairman was either a candidate or member of the Okruzhnoy committee, and the deputy chairmen (for radio and television services, respectively) along with department heads were filled by CPSU members also subject to approval by this committee.¹⁴⁹

The majority of journalists and operators who were hired by the chairman were CPSU members and thus accountable to both the chairman and various Party committees. Of the three working Eskimo broadcast journalists, only one was a CPSU member, though all would be subject to strict administrative control concerning their activities and program output.

This administrative hierarchy established clear guidelines as to which bureau or persons possessed final authority over broadcast matters, depending on the individual situation in question. With such a bureaucracy of authority at hand, reporters had to ply the trade of journalism carefully.

Gosteleradio's Role in Chukotka

Concerning central logistical control, Gosteleradio delegated funding from the federal budget to the oblast and okrug studios, overseeing the payments for personnel, physical plant, routing operating costs, as well as fees to the Magadan office of the Ministry of Communications which supervised the studio and transmission systems.

Gosteleradio formulated standards, in conformance with Gosplan (government planning agency), for the construction of studio facilities, the hiring of staff, and the allocation of broadcast

hours. Local staffs were large, with the average broadcast station employing a chairman, department directors, administrative staff, engineers, technicians, and editorial sections (composed of editors, correspondents, commentators, announcers, and producers).¹⁵⁰

Gosteleradio further established provincial and local broadcasting departments in Moscow which oversaw relations between the Anadyr studios and the Central TV or radio bureaus located in the Ostankino broadcast center. This served to coordinate financial, technical, and program efforts, and provided a forum for Moscow to receive local Chukotka program materials for insertion into the national program channels, as mentioned earlier.¹⁵¹

Eskimo broadcasting, as a distinct unit within the overall state radio structure, conformed to the established goals and policies of the CPSU and Gosteleradio in its daily operation. This control represented a major constraint to the course of unhindered developments by the Eskimo in utilizing this form of media to provide for their communication needs. Further, such control prevented the Eskimo community as a whole from circulating information of importance which addressed critical societal problems or goals.

The following chapter will explore how Eskimo radio developed, functioned and maintained itself within this totalitarian broadcast environment.

NOTES

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3. Ibid., 167.
4. Vladimir Zhurakov, Provideniya State Museum, interview by author, 21 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording. Note: information revealing these facts were from the annals of A. A. Vahov, as related by the interviewee.
5. Igor Riga, "History of Radio in Chukotka," radio news broadcast, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, 7 May 1992, photocopy of transcript.
6. Vladimir Zhurakov, interview by author.
7. Igor Riga, "History of Radio in Chukotka."
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14. Raisa F. Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zhizen (Magadan, Russia: Magadan Publishing House, 1974), 13.
15. Vladimir Silchenko, director, Magadan State Communications Committee, interview by author, 19 November 1991, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.
16. Vladimir Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications," internal document, (Magadan, Russia: Magadansvazinform, 1992), 1.

17. Ivanova, Sputniki nashi zhizen, 7.

1. 18. Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications,"

19. Some of this information is from personal observation, while background data relating to early Soviet radio implementation in the region was ascertained from interviews conducted by this writer; Victor Luktivunov, chief engineer, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 30 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

20. Raisa Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zheezn, 23.

21. Ibid.

22. Vladimir Silchenko, "Long Distances are getting Smaller," KOLYMA 67 (1981), 1.

23. No exact date could be confirmed from conversations with numerous officials and from official data. During a personal interview with the former director of the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, Ludmilla Shmelyova. Miss Shmelyova claimed that broadcasting began in 1927. This date cannot be confirmed and is contrary to opinions of local historians and even the director of the government communications committee responsible for Chukotka.

24. M. Vladimir, interview by author.

25. Igor Riga, "Creation of Periodical Press in Chukotka," 1992, internal document, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, Anadyr, Russia, photocopy.

26. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author, 20 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

27. Valeri Haliuleen, interview by author.

2. 28. Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications,"

29. M. Vladimir, interview by author.

30. Ibid.

31. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

32. Ibid.

33. Vitaly Zadoran, interview by author, 20 February 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

34. Ibid.
35. Vladimir Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications," 2.
36. Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zheezn, 23.
37. Ibid., 26.
38. Victor Likativunov, interview by author.
39. During the late 1950s and early sixties, the Soviet government changed the focus on the manufacturing of wired loudspeakers and began increased efforts to manufacture radio receivers; Mark Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union (New York: Pegasus, 1970): 247.
40. George Radchenko, chairman, Magadan State Television and Radio Committee, interview by author, 7 June 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording; Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
41. Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zheezn, 63.
42. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
43. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.
44. George Radchenko, interview by author.
45. Ivanova, 63.
46. Victor Soloviev, Magadansvazinform, interview by author, 6 February 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.
47. Vladimir Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications," 2.
48. Ibid.
49. Ivanova, 32.
50. USSR Ministry of Communications, Transport i Sviaz SSSR (Moscow: Finance and Statistics, 1990), 204.
51. Michael Kuchmar, Chukotka State Communications Committee, interview by author, 6 February 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
52. Ibid.

53. Vladimir Chuganov, director, Chukotka Office of the Russian Republic Ministry of Communication, Informatics, and Space, interview by author, 5 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

54. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

55. Ibid.

56. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, director, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 9 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording; note: Ludmilla Aynana, Eskimo correspondent in Provideniya asserts that Gennadi Koiyak, of Chaplino, was the first Eskimo student to make radio programs at the Anadyr studio, even before Ninlumkina. Other Eskimo journalists do not mention him in their recollections of the first stage of Yupik language broadcasts. Zoya Ninlumkina eventually became famous in the USSR as a poetess.

57. Sveta Togiak, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

58. Ibid. Note: Over the course of interviews with many Eskimo people, it was clear that people in Chaplino, Siriniki, and other settlements in Chukotka could receive KICY, though very few had radio receivers with this frequency (850 khz). Mrs. Togiak related that her grandmother was actually an American citizen who hid her identity from Soviet authorities. She kept in touch with Alaska by listening to KICY, but would never allow her family to reveal that she was a listener. There were both official and unofficial prohibitions made by local authorities against those who would listen to the American station.

59. Ludmilla Shmelyova, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 10 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

60. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

61. Unknown author, "On the Ideological Work of Native Broadcasting for the Period 1969-1970," internal document, Chukotka Radio Company, Anadyr, Russia: Chukotka State Archives.

62. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

63. Chukotka Radio Company, "On the Ideological Work of Native Broadcasting for the period 1969-1970," Chukotka State Archives, Anadyr, Russia.

64. While Enmenkow was the first Eskimo reporter in the newly organized radio department, Tatiana Ochirgina (half Eskimo/half Chuan) was the first reporter working for Chukotka Area Radio, beginning as early as 1956. She, however, did not originally speak an Eskimo dialect, and wrote in Russian for the political affairs department of the radio station.

65. Document, "On the Ideological Work of Native Broadcasting for the Period 1969-70," 1.

66. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author; Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

67. Ludmilla Shmelova, interview by author.

68. Victor Luktivunov, interview by author.

69. Yuri Fyodorov, chief engineer, Chukotka Teleradio Company, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

70. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

71. Victor Luktivunov, interview by author.

72. In 1992, a small cable operation was begun in Siriniki showing movies, but no reports of conducting local origination were received, even though John Waghiyi of Savoonga had delivered a video camcorder to the village. Two years later, it appeared that the operation had shut down.

73. For an excellent analysis of general Soviet television trends, see Ellen Mickiewicz, Split Signals (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

74. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1975 ed., s.v. "Television."

75. Ellen Mickiewicz, Media and the Russian Public (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1979), 19.

76. Ibid.

77. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Television."

78. Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications," 1; Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zheezn, 33; George Radchenko, interview by author.

79. Radchenko, interview by author.

80. Ibid.

81. Silchenko, 1.

82. Much information about the beginnings of Magadan television was gained from casual interviews with Yuri Petrovich Shugaev, Deputy Director of the Magadan branch of Rostelecom, Magadan, Russia, who was an original founder of the first studio, and who is this author's father-in-law.

83. Inaviya, Nototegrina, and Mikhail Feletski, "On the creation of the Committee of Fans for TV," Document to the State Committee of the Soviet Ministry of the USSR for Radio and Television Broadcasting, April 1963, p. 1. Chukotka State Government Archives, Anadyr, Russia.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

87. Valeri Haliuleen, deputy Director, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 6 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

88. Tatiana Ochirgina, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

89. Haliuleen, interview by author.

90. Ibid.

91. Ochirgina, interview by author; Haliuleen, interview by author.

92. Ochirgina, interview by author.

93. Mikhail Filetski, "Personnel and Finances in Local TV in Chukotka as an Affiliate of Chukotka Area Radio and TV broadcasting," 1969, Chukotka State Government Archives, Anadyr, Russia.

94. Ibid.

95. Haliuleen, interview by author.

96. Chukotka Area Executive Committee, "On Formation of Personnel on the Committee for TV and Radio Broadcasting of Chukotka Area Executive Committee," 1972. Document in Chukotka State Archives, Anadyr, Russia.

97. Andre Neskov, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 4 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
98. George Radchenko, interview by author.
99. Haliuleen, interview by author.
100. Chukotka Autonomous Okrug Executive Committee, "On Formation of Personnel on the Committee for TV and Radio Broadcasting of Chukotka Area Executive Committee, 28 February 1972," Chukotka State Government Archives, Anadyr, Russia.
101. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 6 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
102. Hopkins, Mass Media in the Soviet Union, 252.
103. Ibid., 252.
104. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Television."
105. Hopkins, 253; Gayle Durham Hollander, Soviet Political Indoctrination (New York: Praeger Publishers Inc., 1972), 102.
106. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Television."
107. Vladimir Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications," 2.
108. A. T. Hilobochenko, Istoriye cheskey Hronika Magadanskoy Oblasti 1917-1972 (Historical Chronicle of Magadan Oblast 1917-1972) (Magadan, Russia: Magadanskoye Knishnoye Izdatelstvo, 1975), 300.
109. Vladimir Silchenko, "Important Means of Information," Political Agitation 7 (April 1986), 15.
110. Vladimir Silchenko, "Long Distances are getting Smaller," KOLYMA 67 (1981), 2.
111. Yuri Fyodorov, interview by author.
112. Ibid.
113. German Nazarov, Director, Provideniya State Communications Committee, interview by author, 5 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.
114. Vladimir Yatta, former chairman, New Chaplino Village Soviet, interview by author, 20 May 1992, New Chaplino, Russia, tape recording.

115. Vladimir Silchenko, "Important Means of Information," Political Agitation 7 (April 1986), 15.

116. Ellen Mickiewicz, SPLIT SIGNALS, 14.

117. Mickiewicz, 14; Silchenko, "Important Means of Information," 15.

118. Vladimir Chuganov, "Telegraph, Telephone, Television," Sovietskaya Chukotka, 11 January 1986, 9.

119. Yuri Kushko, "Telegraph, Telephone, Television," Sovietskaya Chukotka, 11 January 1986, 9.

120. Vladimir Silchenko, "Important Means of Information," 10.

121. Kushko, 10.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid., 9.

124. "1992 Chukotka village satellite television transmitter site listing," Internal technical document, Chukotka State Tele-radio Company, Anadyr, Russia, photocopy.

125. Ludmilla Shmelova, interview by author.

126. Valeri Haliuleen, interview by author.

127. Ivanova, Sputniki Nashi Zheezn, 35.

128. Haliuleen, interview by author.

129. Vladimir Tkachev, President, Chukotka Teleradio Company, interview by author, 5 April, 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

130. Yuri Fyodorov, interview by author.

131. Ibid.

132. Vladimir Tkachev, interview by author.

133. George Radchenko, interview by author.

134. Vladimir Silchenko, "History of Magadan Oblast Communications," 1.

135. Tasian Tein, Northeast Complex, Far Eastern Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, interview by author, 12 April 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

136. Ibid.

137. S. A. Iosifyan. Televidenie i Zritel (Moscow: Izdatelstva, 1975), 28.

138. Mickiewicz, Split Signals, 204.

139. Valentin Gerosimov, correspondent, Gosteleradio, interview by author, 1 June 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

140. Evgeny Berling, journalist, interview by author, 28 January 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

141. Valentin Gerosimov, interview by author.

142. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.

143. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

144. Olga Karablova, Radio Company Provideniya, interview by author, 11 November 1996, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

145. George Radchenko, interview by author.

146. Evgeny Berling, interview by author.

147. Ibid.

148. Andre Neskov, interview by author.

149. Evgeny Berling, interview by author.

150. Alexander Rushev, Magadan State Television and Radio Committee, interview by author, 3 April 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

151. Andre Neskov, interview by author.

CHAPTER 5

ESKIMO BROADCASTING IN CHUKOTKA: FORM AND FUNCTION

As noted earlier, the Eskimo Radio Department was officially formed in 1969, within the Chukotka Area Radio Committee (Anadyr) and represented the primary broadcast outlet for Yupik language programming to the Eskimo settlements in the Chukotski, Providenski, and Iultinski districts.

The Eskimo staff developed program schedules which reflected central radio content while establishing new formats that provided listeners with information about village life, as well as the history and culture of the Eskimo people and language.¹ Broadcasts were designed to communicate Party-mandated ideals and directives into formats readily understood by the Eskimo communities.

Dynamics of Radio Programming and Consumption: Production and Audience Characteristics

Over the years of its introduction, the Eskimo population could receive news and officially approved information about specific conditions of their life as produced by both the regular Russian language programs and the Eskimo news broadcasts. As most natives could speak Russian (except for some of the very oldest Eskimos), Chukotka's radio authorities defined all of the various nationalities as normal recipients of Russian language broadcasts, with Yupik programming deemed a supplemental service to the Eskimo audience.

Radio (in Russian and Yupik) was a more reliable press outlet

to the native settlements due to the problems faced by regional and national printed press in surmounting transportation and distribution barriers around Chukotka. Because it was common for papers to reach many settlements only four or five times a year, radio had to make up this gap in the dissemination of timely information, so state planners placed priority on Anadyr's Russian and Yupik broadcast service to meet the need.²

Eskimos in coastal settlements were more sedentary than Reindeer Chukchi living in the interior regions, and were more disposed toward listening to radio frequently and for longer periods than listeners out in the tundra. Further, the major population points for the Eskimos were included in the Soviet wired radio net system, providing them with reasonably good signal quality transmissions from telephone stations linked with Provideniya and Lavrentia.³ For those natives outside of villages, Anadyr supplied transmissions on the 31-meter shortwave band.

Reports were often conducted either separately or simultaneously in Naukonsi and Chaplinski dialects depending on the announcer, or intermixed with Russian text. Chaplinski (the primary dialect) was understood by listeners in Chaplino, Siriniki, Uelkal, Wrangel Island, Provideniya, and Anadyr. Naukonski broadcasts were directed toward Lavrentia, Uelen, Lorina, and Anadyr.⁴ With the overall Eskimo population numbering approximately 1500, Yupik language broadcasts were most likely to be effective in reaching about forty percent of this total, if looking solely at statistics indicating Yupik language proficiency. With two primary dialects, the

potential audience size varied depending on, but not limited to, knowledge of the dialect, location of the listener, signal availability, broadcast time period, and listener interest. To note, no official audience surveys or analyses were ever conducted by state media authorities in Chukotka, nor was there any stated policy to perform such.⁵

Eskimo programmers perceived their audience as primarily composed of people over the age of 30, since native language ability among young people steadily declined beginning in the early 1950s up to the establishment of Yupik radio services and afterward. Though young Eskimos were targeted for broadcasts (state archives describe special radio programs for children about Lenin), most of these youth possessed the language only passively, and were not considered active speakers of Yupik.⁶ The broadcasts did, however, provide resources for native language teachers who taught Yupik in village schools.

Given the minute percentage of air time on a weekly basis for Yupik broadcasts, Eskimos were for all intensive purposes, consumers of Russian language broadcasting--as was the case for their English speaking relatives in western Alaska.

Personnel

Eskimo radio broadcasting in Chukotka first developed around a small core of personnel which has been responsible for production of programming output from the first moment of scheduled Yupik language broadcasting up until the time of this writing, a period

spanning 25 years. In essence, very little has changed from 1969, in terms of the people and day to day operations of the Eskimo Department. It is perhaps unique that northern native language broadcasting, as first developed by government planning efforts, should retain its primary core of personnel from its initiation to beyond the collapse of the fundamental government structures which provided its foundation.

After the first year of scheduled Eskimo broadcasts (1971), Anatoly Seleko, an Eskimo who attended the Leningrad University Journalism Faculty, joined the Eskimo Department. By 1972, Seleko left his position and was replaced by Sveta Togiak, a Chaplinski Yupik speaker from Siriniki. For eight years, the two journalists (Enmenkow and Togiak) were responsible for Eskimo broadcasts from Anadyr, and by 1980, a third journalist, Antonina Verbitskaya (a Naukonski Yupik speaker) was added to the staff. These three journalists were originally trained as school teachers. Enmenkow and Verbitskaya remain as the sole reporters on the Anadyr staff up to the present (1996). In addition, two Eskimo radio correspondents based in Provideniya (Ludmilla Aynana and Valentina Golubiva) have served at various times throughout this period, and Irina Apa, a Chaplinski speaker, has conducted Yupik language lessons over the radio. All included, the total number of Eskimos previously or actively involved in state radio broadcasting over this entire period amounts to less than ten persons.'

The first radio journalist in Anadyr of Eskimo descent was Tatiana Ochirgina. As a 13 year old, she was invited by Barbara

Rykoa, a Russian Department editor, to prepare radio programs because of her interest. She produced broadcasts about native affairs in the Russian language as early as 1956 but not in the Yupik dialects.⁹ Setting the trend for native journalism, Ochirgina can claim title to being Chukotka's first Eskimo print, radio, and television journalist.

Production Facilities

Every Soviet radio service was designed and operated according to state plans, from building specifications of studio facilities, to the number of personnel, the equipment they operated, and the hours of broadcast time assigned. The Eskimo Department was subject to these planning factors with the staff limited in their ability to determine for themselves how to expand their production capabilities and program output.

The Eskimo Department was classified as a separate program service, and was given their own office space as well as basic audio equipment and typewriters. Cassette recorders were used to gather materials and were later recorded onto large reel to reel machines for final broadcast. In general, the Anadyr studios were provided with professional radio equipment in the main control rooms, primarily of eastern European manufacture. Actual studio and office space was limited in the original *Dom Radio* (House of Radio) building, which had been provided by the local CPSU Executive Committee, though this was improved later on with the construction of a new facility in the center of town.⁹

As a functioning unit within the greater Chukotka state radio service, the Eskimo staff was not isolated in the degree of control exercised by the Party and radio management over its operations; they experienced the same conditions as felt by those working in the regular Russian and Chukchi editorial boards, and exhibited similar traits in the type, style, and content of programming produced for broadcast.¹⁰

Programming Logistics

In looking at the process of developing and disseminating Eskimo broadcasts, it should be noted that the Eskimo staff had to confront a complex scenario of interacting forces generated by the policies, administrative machinery, and information control parameters imposed by the CPSU.

To understand the fundamental characteristics of native language broadcasts, it would be best to assess the overall process of program development exhibited at the Anadyr radio studios as the basis for understanding how information destined for, and of relevance to the Eskimo population would be determined, managed, and outputted. In this regard, it should be noted that the Eskimo staff would be at the bottom of a vertical hierarchy in all decision making throughout this process.

Program planning

The Anadyr Radio Committee, like all radio services throughout the USSR, was a subsidiary of All-Union Radio. Anadyr had a dual function in serving not only as the carrier of centrally ap-

proved message output from Moscow, but also as a specialized information service cognizant of the needs of Chukotka. It was to differentiate to some degree from its parental arm, while maintaining similarity in content and style.

All-Union Radio was designated for elucidating official ideology or the "line" as defined by the top Party leadership, and focused on propaganda and sociopolitical commentary. It also provided news, "purposeful" entertainment and "high" culture (popular and classical music, literature and drama, concerts), and general features of interest. Anadyr--according to a former chairman of the Anadyr Radio Committee--focused on the development of Chukotka, ie., its industrialization, agriculture, economy, culture, social conditions, and political education." Where All-Union Radio defined life on the national level, Anadyr was to mirror its function at the regional level. The Eskimo Department was designed to facilitate Anadyr's assigned task in this regard, and developed programs which propagated the "line" while still issuing information of "supposed" relevance to its targeted audience."

Coordination of programming was achieved by the use of planning agendas which were formulated on a long and short-term basis, and which determined themes and program assignments. At all times, broadcast planning would reflect the agendas and plans set by central Party organizers, and local CPSU structures were to communicate these to the appropriate broadcast administration.

In Anadyr, the Okruzhnoy CPSU Agitprop Department submitted Moscow's agenda to the chairman of the Radio Committee, who then

gathered senior staff to devise detailed plans for program production. The time frame for these development plans ranged from five years (corresponding to the *petaletka*), to yearly, quarterly, and weekly assignments. Long range plans were often developed in conjunction with the decisions reached by CPSU Party congresses (held once every four years) or Central Committee directives, and short term plans often reflected periodic or recurring events of significance, ie., election campaigns to various soviets, and anniversaries like the 40th Anniversary of Chukotka's incorporation into the USSR, Soviet Army Day, 150th Anniversary of the birth of Engels, etc.¹²

Chukotka Radio followed one major event after another, and most programming was connected with, and designed through the prism of the forthcoming event.¹³

Once plans were formulated, the Radio Committee required confirmation of its intentions, and accordingly, submitted their programming plan to the Agitprop office, which would assess it, make changes, provide recommendations, and then give its final approval. After this, journalists would be assigned specific stories which corresponded to those issues brought up in the planning process.

The Eskimo Department would be assigned their roles within these planning schedules and developed materials for broadcasts accordingly. It was regular practice for the staff to get recommendations or suggestions from local Party officials on ideas which should be pursued for subsequent broadcasts. In reality, however, translations of texts from the Russian Editorial Department consti-

tuted the bulk of stories transmitted during the Eskimo timeslots, a move which further kept the native journalists from independently developing a service of direct relevance to Eskimo needs in the villages.¹⁴

Despite this limitation, the Eskimo staff was expected to help bridge the gap between Party authority in Chukotka and this small, reclusive community, so programming actively sought to cultivate this relationship.

A general system of planning guidelines and program review was enacted which oversaw the Eskimo broadcasts. Upon getting their assignments, journalists researched the subject, wrote their stories (in Yupik), and then submitted short annotations of the text in Russian to the chief editor for confirmation. If sensitive information included in the text required further approval, the editor provided a copy to the committee's Glavlit editor or appropriate censor who either made changes, issued an approval, or rejected the material. Disclosure of state secrets and proximity to hostile capitalist countries which could listen to radio signals (like Alaska) provided an additional rationale for the traditional Soviet practice of prior censorship.¹⁵

Chukotka's status was secretive, to the point where the number of walruses in the Providenski District, the existence of diseases among reindeer herds, or the exact amount of gold produced in its many mines could not be revealed.¹⁶ The list of secrets was extensive. With radio texts finally approved, the program was then broadcast, and a copy would be provided to the chief editor for

later submission to a program review committee in Magadan. Once a month, these reviewers performed critiques on Eskimo programs to ensure compliance with state secrets guidelines, and notified editors and journalists of their performance. As was the case for all journalists, those in violation of procedures or content rules were either warned or terminated from their positions. Termination could also imply further problems for the journalist in his or her living situation, so this prospect kept most in line.¹⁷

Togiak relates that violators were typically those who delivered reports critical of existing conditions. The journalist had to walk a fine line in understanding how far criticism could be tolerated; on one hand, CPSU leaders were active in soliciting inside reports and critical assessments of problems in villages, yet they refused to allow serious criticism to be placed over the airwaves or in publications. Such coverage represented a threat to their leadership.¹⁸

Two other review mechanisms were instituted to keep program output in line with official policies; local CPSU review practices, and the *leetuchka*. CPSU personnel from the city, district, and regional organizations conducted reviews of programming, and met on a frequent basis with editors and reporters to ensure that all were aware of the expectations set for them. On occasion, reporters had to attend meetings at Party offices (journalists referred to it as "calling to the carpet" or "prevention discussions") where they were asked to respond to criticisms made against their on air statements. This tactic encouraged journalists to develop a form

of internal censorship (understanding what could and could not be discussed) in order to avoid future confrontations with Party bosses.¹⁹

The leetuchka was a weekly discussion time between journalists and editors which conducted reviews of the previous week's programming. Often this was a time for informal exchanges of opinion, and it provided the Eskimo journalists the chance to assess their performance while being aware of what they had to do in order to meet the expectations given to them.

Unlike the Russian Editorial Department, the Eskimo staff was afforded opportunities to inject personal opinions into their original production in ways which might conflict with programming standards, and yet be immune from repercussions by the administration, solely for the reason that no one in the Radio Committee, except themselves, could speak and understand Yupik. This didn't apply to the texts they received from the Russian Department, which were pre-censored.²⁰

While the chief editor could read and analyze their program annotations in Russian, this person had no ability to discern the content being broadcast during the Eskimo timeslot. Journalists felt that though there may have been individual listeners in the Eskimo settlements who served as informants to Party authorities, there was no direct evidence to prove this, thus review of their work was based from assessments of the submitted annotations. To a degree, they were free of censorship, yet they avoided the temptation to speak as they truly felt, especially in discussing the

most serious of problems affecting Eskimos, which was essentially taboo.²¹

Production Logistics

Eskimo journalists used a combination of edited reports and live announcing during their program timeslots. Roughly fifty to eighty percent of their material came from the Russian editorial staff, and the rest was original.

Journalists relied to a great degree on telephone communication to gather news from the various settlements, because the logistics of air travel to remote villages and the typical harsh weather conditions in Chukotka often made regular visits impractical. While the staff did have the opportunity to travel, they actively solicited information from a network of correspondents or volunteers who supplied weekly news from the various Eskimo settlements.²² Russian reporters and native officials from various government agencies who traveled around Chukotka also provided information.

The Eskimo staff had access to TASS and Novosti news wire services, and obtained additional information from Party publications, central newspapers ie., Pravda, Sovietskaya Rossia, Izvestia, magazines, literature, and other printed materials. They did not have access to news from the western mass media, but were able to secure information from eastern European and other sources.

Like all departments, their on-air production was facilitated by Russian editors, directors, and engineers, while Togiak and En-

menkow served as announcers. Unlike Alaskan radio stations in Nome and Kotzebue, where journalists often produce, edit, and serve as control room operators for their own on-air reports, the Anadyr staff was subject to built in mechanisms (through editorial and engineering oversight) which prevented them from working as independently as their Alaskan counterparts.²³

Efforts were made by the Eskimo staff to mirror production codes established by All-Union Radio, and they frequently studied radio journalism through correspondence courses and monitoring of Moscow programming to improve their journalistic craft. Though broadcasts varied in approach and style, they generally corresponded to normal radio standards. A typical program contained news, interviews, etc., intermixed with modern music breaks, while other formats possessed a more distinct style, usually when featuring Eskimo folk art materials (dances, music, story telling, etc.).

Program Content

Content of Eskimo broadcasts varied in type and shade depending on the nature of programs presented. While ideological and propagandistic content was pervasive in programs of political and socioeconomic orientation, content reflective of the Eskimo worldview and condition made its way into much of broadcast output.

While ideology and propaganda were major threads woven into the fabric of Soviet broadcasts, Eskimo programs based on political, socioeconomic, and cultural themes had to be done in ways which recognized the uniqueness of the Eskimo population as well

as the context of their position within Soviet society.

In performing their assignments, the Eskimo staff had to constantly perform balancing acts in determining the amount of ideological versus non-ideological, culturally cognizant content placed in their broadcasts. This was done under the pretext that all broadcasting was done "for official ears" and that such material had to satisfy the needs of government authority rather than those of the individual listener.²⁴ The CPSU used radio as a tool for molding the ethical and moral outlook of its citizenry, raising their social and cultural awareness, and promoting the acceptance of national and economic goals, so content within Eskimo broadcasts had to be constantly referenced to these ideological criteria.²⁵

Concerning political and propagandistic content, Tatiana Ochirgina--chief editor for political broadcasting--noted that Eskimo radio was no different from its Russian counterpart concerning its utilization, since all radio had a general assignment to present a picture of a "flourishing society"--one which was perpetually progressive in attaining the goals of communism, as well as infinitely superior to the societies of the capitalist world.²⁶

To assist the journalist in this, the Party organizations provided a variety of materials explaining Party positions, which were expected to be placed appropriately within programs across all categories. These included statements from Party congresses, Politburo and Central Committee directives, regional CPSU resolutions, general works by Marx and Lenin, as well as books by Leonid Brezhnev and other noted Soviet leaders.²⁷ Eskimos who were Party

members were interviewed periodically and added their own testimonies to the already heavy output of CPSU-dominated information being broadcast.

Some of this content was reflected in programs designed for agitation purposes, called "Radio Schools." These broadcasts revolved around Lenin's teachings and were designed to assist lecturers and agitators in Chukotka's villages, by applying Soviet propaganda to local conditions.²⁸

On a regular basis, Eskimo reporters had to translate CPSU policy directives dealing with native peoples into radio programs which addressed the issues raised by such policies. Program titles such as "Victory of the Leninist Native Politics in Chukotka" or "History Develops According to Lenin" (which explained international communist and working movements) are examples of this political radio strategy.²⁹

The challenge to journalists like Enmenkow, Togiak, and Verbitskaya, was to develop programs which included these Party content mandates in ways that were relevant to an indigenous population more concerned with issues pertaining to their own sociocultural and economic situation. This was paradoxical in that CPSU propaganda directed toward natives via radio focused only on those who could successfully adapt to the expectations of the Party. The Eskimo staff informed listeners about the labor achievements of hunters, reindeer herders, agricultural workers, fur workers, sea-port workers, etc., while praising individual CPSU members, Komso-mol workers, Young Pioneers, teachers, and government representa-

tives of special note in the villages.³⁰

Radio presented only positive aspects of life among Eskimos, while systematically avoiding serious critical analyses of the true status of Eskimos.³¹ As mentioned earlier, the Party allowed criticism of a lower order to be aired, if it served in assisting their management over the native settlements and *solvhoz* (state farms), and did not question their authority or effectiveness. This aspect of programming will be explored in later sections.³²

As broadcasting was conducted in Yupik, program content was affected by the parameters of linguistic adaptation to Russian vocabulary and ideas. It was fairly easy for journalists to write their reports in Yupik when discussing issues which were common to the life experience of the Eskimo population, but much more complicated when forced to translate words, ideas, and concepts developed from a Russian or Soviet perspective which was foreign to the Eskimo worldview.

Content in broadcasts could be easily identifiable as specifically Eskimo when programs featured native folk art, dancing, music, or interviews with whale hunters, story tellers, or elder's reciting history, etc. Discussions of a political or ideological nature, however, influenced program content in ways which could be difficult for the average listener (especially older Eskimo listeners) to comprehend. Elaborating on the latest shift in Soviet foreign policy, or describing Politburo personnel changes, often did not square with a reindeer breeder working in the tundra or villagers living in remote coastal communities who had no sense of

connection with Moscow.³³

Eskimo reporters complained regularly about being forced to translate large sections of books by Brezhnev or Party documents for use in their timeslots, especially since it was a difficult task, took most of their work time, and took away from their coverage of stories which were of specific interest to the Eskimo audience. This programming essentially duplicated what All-Union Radio was already covering, and was viewed as superfluous, since Eskimos relied on the Russian language service for general sociopolitical information.³⁴

As with any radio operation, content should be reflective of the myriad needs and conditions experienced by its audience, and the Eskimo Department designed programs--as far as allowed--with this in mind. Subjects for radio (aside from political or ideological categories) which were handled by the department included; gold mining, sea mammal hunting activities, reindeer herding, fishing, native folk arts, agriculture, activities of state farms, the fur industry, construction activities in villages, education directed toward natives, medical care, sports, native history, native traditions and customs, native language development and literature, life conditions of northern ethnic peoples of the USSR, the life of Eskimos around the circumpolar North (as could be perceived from available documentation), and general news from around the Chukotka region. These were areas of specific interest to the Eskimo audience and journalists endeavored to cover this range of subjects in systematic fashion, though within a framework acceptable to their

editorial supervisors.³⁵

Overall, content was varied depending on the assignments given, the subjects addressed, and the nature of its coverage. In the following section, program schedules will be discussed which provide a clearer picture on how Eskimo programs were formatted.

Program Schedules and Style

At its inception, as previously noted, Yupik language programming began with fifteen minute slots once a week during the Anadyr timeslot on All-Union Radio broadcasts. The time allotted for programming gradually increased within two years as a result of staff expansion and increased listenership in the targeted villages.³⁶

During the early to mid-1970s, broadcasts were aired on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 6 and 7 P.M. usually starting with short newscasts featuring news around the okrug, followed by reports on various social, political, or economic issues, and concluding with cultural items or musical presentations. Two weekly series based on native themes constituted the main program features offered by the Eskimo Department; "You Live in the Village," and "Our Native Land," which involved village news and reports on cultural activities.³⁷

Other early program titles during this period included; "On Formation of the Chukotka National Area," noting developments of economics and culture; and "Your People Chukotka," a special series of reports about the "best" people of the district, featuring

interviews with reindeer breeders, hunters, and others involved in "socialist construction" who were telling of their tasks and successes.³⁸

Excerpts from Eskimo program annotations can give the reader a view of typical radio coverage: "the main topic was preparation for the 1st of May holiday, along with propaganda about decisions of the plenary session of the Central Committee (CPSU) in March;" "we gave reports about the successes of fur workers who prepare raw materials;" "listeners learn about the meeting of citizens with candidates to the area Soviet of People's Deputies, then about the work of the central agitation and propaganda department in Pevek;" "about a 24 year old veterinarian from the farm called '40 Years of October,' and about the production of hunters from the agricultural farm 'Lenin' in the Chomski District in connection with the upcoming elections;" "we described the cultural services of the people living in circumpolar regions;" "presented the program 'At the Construction Sites of the Area,' which highlighted the deeds of builders;" "reports about reindeer herders and their summer campaigns, and preparation of seaport workers and miners for their next season."³⁹

While these annotations provide a glimpse at reporting from the "socialist construction" perspective, the Eskimo staff featured cultural materials as often as possible. In the latter 1970s and 1980s, as cultural reporting increased, the staff highlighted Eskimo songs from many small native dance ensembles which were being formed across the Providenski District. The size of their cultural

tape library (featuring stories, legends, histories) began to expand and were inserted more often into timeslots formerly held for political coverage.⁴⁰

A program which began at the department's inception and which continues to the present is titled "*Polarniya Zvezda*" (polar star), which focused on the lives and relations of Eskimos around the circumpolar North. As stated earlier, program schedules and the types of stories covered varied in successive years, and with the addition of Verbitskaya in 1980, the Eskimo staff further increased its air time and range of programming. By the late 1980s, air time increased to 60 minutes weekly and up to 105 minutes in 1992.⁴¹

This writer was not able to secure copies of Eskimo Department program schedules for the 1970s and early 1980s, instead having access only to individual copies of annotated program descriptions which are housed in the Chukotka State Government Archives in Anadyr.

While it can be ascertained that programs of a political and ideological nature were heavily prevalent in the schedules of those years, the percentage of programs more cognizant of native audience demands, ie., native issues approached from a non-ideological and critical perspective, and more varied cultural themes, began to increase after the beginning of the perestroika period between 1985-1987.

The following schedules provide a representative sampling of broadcasts beginning in 1970, and those evolving during the late 1980s, which continued relatively intact up until 1991.

TABLE #2

SYNOPSIS OF ESKIMO PROGRAMS: 1970-1991

1970 (Selected Spring schedule for January/April)--15 minute broadcasts)

- January 15. "For our Children" (program on children's issues)
"Kanigakuk Anadyr" (Greetings from Anadyr)
- January 22. "In Districts, Villages, and Brigades" (targeted to Eskimo work collectives, featuring compilations of various reports, letters from listeners, news items interviews, music by request from reindeer herders, reports from regional Executive committees, work affecting villages)
- March 5. "Concert for You, Women of Providenski and Chukotski District" (music concert in recognition of International Womens Day...celebrated only in the USSR)
- March 12 "Novosti Okruga" (regional news), followed by *Eskimoski Vishaniya* (Eskimo broadcasting) which features a piano concert
- April 9 "100th Anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Lenin"
- April 16 "25th Anniversary of the Great Victory of the USSR in the Great Patriotic War" (World War 2)
- April 29 "V vecenni Vecher," "Pervotai-Praznik"

1978-79 (sampling of January program schedule)

- January "News of the region" followed by "Consultation of the Doctors" (reports on medical services)
- "Your People Chukotka" (reports on best or famous people in the district, especially among the young generation)
- "By the Pages of Brezhnev" (translation of his books)
- "Culture of a Village is our Long Term Care" (pronouncements from the Director of the Uelkal House of Culture)
- "To the Election Campaign"
- "Prospectives to make better work in Native schools"

TABLE #2
contd.

"International Week" (review of events)

1989-91 (weekly radio schedule)

Tuesdays

Programs run from 7:15 to 7:45 pm with different program series rotating on a monthly cycle

- Week 1 "International Life." A listener's choice program which is devoted to general socioeconomic, political, and cultural topics from an international perspective
- Week 2 Program on Economic Problems. This deals with issues related to fur and marine mammal hunting, economic conditions in the villages, and other sectors of the national economy affecting Chukotka
- Week 3 "Our Native Country has been Preserved." This program deals with the renaissance and revival of the Eskimo language and culture, and features stories about people in villages around the Providenski and Chukotski regions.
- Week 4 "Our Native Land." This features materials about Eskimo history, culture, songs, traditions, and customs.

NOTE: Also on Tuesdays, news reports and schedules of current events from around the Chukotka okrug are given. These reports were often targeted to Eskimo listeners involved in agriculture and state cooperatives who needed information about activities in the region. Reports on education, health care, and similar issues were featured.

Wednesdays

Programs are run at 7 a.m. which features the previous week's program *Polarniya Zvezda*, from 7:10 to 7:45 p.m.

General program slot featuring political, social, or cultural materials.

Thursdays

7:10-7:45 a.m. "Radio Journal"

This timeslot was a combination/compilation format featuring a variety of materials. General information,

analysis, interviews, discussion of problems in villages, stories on Eskimos in different villages, radio sketches, native music, etc. This broadcast was the most listened to out of the entire weekly schedule.

Fridays

7:30 to 7:45 "Polarniya Zvezda" (Polar Star)

These schedules fluctuated depending on the assignments given to staff and broadcasts often were changed to meet the requirements of special preparations for the numerous days of political importance (ie., regional or national Party congresses and jubilees) as well as coverage of important current or historic events.⁴²

The percentage of Eskimo language programming would comprise 7% of Anadyr radio's weekly output--a percentage greater than the nationality broadcast quota would normally allow, given the fact that Eskimos only made up less than one percent of the population of Chukotka.⁴³

Ascertainment of Eskimo Audience Needs and Limitations of Programming: A Native Perspective

While content orientation and program scheduling have been briefly addressed, the issue of how Soviet radio ascertained the actual needs of the Eskimo audience and how this was translated into broadcasts provides an example for the frustration Eskimos have faced in receiving broadcast media cognizant of, and of service to, their societal needs and goals. This frustration was equally felt by the Eskimo radio staff and their listeners, yet

this scenario was characteristic of a media system designed and controlled by an authoritarian view of the press.

As prior noted, the Eskimo Department had specific assignments to assist the goals of the CPSU, which forced the staff's concentration on programming that encouraged Eskimo audience recognition of, and participation with, the course of life set by the policies of the USSR. It should be said that most Eskimos in the Provideniya region recognized the pursuit of communism as a viable direction in life--a result of the educational and supervisory system imposed on them since Chukotka's takeover by the Bolsheviks.⁴⁴

Eskimos often referred to themselves as "little children" who believed what the "great Russian fathers" said, so the idea of communism did have a real place in the minds of some Eskimos and broadcasting with ideological content was therefore not deemed inappropriate. According to Togiak, "some individuals sincerely wanted to transform Party ideology into the programs they were responsible for, but in making pro-communist programs, we had to do this."⁴⁵

In the early days of their broadcasts, it was practically impossible for the staff to develop a set of guidelines for programming which addressed the needs of natives on a non-ideological basis--as stated by individual or communal response in the various settlements.⁴⁶ This scenario was typical for all radio stations, and the Eskimo service was no different than the Lithuanian radio service on the other side of the country.

The Eskimo staff confronted a listing of needs as determined

by officials, and not from audience response. While these officials were concerned with administration and development of the region in accordance with state planning, the journalists on the Eskimo staff at times had a differing perspective on what should be broadcast. While it is true that the staff thought radio should be directed toward addressing and solving socioeconomic problems in the villages (like their Russian overseers), problems arose between them concerning what constituted the primary problems affecting the population, and how (if at all) these problems could be effectively addressed.⁴⁷ Besides social and economic concerns, the promotion of Eskimo cultural identity and language was paramount in the minds of these journalists, but even these were impacted by political concerns--primarily the question of "nationalism".

Here again, Lenin and Stalin reemerge in defining the standard to which cultural diversity would be tolerated and how radio had to be limited concerning the promotion of ethnicity and culture. Nationalism--in this case--the perpetuation of ethnic identity, individuality, and independence, was viewed as a phenomenon of the pre-socialist stage of development and incompatible with the aims of socialism which sought international convergence and multi-ethnic consolidation.⁴⁸

Eskimos were viewed by the Party as members of a supranational Soviet people, adhering to a unifying ideology (Marxism-Leninism), a common political goal (communism), shared beliefs in patriotism, and a common language, and any attempts to deviate from this norm through activities promoting ethnicity were systematical-

ly thwarted by CPSU control."⁴⁹ This was the condition faced by Eskimos in Chukotka despite Soviet claims of assisting the process of cultural preservation while simultaneously raising their level of development to that of the "advanced" peoples, ie., the Russian people.

To this degree, all areas of cultural activity by Eskimos were analyzed from the context of adhering to Soviet nationality policies, and in determining Eskimo audience needs, journalists had to carefully assess how their coverage of events and issues affecting the native population would be in line with such policies.⁵⁰

To summarize, adherence to nationality policies, and the avoidance of CPSU-government criticism in socioeconomic and political affairs represent two primary factors for explaining why Eskimo programming could not accurately portray the true condition of the Eskimo in Chukotka. It should be stated that the Eskimo staff could concentrate on many positive aspects of life and culture, especially in their folk art programming, but this area was somewhat neutral and was formatted in ways which would not present threats to the authorities.⁵¹

As described in chapter one of this dissertation, the Eskimo population faced numerous problems from the initiation of Soviet power up until the dissolution of the USSR. By the 1970s, when Eskimo radio was functioning, general conditions in the villages were worsening: opportunities for Eskimos decreased, unemployment was high, alcoholism was widespread, native language usage was on

the decline, educational systems were failing, settlements had high rates of diseases (ie., tuberculosis) occurring, environmental pollution increased, political representation remained ineffective, etc.⁵²

Eskimo journalists had a potentially wide range of issues which could be opened up for critical discussion over the airwaves; however, their response and recognition of their limitations would mirror that of the native intelligentsia, leadership, and common citizen. The dilemma would be in how to develop programming of a critical nature which addressed historic and current affairs affecting the native settlements.

Unlike their Alaskan relatives, all levels of Chukotkan Eskimo society remained passive and did not pose any serious threats to the CPSU administration over it concerning the range of problems experienced. Party authority and actions were not questioned, and radio broadcasts--as the voice of the Party--could not be adapted under existing conditions to serve as a platform for native grievances.⁵³

These grievances, in essence, provided the clearest basis for determining audience needs--though the Eskimo staff could not relay this information into production plans which would be approved by Anadyr's editorial control structure. This represented a clear example of the Soviet technique of internal information suppression. Because of Eskimo radio's inability to serve as a communal forum representing the native viewpoint, opportunities for Eskimos to establish forums of dialog across local and regional lines were

practically non-existent, though the Party was quick to claim that Eskimos were adequately provided with the means for representing their viewpoint via the village and regional soviets. But here again, Eskimos could not translate participation in local soviets into effective strategies which could address and solve their problems. The Eskimo radio staff knew they could provide an important information outlet in order to be of assistance, but were afraid to breach the authority which determined the limits of their expression. In addition, any efforts by Eskimo radio to facilitate the promotion of native forums outside of Party involvement would be branded as contributing to nationalism.⁵⁴

Enmenkow and Togiak maintain that they could only superficially target native needs for broadcast, stating that it was possible to discuss secondary problems affecting Eskimos, but never the main problems (as formulated from a native perspective). They noted that had they been able to discuss the major problems faced by Eskimos in Chukotka early on, many of them might have been addressed by government authority and perhaps solved. But to do this, they would have violated the rules imposed by the CPSU and local broadcasting committees--and would have been promptly fired.⁵⁵

Counterpropaganda and Information Isolation Along the Bering Strait: The Role of Eskimo Radio

In addition to suppressing information flow among the Eskimo villages via radio censorship, the regional CPSU assigned Chukotka Radio with the task to develop counterpropaganda in native broadcasts which sought to denigrate the government and living condi-

tions of the United States, and in this context, the conditions of life among Eskimos in Alaska. This was a natural pursuit of CPSU propaganda strategies (established by Moscow and implemented on a regional basis) based on internal information suppression and external disinformation.⁵⁶

From a policy perspective, counterpropaganda activities via radio--combined with military enforcement of the sealed border and government restrictions on foreign radio listening--ensured fairly effective information isolation between the Bering Strait. This allowed the CPSU to carefully manage the type of information Chukotkan Eskimos could receive concerning their relatives on the other side.

CPSU authorities knew that the potential existed for Eskimos in the Providenski and Chukotkski districts to listen to American broadcasts from Alaska and Hawaii--and in turn--Chukotka's radio committee assumed that Alaskan Eskimos could receive Anadyr's Eskimo broadcasts via shortwave, which in fact was the case.⁵⁷

The Soviets saw **The Voice of America** as its main opponent, since it featured ex-Soviet immigrants who regularly decried the conditions in the USSR and Chukotka specifically. Alaskan radio was most likely viewed similarly, though without real justification. Eskimos in Naukon and Chaplino who secretly listened to KICY, KNOM, and KOTZ (located in Nome and Kotzebue) related that they listened primarily to music and religious programming. KICY was careful to not include political discussions in their Yupik or Russian language broadcasts for fear of jamming, as well as the

fact that these broadcasts were designed for Christian evangelization and not political discourse.⁵⁸

Counterpropaganda would be targeted to both audiences (in Chukotka and western Alaska), and Anadyr's editorial boards developed reports which sought to affirm Soviet superiority while countering information disseminated by western broadcasts.⁵⁹ Since very few Eskimos had receivers capable of picking up the Alaskan broadcasts (ham radio was tightly controlled), it is unlikely that these people were influenced by western broadcasts to a degree which would justify special counterpropaganda measures by Anadyr.

It is doubtful Anadyr's counterpropaganda tactics affected listeners on St. Lawrence Island, who were more interested in listening to Enmenkow, and recording her programs.⁶⁰

Since independent information about Alaska was extraordinarily difficult to obtain, radio served as the primary media for Chukotkan Eskimos who wished to know about life on the other side of the Bering Strait--and the Anadyr studios capitalized on this state of affairs. Chukotkans in general had a vague understanding of the situation in Alaska (recalling more of its gold rush past), and the lack of current information about its status provided ample opportunity for programmers to introduce biased views of its actual state.

While this strategy of counterpropaganda presented few conflicts for the Russian staff, it was paradoxical for the Eskimo staff who were more interested in finding out the true condition of their Alaskan brethren rather than spreading disinformation

about them.⁶¹ As program features about Eskimos in other countries were very popular among their listeners, the idea of developing counterpropaganda programs against the Alaskans seemed inconsistent to the Eskimo staff, yet it was a requirement they had to comply with.⁶²

In carrying out this task, the Eskimo Department created a regular program titled "Two Lives, Two Peoples" which compared the life of Alaska and Chukotka. Enmenkow relates that the general theme to be relayed was that of the poor living conditions of Eskimos in western Alaska and to contrast this with the advanced state of material living by Eskimos in Chukotka. A slogan often heard was "Alaska lives in yesterday and we live in today," making political references based on time zone differences.⁶³

Chukotka's Eskimos had to be convinced that the benefits accorded them by the Soviet state were far beyond those available to the Alaskans, and counterpropaganda assisted this process by emphasizing the negative aspects and conditions of the "bourgeois way of life."⁶⁴

The challenge for the staff, however, was in the process of researching the subject, primarily because available (and factual) information was difficult to obtain. Journalists took information from Soviet periodicals and central press as well as from a popular book series "Two Worlds, Two Destinies," which compiled numerous articles comparing life in the Soviet North with other circumpolar countries. Russian journalists noted that this series, while accessing large sources of information, was essentially non-objective

and stressed the superiority of Soviet conditions. In addition, the staff relied on notes published by the famous Chukchi writer Yuri Ritheu, who visited Alaska in 1971: his information was later perceived by the Anadyr staff as less than factual, and being a well-known Soviet writer with many privileges, it would not be in his best interest to provide information at odds with official Soviet portrayals.⁶⁵

In producing the counterpropaganda features, Enmenkow and Togiak were consistently frustrated with the availability and orientation of the materials, since they each had uniquely personal perspectives about the Alaskans which were contrary to the official sources they depended on. Togiak, who grew up in Chaplino, was raised by a grandmother who was an Alaskan Eskimo from St. Lawrence Island, and subsequently forced to conceal her true identity from the Soviet authorities.⁶⁶

Enmenkow, who was from Naukon, grew up in a family which regularly visited Little Diomed and Nome via baidar, and was taught to understand these people as her close relatives. Though Enmenkow had never been to Alaska, her impressions of life there were formulated from the stories told by her parents and grandparents--which were consistently positive in nature.⁶⁷

Despite these connections with Alaska through family ties, the two journalists could not translate their family provided impressions into factual and current information concerning western Alaska, and consequently had to rely on the Soviet sources. The one instance when Alaskan Eskimos attempted contact with the Eskimo

Radio Department to provide information during this period reveals the efforts taken by the Soviets to enforce information isolation between the coastal settlements. In 1979, a large packet of materials addressed to "Radio Enmenkow" was received by the Anadyr Radio Committee. This packet had been sent by Eskimo residents from St. Lawrence Island who were regular listeners of Anadyr's Yupik broadcasts. Local KGB authorities opened the package, and then called Enmenkow to their office. Seeing it opened, Enmenkow refused to accept it for fear of the consequences which could result, since it implied potential association with Americans--which at that time was deemed dangerous. She would have to wait another nine years before a similar opportunity for contact arose."

Togiak relates that she actively sought to listen (clandestinely) to radio broadcasts from Nome "in order to have some truthful piece of information." She noted, however, that it was difficult to ascertain facts about the Eskimo's status in Alaska because Yupik broadcasts were primarily Christian teaching in content, and English language broadcasts--which she did not understand--were composed mainly of music interspersed with disk jockey chatter."

The Eskimo Department faced a paradoxical situation: their audience wanted information about their relatives, yet programming which did discuss them was formulated from less than reliable press sources, with the result that Chukotkan Eskimos would continue to have little understanding of the lives of Alaskans across the Bering Strait until the opening of the border. This held true for the wider Soviet population as well.

Despite the apparent futility of these broadcasts in the eyes of the Eskimo staff, counterpropaganda would continue to be produced by all radio departments at Anadyr until 1988, when the first Alaskan flight to Chukotka arrived.

Upon later reflection, the chairman of the Chukotka State Radio Committee who oversaw counterpropaganda stated (in 1992):

it was stupidity to do such kinds of programs...these were created by people who had never seen the life in Alaska. We had an iron curtain all along our borders, and we did not know exactly about the way of living in other countries and in Alaska--most of the people did not know anything about it.⁷⁰

The impact the border opening made on Eskimo broadcasting will be discussed in chapter 7.

**Assessment of Eskimo Broadcasting's Utility and
Function: Factors Limiting Further Development
During the Soviet Period.**

Despite the official tone of broadcasting from Anadyr, it should be stated that most native listeners understood the Eskimo Department's programs to be important, serving as a vital source of information, promoting language and cultural preservation, and acting as a forum for the discussion of Eskimo needs as permitted.

The three journalists on its staff were unified in their understanding of radio as a tool for addressing the greatest concerns of the people (to the degree possible), for finding solutions to their problems, for facilitating the restoration and maintenance of their cultural identity, while serving as a link for government authority in reaching the small Eskimo population. Their broadcasts across program categories reflected this understanding and

each journalist consequently had loyal followings in those villages which understood the dialects they spoke.⁷¹

This broadcast service, for some Eskimos, was not as relevant due to factors of language capability, listener interest, preference toward Russian language media, technical reception possibilities, etc. For others, Eskimo programming was a welcomed friend which assisted natives in communicating across the districts, eased misunderstandings between Eskimos and the non-native population, provided alternatives to regular Russian broadcasts, and gave entertainment as well as instruction. Though no surveys of audience reactions toward Eskimo broadcasts were conducted, it is fair to assume a wide range of attitudes about the programming, from indifferent to highly supportive; or ineffective to very effective.

Eskimo analysts themselves have pointed to a perception held among natives that media does not belong to them, that it does not serve them (or help in solving their problems), and that it is for official purposes--as a tool of government--and designed to connect them to the greater non-native society. At its inception, it was a mechanism of Soviet power which furthered external control over their lives and decision making, and radio never assumed a form which could be utilized at the sole discretion of Eskimos themselves.⁷²

Looking deeper into political variables affecting their media position, it can be stated that Eskimo involvement in the CPSU was minuscule with practically no representation by them beyond the village level. Representation at the district level in Provideniya

and in the okrug at Anadyr was similarly lacking. No Eskimos were found in high regional CPSU positions, nor did they find their own representation in the Congress of Nationalities in Moscow; thus Eskimos had no effective representation at the federal level which could have impacted changes in bettering their media involvement.⁷³

Concerning the nationality component of state broadcast laws; Eskimos naturally found themselves at the lowest tier of priority concerning state sponsorship of indigenous broadcasting. Low population levels did not justify a larger voice (especially when Eskimos were the smallest of the ethnic nationalities), and all Chukotkan indigenous groups were overshadowed by the Russian domination in government, administrative, and sociocultural affairs.

In addition, one must recognize a more subtle factor impacting the Eskimo's ability to enact change on the forces of government, namely the fact that the Eskimo's historically forced change in psychological subservience to Russian authority was well developed during post-contact colonial times, and further strengthened by absolute dominance of Soviet authority after 1923. This aspect of domination eliminated most vestiges of individual native control or sovereignty, and thus can be added to the overall explanation on why Eskimo broadcasting (through lack of grassroots political activity seeking increased broadcast involvement) could not develop to a greater degree during the Soviet period up until the end of 1991.

Some of the most frequently mentioned reasons given by the Eskimo staff for lack of expansion in their broadcasting services

related to the following: local Party and broadcast officials did not see native broadcasting as a priority and were not challenged by the Eskimo community to view it as such; there was a lack of people with fluency in the Yupik dialect who expressed interest in being trained in journalism and who could successfully complete the university education process deemed necessary; and relocation of a potential candidate from an Eskimo village to Anadyr forced the person to give up eating traditional Eskimo foods (marine animals which were available in the Providenski and Chukotski districts but not in Anadyr)--and this was seen to be too great a sacrifice.⁷⁴

It should be noted that regional broadcast authorities continually faced the problem of finding qualified personnel among the native communities who could develop broadcasts in the various regional languages (including Yupik), and this remained a primary cause (from the perspective of the State Committee administration) for the limited air time of native programming on state radio broadcasts.⁷⁵

NOTES

1. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Director, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 9 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

2. The newspapers Sovietskaya Chukotka (published in Anadyr) and Polyarnik (published in Provideniya), were the two main regional newspapers available to Eskimos in the Providenski and Chukotski Districts. National papers such as Pravda and Sovietskaya Rossia were available, but on a less frequent basis. Settlements in the tundra regions and reindeer herders were the least likely to have access to papers, and hence relied on radio for their primary information outlet.

3. The major population centers here are considered as New Chaplino, Siriniki, Lavrentia, and Provideniya. Some smaller villages were not as well equipped for radio as these settlements.

4. Naukonsi and Chaplinski dialects are concentrated in the villages listed, however, the Anadyr Eskimo radio staff also directs both dialects to a small group of people from all of the villages who live in Anadyr, the administrative center for Chukotka.

5. Andre Neskov, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 9 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

6. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author, 20 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

7. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author.

8. Tatiana Ochirgina, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia.

9. Ibid.

10. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 6 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

11. Ludmilla Shmelova, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 10 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

12. Ljubosh, interview by author.

13. Ibid.

14. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author; Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author.

15. Evgeny Berling, journalist, interview by author, 28 January 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording; Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

16. Sveta Togiak, journalist, Murgen Nutenot, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

17. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author.

18. Sveta Togiak, interview by author; Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author.

19. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.

20. Antonina Verbitskaya, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, 5 February 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

21. Ibid.

22. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 18 September 1994, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

23. Personal observation by this author after viewing audio productions at the Chukotka Radio Committee studios, as well as personal experience from serving as news director at KICY Radio in Nome, Alaska (1984-85).

24. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.

25. Ellen Mickiewicz, Split Signals (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 27; Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

26. Mickiewicz, 27.

27. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

28. USSR, Government Committee of Soviet Ministry of the USSR for Radio and Television, Outline About Programming of Chukotka Okrug Radio Editorial Board (Moscow: Soviet Ministry of the USSR, 1970), 2.

29. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.

30. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994.

31. Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

32. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

33. Alexander Omripkir, Chairman, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

34. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

35. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

36. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author.

37. Ibid.

38. unknown author, "On the Ideological Work of Native Broadcasting for the Period 1969-1970," internal document, Chukotka Radio Company, Chukotka State Archives, Anadyr, Russia; Ludmilla Aynana, interview by author.

39. Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, "Review of Programming, 1965," p. 1, Chukotka State Government Archives, Anadyr, Russia.

40. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

41. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

42. The program schedule was provided by Enmenkow, Verbitskaya, and Togiak during the course of interviews as listed in this chapter. Due to the resignation of Togiak in 1991, the schedule was changed, political broadcasts practically ceased, and coverage was targeted to address problems in villages, promotion of culture, and widespread coverage of the newly-opened border with Alaska and the life of Eskimos across the circumpolar north.

43. By 1991, Eskimo programming would constitute just over 1.5 hours out of Anadyr radio's 21 hour weekly program output: information from Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

44. Vladimir Yatta, former chairman, New Chaplino Village Soviet, interview by author, 20 May 1992, New Chaplino, Russia, tape recording.

45. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

46. Andre Neskov, interview by author.

47. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

48. Janusz Bugajski, Fourth World Conflicts: Communism and Rural Societies (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 22.

49. David Lane, Soviet Society under Perestroika (Boston: Unwin Hyman, Inc., 1990), 162.

50. Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979 ed., s.v. "Radio."

51. Antonina Verbitskaya, interview by author.

52. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.

53. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

54. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author.

55. Ibid.

56. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

57. Tasian Tein, Northwest Complex, Far East Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, interview by author, 8 March 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording. It should be noted that many international radio services could be picked up in Chukotka by listeners with proper equipment, but listening was subject to restrictions from poor magnetic characteristics across the region as well as from government efforts limiting ownership of suitable receivers. Eskimos in general were not radio operators.

58. Tein, interview by author; Yatta, interview by author; Ralph Fondell, Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, interview by author, 2 August 1992, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording. Note: Tein related how Eskimos in Naukon listened to Alaskan radio, and Vladimir Yatta described the experiences of Eskimos in Chaplino listening to these signals. Fondell, as founder and manager of KICY Radio in Nome, described KICY's strategies in broadcasting to Chukotka, and while he had technical confirmation that the signal existed in the Chukotkan Eskimo villages, KICY was unsure of actual listening patterns in the region from its inauguration of broadcasts in 1960 until the opening of the border in 1988.

59. Ludmilla Shmelova, interview by author.

60. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 5 April 1994, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording; Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994.

64. Tatiana Ochirgina, interview by author.

65. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992; Sveta Togiak, interview by author, 27 April 1992.

66. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

67. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994.

68. Ibid.

69. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

70. Ludmilla Shmelova, interview by author.

71. All three Eskimo journalists (Enmenkow, Verbitskaya, Togiak) as well as other native correspondents consistently stressed this notion of radio's utility, though they were quick to point out that they could not implement this approach in the most effective means without serious repercussion from the CPSU.

72. Alexander Omripkir and Tatiana Ochirgina, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 9 February 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

73. Tasien Tien, interview by author.

74. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994.

75. This information was ascertained from information provided by Shmelova; Enmenkow; Ljubosh; Vladimir Tckachev, Chairman, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 5 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia; Chuner Taksami, interview by author, 10 May 1992, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.

CHAPTER 6

BROADCAST DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE BERING STRAIT REGION OF ALASKA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Early Telecommunication Developments in the Bering Strait (Pre-Broadcast Era)

The first telecommunication project affecting western Alaska was the same one which marked Chukotka's entry into the world of modern communications--the Western Union Telegraph Extension Project of 1865. After a two-year effort to establish an intercontinental cable network connecting California, Alaska, Siberia, and Europe (via the Bering Strait), Western Union survey and line installation crews ceased their activities on the Seward Peninsula before a direct underwater cable connection with Chukotka could be laid. It would be another 33 years before an operational telegraph system was developed in the region. In the meantime, communication to the outside world was by foot, by dog sled (in winter), or boat via river and sea connections.¹

In September 1900, the first telegraph system in Alaska was established from a military command center in Nome to an outpost near Port Safety, located 25 miles away. This line was part of an overall strategy by the U.S. Army Signal Corps to connect isolated military sites in Alaska to the rest of the lower 48 states. Three years later, the original system in Nome was tied into lines connecting the region to other parts of Alaska.²

During 1903, military engineers--seeking a solution to the problems of underwater cable disruption across Norton Sound--were

responsible for making one of the world's first applications of radiotelegraph technology (wireless telegraphy). This radio link (from Port Safety to St. Michael) marked the completion of the Signal Corps' first integrated telecommunications network, and allowed military commanders across the country to be in continuous contact with sites along the Bering Strait. By 1905, 3500 miles of cable had been laid, and the system became known as the Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System.³

Over the next two decades, private wireless systems, similar to those "spark" stations set up by American entrepreneurs in Chukotka were in operation around western Alaska and civilian use of wireless telegraphy increased. Nome and a number of villages had access to communication with the outside world through these systems, vastly improving upon tradition methods. By 1935, the old military system, in combination with private radio links, became the Alaska Communications System (ACS), relying more and more on wireless rather than land lines.⁴

Eskimos along the various Bering Strait communities had new possibilities for access to interactive telecommunications via ACS and beginning in the 1940s, reception of radio broadcasts from military stations. While the first Alaskan broadcast radio station (WLAY-Fairbanks) went on the air in December of 1922 (followed shortly afterward by stations in Juneau, Anchorage, Ketchikan, and other sites), Eskimos within this study area were unable to access such radio services during this early period. Their condition was similar to their Chukotka relatives who were also without service.⁵

World War II and the Development of Broadcasting

World War II sparked a new developmental phase for western Alaska in telecommunications and in broadcasting. With the need to improve its technical radio network and provide communication interconnections in support of the movement of military personnel, supplies, and logistical links throughout the territory, the U.S. military built numerous radio facilities along the Seward Peninsula. This laid the foundation for eventual Eskimo access to radio broadcast services. An Army post and radio complex was built in Nome (1941) which also facilitated communications between Soviet and American officials directing the transport of military aircraft from Nome to Chukotka--an outcome of the U.S. Lend Lease aid program to the Soviets.⁶

Radio broadcast equipment was constructed by Nome's Civil Defense Committee in 1941 to serve as an aircraft warning system in case of Japanese attack. The signal, at first distributed by carrier-current along the town's power lines, was soon replaced by a broadcast transmitter, and assumed the call letters WXLN. This was the first opportunity for Eskimos in the town to receive radio broadcasts.⁷

This radio center received broadcasts from the U.S. Armed Forces Radio Service, and inserted local programming as produced by Army and civilian personnel. Local programming consisted primarily of news and general information to local service personnel, as well as Christian broadcasts by Paul Carlson, a missionary with

the Evangelical Covenant Church.⁹

In early 1945, a small unauthorized radio station was established in Kotzebue by Paul Sell, a U.S. Weather Bureau employee. The station, distributing its weak signal to Eskimo listeners in town via a phonograph oscillator, broadcast music and information by Sell, a ham radio operator. The station continued in this operational pattern until the late 1950s.⁹

After the war, many of the military stations remained in operation, and the Nome installation (WXLN) continued to beam AFRN broadcasts from the late 1940s up until 1960 using a 1000 watt transmitter--which easily penetrated across the Bering Strait to Chukotka, as well as down to the Aleutian Islands. This channel was the major radio information link to those Alaskan Eskimo communities which were in listening range, though reception of signals from Anchorage and Fairbanks, as well as international short wave stations were increasingly available to those with suitable receivers.¹⁰ Numerous villages during this period were without electrical power generation, hence, radio was not accessible for many Eskimos.

AFRN's signal penetration to the USSR via AFRS-Nome (the renamed WXLN) marked a unique period during this postwar time as Eskimos on each side of the strait had primary access only to U.S. and Soviet government-sponsored radio broadcasts.¹¹ In the early 1950s, **Radio Moscow** broadcasts in English and Yupik could be picked up in Nome, and consequently, AFRS-Nome was strengthened by the U.S. Air Force which assigned 14 full-time staff members and in-

creased broadcast time to roughly 135 hours weekly.¹²

The U.S. military soon upgraded their capabilities in the region with the development of telecommunications facilities known as *White Alice* sites. As mentioned earlier, *White Alice* was part of the Distant Early Warning System (DEW) which was built between 1955-58.¹³ The rationale for these systems was based on providing a credible warning system against potentially hostile Soviet activities, while improving telephone and telegraph connections throughout Alaska. Sites in the Bering Strait area including Gambell, Unalakleet, Nome, Savoonga, Tin City, and Cape Romanzof.¹⁴

The Eskimos were influenced by the activities at these sites by reason of the construction and military personnel that suddenly descended upon their communities.¹⁵ *White Alice* utilized the old tropospheric scatter technology which required massive parabolic antennas to transmit radio signals off the troposphere and back down to stations downline.¹⁶ Situated on mountaintops, these structures became symbolic monoliths which accustomed the Eskimo residents to the ever improving state of communication technology.

Chukotka's Eskimos in Lavrentia, and Siriniki would later notice similar structures (around 1965) which were part of the Soviet *Sever tropo* system. Within twenty years, Eskimos on both sides would see the technology used in these early sites improved and applied to modern systems set up in their villages for receiving satellite television and radio broadcasts.¹⁷

In the meantime, *White Alice* facilities during this period would continue providing local AFRS access to Air Force stations,

including AFRS-Nome, as well as military and civilian long distance communication channels.¹⁸ It was only a matter of time before subsequent electrification across the region (allowing for reception of AFRS) and later penetration by private radio stations would open up new listening options for the Eskimos.

Development of Private Radio Broadcasting

After the war ended, a committee of people from the Evangelical Covenant Church denomination--which had western Alaska's Eskimo villages as its primary mission field--remembered Carlson's experience with WXLN during the war and discussed the possibilities of constructing a new station in Nome. The idea was considered, then tabled. Roughly ten years later, Bill Hartman, another Covenant missionary, began installing radio telephones at mission stations around the Seward Peninsula and Norton Sound, and reported the potential for private radio to the denomination's offices in Chicago.¹⁹

AFRS-Nome had by 1956 experienced reductions both in the size of its staff as well as coverage area. Three personnel now broadcast an 18 hour locally produced schedule. Within two years, the station staff was reduced to a single engineer and AFRS-Nome began rebroadcasting AFRS programming 24 hours a day as brought down from the White Alice installation on Anvil Mountain. Local programming was practically eliminated as a result. This situation strengthened the rationale for Covenant involvement in developing a private service there.²⁰

In 1957, the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church authorized application to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for a radio station license in Nome. Art Zylstra was named head of the radio project. In July 1959, a construction permit was granted and building of facilities commenced, financed by funds from the First Covenant Church of Minneapolis, Minnesota.²¹

On April 17, 1960, KICY began transmitting a 5000 watt signal on 850 khz, marking the beginning of sanctioned private radio broadcasting in western Alaska. An Easter sunrise service was broadcast, followed by the first newscast, which included a report on U.S.-Soviet relations. Broadcasts could reach Eskimo listeners in more than 20 settlements, with a normal signal range stretching from the shores of Chukotka to the upper reaches of the Kuskokwim Delta. Listeners were reported as far south as the Aleutian Islands, as well as to the far north in Barrow.²²

The Covenant denomination felt that radio could be a means of supplementing the work of its missionaries, and saw providing an all-purpose broadcast format as the best means to serve the native people of the region. KICY provided villages with music; local, statewide, and national news; personal message bulletins; weather reports; flight information; and a combination of secular and religious programming.

The station broadcast 15 hours per day in English, and caused the rapid escalation of radio listening by a vast majority of Eskimos in villages, many of whom heard broadcasts for the first time. The introduction of transistorized radios and their low purchase

prices further encouraged the increase of listening in the Eskimo communities. KICY provided a vital link for natives seeking information and news from across the state and the rest of the country and greatly assisted interregional communication among villages--most of which had no access to telephones.²³ KICY's programming greatly facilitated the use of English in villages, especially in those remote settlements which had been relatively isolated from its usage.

In the summer of 1960, KICY started broadcasting in Eskimo dialects, providing the first opportunities for natives on both sides of the strait to receive regular programming in their own dialects. The station hired two Eskimos (Fred and Gladys Savok) to develop religious broadcasts in Central Yupik and Inupiaq, and shortly afterward developed news broadcasts in Siberian (Chaplin-ski) Yupik. Clarence Irrigoo, an Eskimo from St. Lawrence Island and an active radio amateur, approached the station noting that listeners in Gambell and Savoonga should be served with a newscast in Siberian Yupik, since many of the islanders did not understand English well.²⁴

Offering his services to perform such a task, Irrigoo began taking headlines from the Associated Press wire service and translated them into short newscasts. Chukotkan Eskimos would later refer to Irrigoo as "and that's the way it is," in reference to his usage of this phrase to end each broadcast.²⁵ Irrigoo's involvement with Chukotka sprang partially from the fact that his wife was born in the Provideniya region (Avan) and he himself had been

in contact with Soviet ham operators from the 1930s onward.²⁶

Within the next few years, Eskimo programs were broadcast for roughly one hour daily, featuring newscasts and a religious program entitled "The Eskimo Hour" (which included Bible readings and sermons in the three main Eskimo dialects); Christian music as recorded by Eskimo believers at the scattered Covenant mission churches; and devotionals. The other main features on KICY were the message program "Ptarmigan Telegraph" (in both English and the dialects), and "village get togethers." "Ptarmigan Telegraph" broadcast personal messages from individuals across the listening area. This was an important program which facilitated the exchange of vital personal and corporate communication in the region. The "village get togethers" were programs highlighting meetings of Eskimos from western Alaska who would gather at a certain village for religious purposes (as well as general social interaction) and record their activities on tape.²⁷

KICY broadcasts also served an important linguistic function in facilitating some degree of convergence among the three native dialects, primarily through its Bible reading programs. Fondell relates that Eskimos speaking different dialects would follow along with Glady Savok's readings in Central Yupik, and those in Inupiaq by her husband Fred, comparing different ways of rendering meanings of words and phrases. Fred Savok noted that people were beginning to understand each other's language, though this tended to center upon Savok's Inupiaq. His interpretations reflected his knowledge of the other dialects, and since he was the primary on-air announ-

cer, his rendition of words became standardized across the entire listening audience.

Since the station had to deal with pronunciation of native words (people, place names, activities, things, etc.) in both native and English language programs, this convergence was a natural (and not intended) outcome. Many Eskimo listeners of the station recounted a joke about pronunciation of words: "there are three ways to pronounce a word...there is the correct way, the gussok (white man) way, and the KICY way." After years of broadcasting, native speakers across dialects had developed a commonality in language via the broadcasts of the station."

Overall, the station developed its radio format to fit the unique characteristics of its native audience, actively incorporating village information and social activities into a daily schedule which met Eskimo needs as much as possible. An example of this was the summer fishing season schedule, where KICY broadcast 24 hours a day for the benefit of native fisherman and people living temporarily in fish camps. The station provided up to the minute weather forecasts and announcements by Fish and Game officials responsible for opening and closing fishing areas.

Music and news entertained those working on the ocean or in the tundra, and special message broadcasts helped reconnaissance efforts during emergencies (ie., rescuers looking for hunters stranded on ice floes), or gave information to those away from their home villages. One of its most popular features was live coverage of high school basketball, the main sport in the villages,

and residents throughout the region tuned in during the winter months to root for their favorite teams. ²⁹

KICY did not specialize in Eskimo cultural programming, ie., native dancing, legends, or native spiritual discussions, as this was felt (by both older native Christians and missionary personnel on the field) to be incompatible with Christian beliefs. These opinions changed over time, but the station did not initiate the collection of such materials and kept their Eskimo programming limited to news and religion. It did, however, provide valuable service in the area of native political and economic concerns, by regularly giving air time for discussion of these issues (in English only). KICY also served as an important media outlet for Alaska's political leaders, who often visited the station in order to get their message out to the scattered village sites.³⁰ At all times, KICY labored to deliver a professional, commercial format similar to stations across the U.S.

While Christian in character, KICY sought to provide a well balanced diet of programming to serve the interests of its listeners, and dedication to its Eskimo audience remained at the forefront of its mission statement. While limited in some areas (ie., cultural programming, and relatively low levels of programming in the various dialects), the station continued to grow in its broadcast schedule (18 hours/winter and 24 hours/summer), and successfully made the transition to financing its overall budget through commercial revenues.

After the decommissioning of AFRS-Nome in 1960, KICY contin-

ued to be the sole radio operation in the Bering Strait region for the next eight years, referring to itself as "The Voice of the Arctic."³¹ It was primarily staffed by long and short term missionaries from the Covenant denomination, as well as by local native and non-native volunteers. While Eskimo programmers were hired full-time in the beginning, there remained only one paid Eskimo staff worker in later years, primarily to oversee collection of religious materials for "The Eskimo Hour," which was broadcast in the early evening hours.

In the 1980s, the director of Eskimo programming was not a native language speaker, and the percentage of programming in the dialects diminished from previous years. By the 1990s, KICY eliminated this position, and the permanent staff was without native representation (except for Irrigoo--a volunteer--who produced reports from his home).

Russian Programming on KICY

During the first ten years of its operation, KICY managers knew their signal was available to Chukotka, as well as to the Soviet fleet operating in the Bering Sea. Dave Shinen, a Wycliff Bible translator working on St. Lawrence Island, was instrumental in convincing KICY to broadcast Christian programming in Russian. Shinen, engaged in translating the Bible into Siberian Yupik, was also a Russian speaker who saw the potential for communicating with the nearby Soviet population. KICY had also been in contact with missionaries working in the small Russian speaking native communi-

ties along Alaska's Yukon river and found another potential audience for Russian language broadcasts.³²

In 1970, the Arctic Broadcasting Association (the license holder of KICY), applied to the FCC for permission to broadcast in Russian. The original rationale given for this application was to target Russian language programming to Alaskan natives along the Yukon, since the station's normal licensing conditions did not permit it to engage in international broadcasting. While the station used this tactic to secure the FCC's authorization, it regarded Soviet listeners as its primary audience.³³

During the same year, KICY began daily programming in the Russian language, starting with broadcasts for one hour at 11 p.m. The station utilized materials prepared by the Slavic Gospel Association, based in Chicago, and had Shinen review programming in order to ensure the broadcast's conformity to KICY's doctrinal beliefs, as well as fulfilling FCC requirements. The station did not produce any original programming in Russian.

As Russian programming got underway, KICY knew that Eskimo and Russian listeners in Chukotka were indeed receiving it (as well as its regular English language schedule) through reports garnered from Soviet exploratory vessels and the fishing fleet. KICY quickly developed program policies which would avoid controversies with the Soviet authorities and maintain the signal's distribution along the Chukotka coastline. This was a needed precaution to deal with potential jamming by the Soviets, and the station endeavored to avoid political subjects in the Russian programming, though such

material was relayed through their broadcasts from the Associated Press News Service in English. Fondell noted, "we stayed away from political reports precisely for the reason of jamming, because it wasn't our interest to preach democracy...our interest was to share the Gospel. We did not want to be a hindrance to people (Soviets) listening."³⁴

The station's policies were successful over time as the signal was left untouched by the Soviets. In general, KICY personnel had as little idea about the people and life of Chukotka, as did the Chukotka radio staff in Anadyr about Alaska, though they had more opportunities to receive listening reports from the USSR. With little knowledge about their target audience, and with no Russian speaking staff, KICY continued its Russian broadcasts despite not possessing the means to gauge its effectiveness. However, Soviet sailors came to rely on KICY's weather reports dealing with the Bering Sea, and regularly listened to the late evening religious broadcasts.³⁵

In 1980, the station increased its transmission power to 10,000 watts, as well as the timeslot of its Russian broadcast, thus increasing the possibilities for reception among its Soviet audience in Chukotka. With both Siberian Yupik and Russian more predominant in the program schedule, Eskimos in Chaplino, Lavrentia, Siriniki, and other villages began more frequent listening to the signal, though it continued on a somewhat clandestine basis.³⁶

The Eskimo communities of Gambell and Savoonga contributed to KICY's programming (primarily religious materials produced at

the local Presbyterian church) in an effort to assist the station in reaching their relatives, but despite the availability of the broadcasts, Eskimos along the coastline still had little idea about the life of Alaskans through this programming.³⁷

**Eskimo Listening Characteristics and Use of Other Media
After the Introduction of Radio Along the Strait.**

Eskimos adopted radio as a trusted tool for securing information of personal relevance, while using it for entertainment and other purposes. KICY knew listeners often turned their radio on at sign-on (6 A.M.) and left them on until sign-off at 12 midnight. Early research on listening in western Alaska found that roughly 67 percent of residents listened to radio approximately 10 hours per day.³⁸ The spread of portable transistor radios proliferated, making radio a truly transportable medium which found its way to any location, ie., at the fish camp, on the ocean, in the hunter's cabin, in the village store, or in the kitchen.

Harrison, who conducted an early study of radio in western Alaska, noted that patterns of radio listening among Eskimos were remarkably similar to those in metropolitan areas. KICY's music and news throughout the day were reasons for extended listening in villages (similar to urban radio usage), though Harrison noted that radio did not appear to be personalized by villages to a degree that typified a metropolitan audience. Special attention was given to broadcasts of personal messages (ie., "Ptarmigan Telegraph"), and to morning and evening weather broadcasts (especially important to sea hunters and fishermen), but programs such as national and

international news were listened to inadvertently, while local, regional, and statewide news were programs which Eskimo listeners took more effort in listening to.³⁹

It should be stated, however, that KICY developed a highly personalized program format through time shifts by popular KICY disc jockeys, which appeared to promote more active listening depending on audience reactions to the person on air. Women were attentive to the morning program "Gert's Corner," which featured Gertrude Fondell in a format designed to focus on women's concerns and interests. Men were active listeners of news and weather, and music programs attracted people of all ages, noting that KICY limited itself to Christian, easy listening, or country music. While KICY was the only service dedicated to the region, and maintained its audience through monopoly, it was natural for some to be disaffected because of the station's lack of program diversity in cultural, musical, or other offerings.⁴⁰

For those seeking alternatives, radio from Anchorage or Fairbanks provided an outlet, with some stations offering short daily broadcasts of general interest to villagers, but reception characteristics varied across the region due to terrain as well as the radio equipment used. KICY's strong signal remained a dominant reason for rural listeners to stay tuned.

Print Media

Eskimo access to print media (newspapers and magazines) was limited in some villages, and during the early period after radio's

introduction, exposure to print media continued to be much less extensive than that of radio. To a degree, their experience was similar to the Chukotkan situation, where transportation logistics and language factors affected exposure and utilization rates of print media. While the majority of Eskimos had a working knowledge of English, few faced the daily necessity to regularly read or write it, though this varied from village to village depending partially on educational facilities and previous acculturation to non-native influence.

Isolation from urban areas of Alaska as well as from the rest of the country proved one cause for a general disinterest by Eskimos in print media--which generally covered the life and issues of those far removed from the village setting. Access to newspapers (ie., The Anchorage Daily News (urban), The Nome Nugget (regional), The Tundra Times, and Tundra Drums (native), remained primarily the domain of a minority of Eskimos who were knowledgeable of and interested in activities beyond the village setting. Pictorial magazines such as LOOK, LIFE, and TIME were more popular for readers outside of the previously mentioned minority.⁴¹

The decade of the sixties could be characterized by KICY's monopolization over regional broadcast communication for the Eskimo community, and during this pre-television period, radio would continue its dominance over all other forms of media.

Expansion of Radio Station Operations

The reader should note that this dissertation, in selecting

the geographic parameters of radio broadcasting affecting the strait, defines the primary study target as those areas between Point Hope in the north to Nunivak Island in the south. What this implies is a concentration on radio broadcast operations from Kotzebue in the north, down to Unalakleet on the Norton Sound, though for further insight into Eskimo broadcasting, a short survey of operations in Barrow and Bethel will be conducted.

In 1964, the Catholic Church, operating in various settlements along western Alaska, determined that a radio station should be built in the region to facilitate their mission efforts. A Jesuit priest, Father Jim Poole, began soliciting funds for a station which was to be located in Nome. There had been a subtle rivalry between the Covenant denomination and the Catholics in the region, and the idea of an alternative station representing the Catholic point of view quickly gathered support among the Catholic communities, which stretched from King Island (an Eskimo settlement in the Bering Strait), down to the Upper Yukon delta.⁴²

In 1970, the FCC granted a permit to the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska for construction of facilities. The station would adopt a similar ownership structure as KICY, but differed in its economic orientation, being a private non-commercial AM station funded by the Archdiocese of Alaska. The call letters KNOM were assigned, along with a frequency of 780 khz and transmission power of 5000 watts.⁴³

One year later, station equipment was assembled, a volunteer staff recruited, and its transmitting tower was erected. Father

Poole was named station manager, and on July 14, 1971, KNOM initiated its first broadcasts. KNOM developed a counterprogramming format from KICY, being essentially non-religious in orientation."

When KNOM went on the air, Eskimo listeners throughout the Bering Strait encountered a radio format which provided features previously unavailable through KICY and witnessed the beginnings of competitive radio. KNOM took a more active approach in addressing regional sociocultural concerns, developed an extensive news operation aligned with the Alaska Public Broadcasting Network (APRN), played modern music (primarily rock which was never played on KICY), and concentrated on native cultural affairs and art forms. While the station's sound was comparable to KICY with the usual newscasts, weather reports, message bulletins, and community items (noting the station played a variety of music somewhat similar to KICY), the chief difference was in its approach toward religious identity."

KICY was overtly evangelistic in its radio strategy--not feeling the pressure to change its direction for the sake of modern secular trends--while KNOM was much more quiet in its religious character and mirrored the programming traits of secular urban radio. KNOM was, however, very attuned to being a station for the native audience, and its program output represented a collage of sounds mixing modern contemporary news and information with a reverberation of voices reflecting native imagery. For example, in the space of a one hour broadcast, listeners could hear NPR News from Washington; weather conditions on the Seward Peninsula; news

of a plane's arrival in White Mountain; a top 40 song on the rock charts; followed by five minutes of Eskimo dance music from the King Island Dancers.

One reason for the difference in orientation between the two stations was due to the makeup of their staffs: KICY was composed of older career missionaries and some short term volunteers, while KNOM was staffed primarily by younger college-aged volunteers from outside Alaska, possessing a different religious perspective as well as a different understanding on the role of radio in a religious context. Where KICY was more conservative in their music and Christian teaching programs, KNOM had a propensity toward secular trends, and its later affiliation with the APRN furthered its non-religious orientation.

KICY and KNOM had mandates to serve the native population but viewed its implementation differently. While providing the bulk of programming in English, the stations were similar in the degree of native language materials offered for broadcast. KICY continued its Yupik and Inupiaq religious programming, but did not expand it to other program areas (except Irrigoo's daily news broadcast in Siberian Yupik). KNOM's short native language features consisted primarily of news reports in Siberian Yupik (produced by Tim Gologregen of St. Lawrence Island).

The bulk of non-religious Eskimo programming for both stations had been limited chiefly to the efforts of these two men (Irrigoo and Gologregen) and it was their productions which consistently reached Eskimo listeners on the Chukotkan shore. These men,

well past retirement age (like their colleague Nina Enmenkow in Anadyr), continued to work as volunteers.

Native needs--as addressed by radio programmers from Nome--have traditionally been formulated by non-natives, partially because both stations have been unable to employ more native personnel in this process, and because of policies set down by their denominational hierarchies. Both KICY and KNOM have consistently sought input from the native community, and in the late 1970s began working with representatives from native organizations, ie., the local Sitnausak and regional Bering Strait Native Corporations in order to better address native concerns. During this period and later in the early 1980s, each station conducted regular listener surveys to better assess native needs, and while slight format changes had been made, the levels of direct native participation in their operations did not significantly change.⁴⁶ KICY and KNOM continued to operate with relatively the same orientation developed from their inception, but changes in programming in Yupik and Russian have been made since the opening of the border in 1988.

Public Broadcast Station Development

While private radio maintained its domain over the Bering Strait, new developments in government-sponsored public broadcasting began in western Alaska during the 1970s. KUAC-Fairbanks, was Alaska's lone public station during the 1960s, but it helped set a pattern for later developments in public radio.⁴⁷

In 1969, Alaska governor Keith Miller appointed a committee, known as the Educational Broadcasting Commission, to begin investigations leading to a framework for establishing educational radio stations. In 1970, the Alaska State Legislature authorized funding for the Commission's activities. Their first initiative came in support of a proposal to develop a public radio station in Bethel in order to serve the sparsely populated area of southwest Alaska. Requests for funding were directed toward the newly established Alaska Educational Broadcasting Commission (AEBC), as well as the Educational Broadcasting Facilities Program for Federal Assistance. While initiated by the state, AEBC followed state legislation which prohibited the agency from being the owner, operator, or licensee of any station or production facility (unless no other entity existed), so in April of that year, a nonprofit corporation was formed in Bethel to secure licensing for the station."

The Bethel project was an example of the philosophy of public broadcasting in function: stations could be created and funded through a combination of government and public assistance, governed by a board of local people, and provided with programming as determined by community need and response. It would be distinct from the characteristics of commercial broadcasting especially in providing program diversity while not relying on the profit motive. Given the general inability to financially support commercial broadcasting in remote Alaska, Bethel's success would be important in proving the viability of community-oriented public radio across the state."

The radio station, now known as KYUK, began broadcasting in May 1971. Using an AM transmitter, its signal covered native villages within a 100 mile radius. Its broadcast schedule included programs in English and Central Yupik, and featured a variety of music and general information.⁵⁰ Eskimo participation in management and programming decisions was at a high level and represented a breakthrough for the development of native radio broadcasting in the state.

KYUK provided relevant news and information to the Eskimo communities in its broadcast area (including hourly news reports in Yupik) and continues to set standards for native participation and distinctiveness in native programming.⁵¹ Despite the increase in its radiated power in 1985, KYUK has not been able to effectively reach Eskimo listeners in the Bering Strait of interest to this dissertation.⁵²

Kotzebue

In January 1971, a local group of citizens in Kotzebue met with the AEBC to discuss the potential of a public station similar to that of KYUK. Up to this point, KICY had been the only option for listeners in Kotzebue, and seeing the success of the Bethel station, general interest in starting a local station was high.⁵³

A local corporation was formed that November known as Kotzebue Broadcasting, Inc., which would serve as the radio license organization. The group applied for equipment funding from the EBFP and AEBC, as well as a construction permit from the FCC. The

organizing committee was made up primarily of non-natives, but there was a strong call for Eskimo participation in the operations of the station once it went on the air. In 1972, the funding was secured and construction began. The FCC originally assigned the call letters KICE, and authorized a transmission power of 5000 watts.⁵⁴

KICE began broadcasting on March 31, 1973 but operations were disrupted when a fire started inside of the transmitter. During its repair, the FCC reassigned the call letters as KOTZ, and the station resumed broadcasts in July. This represented the first public radio service available in the Bering Strait region, and provided a new forum for Eskimo language broadcasting as well as English programming designed to meet native community-determined needs.⁵⁵

Broadcasts in Inupiaq were aired daily from materials produced by the staff, as well as from Eskimos from different villages whom recorded various stories on cassette (interviews, legends, singing, etc.) and sent them to the station.⁵⁶ KOTZ's coverage area included Eskimo villages along the Kotzebue Sound region, extending up to Point Hope and down to the northern Seward Peninsula. Coverage also went across the strait to Chukotka, though its use of Inupiaq limited the abilities of Soviet Eskimos to understand these broadcasts.⁵⁷

KOTZ, though adopting an emphasis similar to KNOM's format, was much more aggressive in making the station adhere to a native identity. During its early days of operation, KOTZ had a high

degree of local participation and concentration on uniquely Eskimo offerings. KOTZ later became a member of APRN and the National Public Radio Network, and mirrored program output similar to urban stations tied to this network. The station sought to combine a sophisticated information format (achieved through tie in with NPR and APRN) with local program content of relevance to its native audience. A listener in a fish camp could tune into NPR's "All Things Considered" news analysis program from Washington, or "Alaska News Nightly" (produced by APRN in Anchorage), which might be followed by a documentary on traditional Eskimo mask making in both Inupiaq and English. Its Inupiaq programming continued to increase yearly where by the beginning of the 1990s, roughly 16 hours were broadcast weekly.⁵⁸

KOTZ's public radio orientation made it sufficiently different from KICY and KNOM to attract its own following, and deliberately concentrated on the people around the Kotzebue Sound region while avoiding much coverage of the Seward Peninsula just to the south. Fondell noted that KICY's listenership in the Kotzebue area declined for other reasons as well, one being that people previously installed good antennas, and now with KOTZ's strong signal, few bothered to do so.⁵⁹

The tendency of isolation based on geographic coverage characterized the relationship between stations working in the region, to the point where there was relatively little interaction between programming staffs at KICY, KNOM, KOTZ, and KYUK--despite all having mandates to serve the Eskimo people. The public stations

did provide regional and state news from the other regions via its contributions to APRN news reporting and their airing of APRN shows like "National Native News," however, they were more inclined to participate with each other, rather than with KICY or KNOM.⁶⁰

The Eskimos as a whole have had trouble adapting available radio to its greater corporate goals in the political, economic, and cultural realms partially because of the lack of effective cross-station networking and native staffing. KOTZ, as with the other stations, has historically had only a token native presence in its full-time paid staff (though by 1991, native personnel had risen to 60% of staff). In addition, given the differing administrations and orientation of each station, each operation most likely did not have strong mandates to develop greater station ties.⁶¹

Eskimo Radio on the North Slope

The development of Eskimo-controlled radio service on Alaska's North Slope came about in the same manner as that of public radio stations like KOTZ and KYUK. In 1974, the AEBC appropriated \$10,000 for a station in Barrow, the largest Eskimo community in the North Slope Borough, situated at the extreme northern part of Alaska. A broadcast corporation under native control, Silakkuagvik Communications, Inc., was formed and by the next year, AEBC delivered an additional \$180,000 grant and construction began.⁶²

On December 22, 1975, KBRW-AM 680, went on the air, transmitting a 10,000 watt signal in English and Inupiaq to eight villages

across the North Slope. Its staff was predominantly Eskimo and programming mirrored that of KOTZ and KYUK, though with particular emphasis on the life and activities of natives in the region. KBRW's signal range could not effectively reach listeners in the Bering Strait (it later reached Point Hope via satellite), though it may have been possible for listeners in northern Chukotka to receive it.⁶³

KBRW's initial and annual operating support was provided by the AEBC. In 1978, it joined with KOTZ, KYUK, and other Alaskan public stations to form the Alaska Public Radio Network (APRN). It added affiliations to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), NPR, and American Public Radio during the years of 1984-85. With additional financial support from the CPB as well as the government of the North Slope Borough and regional native corporation, KBRW became the highest-funded native radio station in the nation, and its signal was extended to the Anaktuvak Pass region via satellite. Again, the station developed cooperation to some degree with member APRN stations along the Bering Strait through APRN programming activities, but no major effort was made to develop cross-programming strategies with KOTZ, KNOM, or KICY.⁶⁴

Radio in Norton Sound

The Eskimo village of Unalakleet, located on the central coast of Norton Sound, has been active in the development of radio both on a private and public radio basis.

The first application of radio as operated by Eskimos was in the form of KCHS, a student-run AM radio station broadcasting to the village. Supervised by the now-defunct Covenant High School, a private religious school run under the auspices of the same Covenant denomination running KICY, KCHS broadcast during the school year in the late afternoon and evening hours with a format including music, news, and general information. Though produced by Eskimo students taking broadcasting classes, the station became a favorite among residents, many of whom were graduates of the school. Its programming (in English only) and organization varied from year to year, but it managed to provide an alternative choice to KICY or KNOM broadcasts. The station ceased operation when the school was decommissioned in 1985.⁶⁵

In the early 1980s, residents of Unalakleet petitioned the APBC for extension of public broadcasting to the village. Henry Ivanoff, an Eskimo who was also chairman of the RATNET Television Council (to be discussed later in this chapter), was given authorization to set up and oversee a radio translator system which brought in APRN programming via satellite. The station was assigned a license with the call letters KNSA, and licensed to transmit the signal to nearby villages along Norton Sound. This station did not conform to the structure associated with KOTZ or KYUK and did not have the resources to develop locally originated programming, instead providing announcements and messages in a manner similar to the *radio uzels* located in the Chukotka villages directly across the sea. This writer was not able to confirm whether KNSA's signal

was listenable along the Chukotka coast, though given its low radiated power, reception seemed extremely limited at best.

Alaska Public Radio Network and Other Developments in Regional Radio Services

The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission (replacing the AEBC), had a mandate to support and encourage the development of an integrated public broadcast system for Alaska, and its activities were revealed through annual subsidization of APRN as well as partial financial and programming support for member stations in Kotzebue, Nome, and Unalakleet.⁶⁶ It aligned itself with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for funding activities as well as in setting radio operation standards which were applied to the native-controlled stations. These standards included; assuring that each full service station could reach its primary community; provide significant local programming; operate a minimum of 18 hours per day, 365 days per year; guaranteeing the production of programs that addressed local and statewide problems, needs, and strengths. These criteria were seen as the most vital part of what public broadcasting could provide to natives in Alaska.⁶⁷

Regional native radio--through its APRN affiliation and 16 member station network--could take advantage of many benefits in the area of funding activities, programming options, training, and professional interaction with other related communication entities. The Kotzebue station, for example, worked with APRN in developing funding sources, which came from member station dues, corporate underwriting, grants, foundation support, listener contributions,

and contractual fees.

While early in their histories, KOTZ, KYUK, KNOM, and KBRW traditionally relied on local production efforts to fill the bulk of their daily schedules, by 1978, APRN expanded its programming in state news, government reporting, and general features. This provided much valuable state-oriented programming for Bering Strait listeners, and rounded out the local program schedules in Nome and Kotzebue."

From the perspective of training and interaction with other agencies, APRN provided Eskimo-controlled stations with various training workshops, conferences, and seminars--with training ranging from news and production skills, to management, engineering, volunteer coordination, etc. Further, these stations had accessibility to a number of organizations interested in various aspects of radio, including the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, Alaska State Council on the Arts, National Federation of Community Broadcasters, National Association of Educational Broadcasters, National Endowment for the Arts, as well as the CPB, and diverse private corporations."

The results of these various opportunities from APRN affiliation for public radio in Eskimo communities were best seen from the factor of station sustainability and continued radio services for Eskimo listeners seeking alternatives in listening. In addition, the public radio format and its organizational design took Eskimo participation in station operations as a cornerstone of its philosophy, though the results of operations in regard to the at-

tainment of criteria set down by consensus among the native community were difficult to ascertain. This is especially true concerning the role public radio has played in facilitating native language development, cultural identity, socioeconomic prosperity, and political power.

What public radio has done, from a technical perspective, is provide the infrastructure which, once in place, could either succeed or fail in the attempt to meet the goals placed upon it.

Eskimo Access to Telecommunications in Bering Strait Villages

The previous sections have dealt predominately with early radio efforts in the region, but the reader should note that major changes in village utilization of mass media began in the 1970s, partially through socioeconomic and technological changes at the village level. As Eskimos were provided with greater opportunities in education, political involvement, business, travel, communications, etc., regional radio had to evolve to meet changing circumstances and expectations put on them by the native audiences.

An interesting development in radio communications within Eskimo villages was the citizens band radio (CB), which was quickly adapted for personal intervillage communication. Often, CB radios were used for informal message services, like "Ptarmigan Telegraph" from KICY, and provided alternatives for villages lacking telephone service. CB radios served an important role during emergencies (ie., lost hunters, fishermen, or people out in the tundra during bad weather, etc.), and was a valuable form of radio which was used

imaginatively by many Eskimos.

Though not to be discussed in depth at this point, Eskimos were soon to face new worlds of mass media starting in the late 1970s with the rapid development of Alaska's telecommunications infrastructure and the services that came along with it. The introduction of telephones, radio, television, and data services, offered Eskimos vast possibilities for utilizing the new mediums in a manner most suited to their personal and corporate context. After radio, the next revolution in media to impact the Eskimo people along the Bering Strait involved the introduction of television.⁷⁰

Early Influences Leading Toward Eskimo Television Service along the Bering Strait

Alaska entered the television age in 1953 with the establishment of a small cable TV system in the southeast town of Ketchikan. Television--via terrestrial transmissions--appeared late that same year with broadcasts in Anchorage by stations KFIA and KTVA.⁷¹

The first attempt to develop television in the Bering Strait region was made by Larry Galvin, who established a small cable operation in Nome between 1956-57. Known as KNOM-TV, the service gave Eskimos their first glimpse of televised images, with kine-scope recordings providing the program fare in this initial phase of TV development. KNOM-TV's operations lasted until 1962, when the service was shut down due to city subscribers owing then-owner Willie Brown over \$70,000.⁷²

There were no other attempts to introduce television in the

region because it lacked a viable economic base that could foster the growth of private commercial services. The Bering Strait region could not support free dispersion television then, and it still faces the same dilemma.⁷³ Military-sponsored television efforts would represent the next phase of development in the territory.

As early as 1956, the United States military's Armed Forces Radio and Television System (AFRTS) provided television service for a base at Fort Greely.⁷⁴ It was the military that provided a number of small programming services to support the isolated installations around the state. In 1962, the Air Force established a television station at Gambell (St. Lawrence Island) that broadcast programs for forty-eight days out of a total six-month period, before it succumbed to technical difficulties.⁷⁵ This marked the first occasion for broadcast television distribution in the Bering Strait. The signal could not be picked up by other communities, yet it provided local Eskimos with an insight into television's remarkable communication abilities. Until the advent of state television experiments, the majority of villages were without television of any kind, and it would be well into the late 1970s before these villages received any regular television service.⁷⁶

In 1967, COMSAT, a U.S. government-created satellite organization, sent a group of experts to Alaska for an economic and technical study assessing the need for an intrastate communication system.⁷⁷ Alaskans were asked about what was wanted and needed in terms of TV broadcasting services. The awareness of satellite

capabilities as a problem solver for distance delivery of television to remote Alaskan regions spread at a fast pace, and the stage was set for the beginning of numerous demonstration experiments.⁷⁸ Unfortunately, during most of the strategy and policy proceedings guiding these activities, Eskimos in the Bering Strait region were not included within the consultation process.

Initial Satellite Broadcast Development

The first satellite television broadcast to Alaska occurred during the July 1969 moonlanding.⁷⁹ Anchorage viewers watched Neil Armstrong step off the Eagle, courtesy of an American military satellite. For the first time, Alaskan residents could visually understand the future necessity of satellite broadcasting as a way of creating closer ties and gaining regular access to information and programming that was being received by the rest of the country. Commercial satellite service to Alaska began in 1970 via the Bartlett earth station in Talkeetna using a 30 meter antenna.⁸⁰ Urban residents of the state would be the first to benefit from commercial television from the national networks, in addition to the local stations which had existed in Anchorage since the 1950s. Rural Eskimo residents would have to wait for this privilege.

In 1970, new studies were conducted on how to bring television to rural Alaska. A Pacific Western Engineering study investigated methods of translating television broadcasts from the Armed Forces Television Network to southeastern Alaska, Kodiak Island, and the Aleutian Islands.⁸¹ Concurrent with this was a joint

UNESCO-National Education Association study exploring the feasibility of using satellites to assist the state's educational development plans.⁸²

Sensing a need to develop a state-mandated broadcasting entity to guide any future initiatives, the Alaska State Legislature vested power in August 1970, to the Alaska Educational Broadcasting Commission (AEBC).⁸³ As noted earlier, this was the state's first commitment to appropriate government funding for bringing radio and television to areas where it could not be supported commercially. The AEBC sought to determine goals which might be achieved through electronic media; establish university educational television services; and submit proposals to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for experimental satellite usage.⁸⁴

In 1970, NASA's ATS-1 satellite afforded the opportunity to begin the first of many satellite demonstration projects in the state.⁸⁵ The University of Alaska's instructional radio and television station, KUAC-College, uplinked the first Alaskan broadcast via satellite for an extended period. These were radio broadcasts which subsequently paved the way for the uplinking of instructional television service in the near future. Concurrent with the use of ATS-1 was a project that included the establishment of regular communication with numerous villages which lacked basic telecommunication services.⁸⁶ Included with this was a project to utilize audio services to support rural classroom usage and medical traffic for the isolated health clinics in native villages.⁸⁷

The ATS-1 demonstrations clarified the perspectives held by telecom decision making groups concerning what could be done and what subsequent satellite experiments or demonstrations would require.⁸⁸ The benefits of satellite usage were readily apparent, even though much adaptation would be required in order to properly use the technology within the village setting.⁸⁹

The next year (1971), a series of COMSAT demonstrations were done at sites using portable earth stations to show the system's versatility; this was partially done to persuade the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to allow an exemption for the use of small earth stations in Alaska.⁹⁰ The existing satellite dish size standard was a minimum ten meters in diameter. This ruling, while becoming antiquated due to the development of high power satellites, made earth station installation in the Eskimo villages cost-prohibitive.⁹¹

COMSAT employed engineers Bob Miller and Michael Vaughan to conduct the first on-site testing of satellite television reception in selected villages around the Bering Strait. Though their priority was in checking technical parameters, the engineers--in assessing the initial impressions of Eskimo residents to the satellite system--were divided over the question of satellite television's suitability. Vaughan noted the potential negative aspects to the village and was (at the time) against it, while Miller was neither pro nor con concerning TV's impact--noting that sooner or later TV would reach the bush and it would be up to the decision of individuals on how to utilize the medium.⁹²

In 1972, a Rowan Group Inc. survey of Eskimos residing in twenty-eight western Alaskan villages concluded that electronic media might be the best way to help Eskimos deal with certain social and health problems, and recommended that these people be trained in media production and dissemination.³³ Although this study envisioned future Eskimo media participation, it failed to establish a baseline for accomplishing these objectives.

Eskimo Access to Television

A separate action in 1972, paved the way for the eventual establishment of Eskimo participation with television. Governor William Egan suggested to the Alaska Legislature that a means for providing educational television for southwest Alaska be found. Soon after, the Legislature appropriated additional monies to AEBC's 1972 budget, which allowed the agency to support the development of television via KYUK-Bethel. In September 1972, KYUK-TV began transmitting a low power signal to the city, and the station featured educational and cultural programming in English and Yupik. While its signal reach was small, KYUK started a tradition of being a major producer and distributor of Eskimo-related programs.³⁴

Much of the discussion in technical and programming circles was concerned with finding alternatives for television delivery options to remote regions in the state.³⁵ Three options emerged: cable television, establishment of rural television stations with extension via translators (like KYUK-TV), or over the air transmission via low power television transmitters (LPTV).

Mini TV

The concept of Mini-TV originated from the atypical communications environment of Alaska, for little benchmark data existed when encountering the problems of providing viable television service for a region with so many unknowns in terms of geography, cultural diversity, technical limitations, financing, etc. In May of 1972, the AEBC and University of Alaska (KUAC-TV personnel) installed a ten-watt television transmitter fed by videotape at Fort Yukon, and a 1/2-watt transmitter at Angoon on Admiralty Island.⁹⁶ These projects set a precedent for the installation of this type of equipment in other native villages throughout the rural regions. By using programs videotaped at dubbing facilities in Fairbanks and Anchorage, it was found that this style of operation was viable, despite encompassing logistical problems related to funding and program delivery.

In March 1973, the Alaska Public Utilities Commission conducted a six month experiment dubbed *Project Wales*.⁹⁷ This experiment was set up in the village of Wales--consisting of a cable television system with distribution to various locations--and was designed to measure the impact of television on a previously unexposed village and upon school age children. Part of the experimental design sought to assess viewing response to entertainment and educational program offerings. A group of twenty-six households were individually wired with sensors to determine viewing preferences between entertainment and instructional features.

The project proved the preference for commercial programming

and set standards for future research on measuring the impact of television exposure on village routines, and children's behavior (including communication skills, educational achievement, and verbal intelligence).⁹⁹ Initial observations confirmed that informal social activities were minimally affected by television; formal social events were more strongly affected; and that broadcasting (under local control) could be programmed to accommodate local events. Madigan and Peterson, the principal investigators stated:

It is not impossible to feel that television might well help to make the village--for many people--the best of all worlds. The rural village of the future could share some of the many advantages of an urban lifestyle while maintaining a close tie with a way of living that has its roots in tradition.⁹⁹

In August, as Project Wales closed down, it became apparent that cable television with satellite interconnection was seen as the best approach for distant television service in the remote areas. In October 1973, a reevaluation of this approach was needed in light of changes made by the FCC. The commission granted a waiver in some clauses of the translator rules which permitted the establishment of Mini-TV stations in Alaska.¹⁰⁰ This action opened up the possibilities for future delivery options and made village ownership of television feasible.

Mini-TV was now licensed as a translator, but had the flexibility of transmitting material via satellite, videotape, or local origination. This scenario had never existed before, and was applicable only to Alaskan operations.

By the end of 1973, three stations (sponsored by AEBC funding) started Mini-TV operations in Fort Yukon, Unalaska, and St. Paul.¹⁰¹ These stations were to serve as test demonstrations to prove the feasibility of the approach. In Unalaska, the school district became the licensee, serving Unalaska and Dutch Harbor, and in St. Paul, the village assumed the license (all villages are located in the Aleutians). Both stations were fed via pre-recorded videotapes supplied by KUAC-TV and KYUK-TV. Some local origination was attempted at the sites.¹⁰²

As these operations proved successful, other applications for Mini-TV were soon filed. The FCC promptly authorized thirteen Mini-TV operations located in native villages, and the mold was set.¹⁰³ Communities which could raise approximately \$10,000 for the transmitters were among those who quickly established mini-TV sites.¹⁰⁴ Under the new arrangement, villages could obtain programs from a central dubbing operation that was coordinated by the AEBC: programming contained both commercial and Public Broadcasting System offerings. This unique situation was condoned by the FCC when they ruled that translators (the Mini-TV) were neither commercial or non-commercial. Once again, villages were given government approval in ways that were not possible for similar stations in the lower forty-eight states.¹⁰⁵

Even with programming flexibility created by a duality of educational and commercial features, the stations experienced severe logistical programming problems as evidenced by a breakdown in the tape distribution process.¹⁰⁶ Since distribution was based

on mail delivery from bush planes, the programs were often delayed during bad weather, or lost in transit. Villages could not be sure when tapes would arrive. Eventually, the system fell short in meeting user needs.

As other village sites became operational and entered the distribution process, a tape "bicycle" was established where a tape was delivered to one village, then to a second village, etc. One tape could be shared by up to five villages. Again, due to uncertainty concerning mail delivery and polemics involving the habit of holding on to tapes until new ones arrived, the bicycle system resulted in a chaotic failure. Villages would struggle until a new system was devised.¹⁰⁷

By 1974, the Mini-TV operations had expanded throughout the native villages and along the entire route of the Alaskan pipeline construction project from Valdez to Prudhoe Bay.¹⁰⁸ It should be recognized that none of these sites had live interconnect capacity from off the air or satellite sources. It would take the intervention of the state to provide this capacity in the future, yet these sites provided the impetus for further satellite experiments.

Satellite Television in the Bering Strait

In September of 1974, the "Alaska Communications Plan" was announced by RCA Alascom Communications, Inc. (Alascom), the state's sole commercial telecommunications carrier.¹⁰⁹ This plan set the stage for a significant expansion of the satellite infrastructure within the state, based on the need for future services.

Although their motives were centered around commercial incentives, it provided a boost to those who recognized that the time was ripe to exploit the advantages that satellite communications had for servicing remote regions.¹¹⁰ Alascom had a satellite system in operation, but found the FCC restrictions on small earth stations inhibiting for these areas.

New developments proceeded when the FCC waived its prohibition on earth stations that had parabolic antennas less than ten meters in diameter. The new waiver allowed Alascom to install 4.5-meter earth stations at thirty-eight locations around the state.¹¹¹ For the first time, many villages along the strait received access to basic long distance telephone and data transmission service (through state funding) and the stage was set for further developments in radio and television delivery. Television still was not transmitted at this point, but Alascom did prove the potential for the cost-effective realization of service in areas formerly without communication services.¹¹²

Around the same time frame as Alascom's initiatives (1974), a government-sponsored satellite experiment was conducted. This project, dubbed the "Educational Satellite Communications Demonstration (ESCD), utilized NASA's new ATS-6 satellite to test the satellite's engineering capabilities, and test its acceptability in delivering social services (education and health) to rural native areas.¹¹³ One objective was to provide the technical and operational experience the State of Alaska needed for planning subsequent telecommunication systems.¹¹⁴ The project provided

satellite television transmissions to rural Alaska, however, no villages in the Bering Strait region were able to participate.

ESCD set a precedent for designing native constituent control into the system, as it was the policy of the Governor's Office of Telecommunications to seek avenues of native control within the several phases of the project. A program titled "The Alaska Native Magazine," created a viewer-defined format, concentrating on a diversity of topics relevant to native needs.¹¹⁵ ESCD sought innovations in the development of new educational programming adapted for, and to some extent by, the special populations living in Alaskan villages. ESCD's advantage over previous efforts rested in the fact that villages could use inexpensive three-meter earth stations made possible by the high power ATS-6 satellite.¹¹⁶

The Genesis of State-Subsidized Television

By 1975, the possibility for television delivery throughout Alaska was finally realized when the Alaska State Legislature appropriated five million dollars for the purchase and installation of one-hundred and twenty-two earth stations. The justification for the appropriation centered around the need to provide basic telephone service to every community containing twenty-five or more residents.¹¹⁷

This project erased the trend of building up satellite services within Alaska's urban centers at the expense of rural regions which could not support commercial operations. Alascom, after initial reluctance to the Legislature's plan, installed and oper-

ated the state-supplied earth stations.¹¹⁸ At the time of installation, these earth stations lacked video capability, but it was apparent that once satellite television services became available, the stations could be retrofitted with the enabling video hardware.

By July 1976, the success of the Mini-TV operations (despite distribution problems) and the previous appropriation for statewide earth stations prompted the Legislature to pass Senate Bill HCSSB 696. This action allocated 1.2 million dollars for a project to demonstrate the feasibility of state-subsidized satellite television distribution to the earth stations recently installed in these villages.¹¹⁹ Representatives from Anchorage TV broadcasters and the Governor's Office of Telecommunications negotiated with the FCC and national networks (CBS, NBC, ABC) for access to their programming. The networks eventually granted permission to relay their signals without cost to the state, terming the action as an extension of their affiliate station agreement with the Anchorage commercial broadcasters.¹²⁰

The Governor's Office negotiated for the access of transponder time via Alascom's channels on the RCA Satcom 2 satellite (including both uplink and downlink charges) and provided satellite receivers, LPTV transmitters, and 4.5-meter earth stations for twenty-four villages.¹²¹ These sites were selected from across the state by the Alaska Federation of Natives Telecommunications Subcommittee, and consisted of villages that were previously without telecommunication services. Four villages within this dissertation's study area that participated were Gambell, Savoonga, Dio-

mede, and Emmonak.¹²²

In accordance with the appropriation was a fund for the construction and operation of a tape delay and program origination center in Anchorage, which would act as the nerve center for the project. The legislation also benefitted Anchorage commercial stations as the state agreed to finance satellite delivery for these stations from the national networks, in return for uplinking those signals to the origination center and on to the villages. The four networks were to be coordinated on Satcom 2 with a two channel capacity.¹²³

In essence, the Mini-TV sites would downlink a signal comprised of a mixture of all four networks as retransmitted by the tape delay center.¹²⁴ This condition warranted a complex procedure to bring up various feeds from the lower 48 uplink centers on one channel, and then beam the project's program stream on the other channel.¹²⁵ The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission oversaw the project and coordinated program feeds through Alascom's Bartlett Hills earth station in Talkeetna.¹²⁶

As a result of the entire experiment, Alascom prospered in its monopoly status as it received state leases on their satellite, as well as the interconnections with their rural earth stations--though some questioned their lobbying tactics with the state.

The project, now dubbed "The Alaska Satellite Demonstration Project," began operating in January 1977, for a one year period.¹²⁷ For the first time, rural native villages had access to satellite television interconnection on both a live and taped-feed basis.

These villages could now obtain television programs identical to those seen in the rest of the country. The results were positive enough that during the 1977 legislative session, the State House voted for an additional \$600,000 to extend the operation of the project six months until June 30, 1978.¹²⁸

Each village site (many with pre-existing Mini-TV transmitters) now had both commercial and educational offerings, and most of them dismantled their old tape distribution operations. Satellite television was infinitely easier to receive in terms of costs (there were none), program diversity, and operation (no local supervision was required). Villagers were eager to accept this gift from the state.¹²⁹

If there were any worries on the part of village leaders, it was based mainly over concerns that they could eventually lose this free programming service, or via the fact that by staying tied to this system, they would relinquish programming control to an outside party.¹³⁰ Nevertheless, the project was a blessing for most of the villages and overcame limitations that could have otherwise proved insurmountable for Eskimo access to telecommunications technology.

The Status of Mini-TV Operations: 1976-78

As the initial plans for subsidized satellite television unfolded, the APBC continued the supervision of tape deliveries to seventeen Mini-TV sites which were not included in the demonstration.¹³¹ For the few villages that had the LPTV's before their

inclusion into the demonstration, it should be noted that once they became "on-line" to satellite service, their right to preempt or produce local origination programming was eliminated.¹³² A few villages, such as St. Paul Island, refused to relinquish this right based on their ownership of the FCC license. For those villages relying on tape feeds, or those exercising the satellite-tape feed interrupt option, a rearrangement of the old delivery system was in order.¹³³

The APBC and a newly formed eighteen village cooperative called the Alaska Mini-TV Association (AMTVA) set out in March 1977 to improve the old tape distribution system.¹³⁴ The arrangement called for individual villages to receive tapes directly from a dubbing center, without the headaches that were inherent with the "bicycle" system. Villages paid charges based on the number of program hours, plus tape costs. The funding for this came from local, personal, and corporate funds. This was a relatively prosperous period for the native villages since they still possessed a large amount of funds left over from the 1971 ANSCA allocations.¹³⁵

Logistical problems related to mail delivery and video equipment incompatibility bogged down the distribution process. With the promise of satellite access throughout Alaska, these villages could finally join the other satellite villages, and rid themselves of a system that never overcame the problems of a design plagued by funding and distribution polemics. With Alaska's new phase of satellite television, however, local control would become lost.¹³⁶

**The Emergence of Comprehensive State-Subsidized Satellite
Delivery to Eskimo Settlements: 1978-1987**

It became apparent in 1978, that there was still a need to deliver television service to all villages that were not included in the original STDP. As part of the original waiver by the FCC that permitted Mini-TV sites, Commission Secretary William Tricario underscored the uniqueness of Alaska's remote native villages, and justified their special treatment by stating:

The Commission believes that Alaskans are entitled to the same off-the-air programming routinely enjoyed by other Americans. The Mini-TV concept achieves this objective and facilitates the discharge of our mandate to encourage the larger and more effective use of radio [TV] in the public interest.¹³⁷

Ever aware of federal interest and past flexibility in encouraging the state to expand its intrastate telecommunications, and with increasing requests by native villages to gain access to these services, the State of Alaska entertained the notion of comprehensive state coverage.¹³⁸

With the influx of increasing petro-dollars in 1978, the Legislature passed House Bill 908 which appropriated 10.9 million dollars to extend television service to 176 rural communities. In effect, it was an optimistic boost for satellite communications even though Governor Jay Hammond reduced its final television expenditure to \$2.1 million. Eleven more sites were added, including all the regional native centers. The funding also provided continued support for the origination and uplinking centers, and it appeared that the tradition of state-subsidized entertainment television for rural Alaska was firmly entrenched.¹³⁹

The demonstration was renamed the State of Alaska Satellite Television Project (STP) reflecting the fact that it was no longer a demonstration, but a regular service. The system, including transmission facilities, and downlink sites (including the AMTVA ones) eventually evolved into what was now known as the Rural Alaska Television Network (RATNET).

Alaska differed from the rest of the country in that no other state had a similar broadcasting or satellite structure, and none were patterned upon the idea of state-supported entertainment services.¹⁴⁰ In this, Alaska was unique, and progressively developed one of the most innovative satellite-based television infrastructures found anywhere in the world.¹⁴¹ Canadian and Soviet Eskimos would also become recipients of state-sponsored satellite interconnectivity, yet it would be the Canadians who would effect greater influence on program content rather than their Alaskan or Soviet counterparts.

Rising state revenues discouraged initiatives in private rural TV enterprises, as evidenced by the continuous legislative appropriations for state broadcasting. With newly provided television reception, private enterprises were hard pressed to develop local service.¹⁴² The STP was still a novelty in terms of initiating state media services, however, public discussion concerning future scenarios warranted a reassessment of the state's role in providing television service.

For the time being, rural Alaska could receive one television channel and urban Alaskans would continue to receive multiple serv-

ices. Since rural commercial operations were generally unsupportable by the limited economic base in villages, the state and other urban commercial stations felt they could continue this arrangement until future circumstances necessitated a change in policy, ie., the growth of village cable systems.¹⁴³

By 1979, the Legislature passed two appropriation bills which allocated 3.4 million dollars for continued funding of the STP, and for the extension of service to forty-four additional communities. Again as stated before, it became apparent that yearly legislative appropriations would extend the STP, and that the goal of reaching every village with a population of twenty-five residents or more was soon to be achieved.¹⁴⁴

It was during this period that the state followed up the pioneering efforts of the ESCD project within the policy areas of constituent participation in programming matters. In 1982, as a result of Alaska State House Bill 50, the Department of Administration's Division of Telecommunications Systems delegated programming responsibility for the STP over to the Rural Alaska Television Network Council. This body was originally composed of 14 representatives recognized by the Legislature, with twelve appointed by each of the ANSCA-created regional native corporations, and two appointments by the Governor's Office.¹⁴⁵ Eventually, advisors from the University of Alaska, the Alaska Public Broadcasting Network, and Alaska State Department of Education were added to the RATNET board.

The RATNET Council functioned as the official organ which

represented rural-native interests, set programming policies, established and revised programming guidelines, and assessed community program needs. All programming transmitted from the STP origination center was pre-approved by the RATNET Council in conjunction with state policy guidelines. The state, in setting up this arrangement, made rural interests and native representation a priority in operating the channel, while distancing themselves from program decision making. John Morrone, then-Deputy Director of the Division, reiterated the DOA's position on the matter by stating that the State of Alaska's overriding policy was to avoid any semblance of control over RATNET--with its concern resting with legal and technical matters only.¹⁴⁶

The RATNET system was unique, being a major television network with hundreds of reception points in rural communities, yet having no original programming, no production budget, and no studios (except the tape delay center). Its continuing existence depended on yearly legislative appropriations, as well as authorization by each of the national TV networks, since their programming was worth millions of dollars which the state could never hope to pay if payment for broadcast rights was demanded.

To a degree, Eskimo viewers in Alaska were recipients of a similar system provided to Eskimos in Chukotka, and RATNET's primary transmission of national programming mirrored Soviet central television's distribution strategy to villages in the Providenski and Chukotski districts. The primary difference was in the ability of Eskimos (through their Bering Strait Native Corporation repre-

sentative on the RATNET Council) to pick and choose among national and statewide programming in creating daily broadcast schedules, while the Chukotkan's had no such ability.¹⁴⁷

Educational television during this period had taken a back seat to the State's concentration on the expansion of entertainment TV throughout the rural regions.¹⁴⁸ Native viewers close enough to public television stations in Bethel, Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks, could view educational and instructional programming, however, few villages had this benefit of two channels. Native viewers connected with the STP were able to watch occasional PBS fare from the public stations despite commercial entertainment being the dominant element in the program stream.¹⁴⁹

In Kotzebue, a small television production center named "The Northwest Arctic School District Instructional Television Center" was created through state and regional school district support in the effort to develop rural production capabilities. This production facility created programs on cultural and educational themes (primarily in English) and supplied materials on an infrequent basis to the Alaska PBS network as well as to other sites in the lower 48 states, even supplying footage for the PBS-sponsored "Sesame Street" series.¹⁵⁰

The center did not broadcast its output, though it had access to satellite uplinking to feed Alaskan stations when needed. While its staff was prominently non-native, the center's orientation was aligned to the interests of the region's native community. Its funding, however, was precarious and eventually withdrawn, forcing

the facility to shut down.

Educational Programming via Satellite in Eskimos Villages

The University of Alaska continued to be visionary in the production of instructional courses via its studios at the Anchorage (UAA) and Fairbanks (UAF) campuses. Much of their output was seen over Alaska public television stations. Voices throughout the educational community and the Legislature echoed the need for an instructional television network aimed at penetrating the newly developed state Mini-TV system. Education in rural Alaska via distance delivery technologies was proven to be technically feasible, although there remained questions as to how such a system could be designed effectively. Making the technology work was not deemed the major problem; adapting the system to succeed in a confrontational atmosphere of differing cultural orientations, knowledge transferral techniques, village programming advisors, and untried implementation strategies was the problem.¹⁵¹

Despite this set of circumstances, among others, it was sensed by many that the time for a major statewide project had come.¹⁵² The state budget outlook was optimistic and the Legislature had the capital reserves to initiate another satellite operation. Foremost in the minds of Alaskan educators, however, was the state of basic secondary and postsecondary education and how distance delivery could be of assistance to educational efforts in the villages.

In his assessment on state-supported education in the vil-

lages at the time, Monaghan (1986) stated:

A decade ago, rural Alaskans looking for higher education had three choices. They could leave the state. They could come to the University of Alaska's campuses at Anchorage, Fairbanks, etc. Or they could go without. For most, higher education was not even an option.¹⁵³

It was well known that Eskimo students had difficulty adjusting to life in the urban areas, and the dropout rate for them was very high.¹⁵⁴ As long as the technology could do the job and the funding was available, there came the rationale that distance delivery could solve many of these problems.

During the 1980 legislative session, three appropriation bills were passed which affected state television. House Bill CSHB-60 provided \$2.8 million for the continuation of the STP; FCCSHB-60 funded five additional Mini-TV sites; and the major expenditure (HCSSB-165), provided five million dollars for the development of a statewide satellite-based instructional television service eventually dubbed the "LEARNAlaska ITV System" (L/A).¹⁵⁵

Overall management was performed by the University of Alaska Instructional Telecommunications Service, in conjunction with the Alaska Department of Education. U of A was responsible for ITV program selection relevant to university and continuing education courses, while the Department of Education oversaw programming for pre-school and K-12 classes.¹⁵⁶

LEARNAlaska created a system where college and public school students could participate in classes right in their own village. In the Bering Strait area, coordination for much of the instruction was provided by the Northwest Community College in Nome. Eskimo

villages could be hooked up to the college via telephone-based audioconferencing, or through connections with the many community libraries that were just being built. L/A tape feeds were sent to elementary and secondary schools, and teaching efforts were supplemented with a wealth of audio/visual aids for classroom activities.¹⁵⁷

In order to ensure the availability of adequate signal coverage, L/A targeted the installation of 250 LPTV transmitters and satellite receivers throughout the state. This in effect, doubled the capacity of each village, creating two Mini-TV channels (both via satellite). STP and L/A signals came through either the Alascom or state-owned earth station, and then out to separate channels.

Programming on the STP and LEARNAlaska

STP program content was a mixture of tape-delayed and real time programming, while LEARNAlaska was mainly taped (though it had capabilities for live satellite uplinking). The RATNET Council members saw entertainment as their chief priority.¹⁵⁸

RATNET's daily program schedule was categorized by entertainment and non-entertainment formats. Its non-entertainment programming consisted of PBS children's programs, science and nature shows, documentary films, programs of academic and sociocultural interest, and in later years, late night instructional TV feeds to rural schools. Entertainment features consisted of situation comedies, sports, movies, soap operas, cartoons, game shows, specials,

fitness programs, talk shows, variety shows, music videos, and documentaries. RATNET identification spots and program schedules, public service announcements, and disclaimers (ie., against alcohol advertisements) comprised the remainder of what viewers watched on a daily basis.

From the perspective of Alaska-specific programming, RATNET carried Alaskan news (and national news), Alaska Weather, state legislative reports, information programs from the Alaska Governor's Office, the Alaska Congressional delegation report, public affairs shows, and original programming as produced by various entities from around the state.

In 1986, the production of programming directly targeted to Alaskan natives constituted roughly 4 percent of RATNET's yearly air time. One year later, this figure dropped to approximately .04 percent, a figure which remained fairly consistent throughout the system's period of operation.¹⁵⁹

LEARNAlaska became the embodiment of all previous Alaskan educational experiments in its daily content. LEARNAlaska presented a variety of educational fare (in combination with instructional classes and university courses) with most programs coming from independent producers, networks (like PBS), the Alaska State Film Library, and University of Alaska instructional media services. The service also provided audioconferencing and slow scan video capability.

Program categories ranged from film documentaries to live statewide conferences, and rural viewers could view daily program

schedules which were similar in design to PBS stations targeted to urban audiences. Viewers on Little Diomedé and St. Lawrence Island could view a morning documentary on heart surgery operations at a Boston hospital, followed by a lecture on Alaska health issues held at UAA.¹⁶⁰

LEARNAlaska often sought sophistication in its educational offerings, while trying to provide programs of relevance to a native-rural perspective. It highlighted yearly native activities such as Eskimo-Indian Olympic games, and Alaska Federation of Natives conventions. It did not, however, have an effective participatory body like the RATNET Council to assist it in the formulation of daily program schedules, with the result that many Eskimo viewers deemed much of the broadcast content irrelevant to their unique context of living.¹⁶¹

In any event, after three years of an exclusive STP program diet, Eskimo viewers along the strait were given the luxury of an alternative state-subsidized choice in LEARNAlaska. No other state in the country could boast of such a dual system.¹⁶² Alaska had more in common with other developing countries in that the state was the main supplier of programming to rural citizens, and not private commercial concerns.

Although past demonstrations like the Indian SITE project, the Canadian Anik-CBC Frontier package, or the Indonesian Palapa program emphasized distance delivery via satellite, none (save Anik) came close to offering this dual system on a continuing basis.¹⁶³

From 1982 to 1984, the Legislature provided \$19.1 million for the operation of both satellite networks.¹⁶⁴ Much of the financial outlay was directed toward payment of Alascom transponder fees, since the new Aurora satellite carried both signals. It was evident that Alascom and the State of Alaska were inextricably intertwined in the business of providing television service. This raised concern among both commercial broadcasters, and state administration personnel.¹⁶⁵

Over the two years of FY 85 and FY 86, the state's fiscal budget would allocate approximately \$14.4 million for both the STP and L/A channels. The STP was available at 248 communities and L/A was also available at 227 sites: 146 earth stations were owned by Alascom, and 102 were owned by the state. During 1985, more villages were still in the application stage for LEARNAlaska.¹⁶⁶

Alaska's satellite distribution system for subsidized television had become one of the largest and most viable in the world, yet this still did not serve to satisfy the needs of those Eskimos seeking greater input and advantage out of a system seemingly designed with them specifically in mind.

In the meantime, new cable and satellite-based broadcast services were increasingly available to the Eskimos of the Bering Strait, providing alternatives to the existing RATNET system--a fact of increasing concern to advocates of state subsidization who became threatened with fiscal realities faced by the State of Alaska. It was only a matter of time before the advances in satellite technology would spawn new service applications on behalf

of Eskimo consumers along the strait.

New Alternatives: VCRs, Cable, and DBS

It was only a matter of time before Eskimos would have access to the same broadcast options enjoyed previously by the state's urban residents, and these developments occurred in the latter half of the 1980s. Already in the late 1970s, video cassette recorders (VCRs) had achieved a firm presence in many villages along the strait, offering new viewing possibilities to Eskimos. Residents of Unalakleet, Wales, Gambell, Savoonga, Little Diomedes, and other villages quickly witnessed the emergence of video rental shops operating out of private homes, and the availability of a wide selection of films soon provided ample competition to the RATNET signal.

Unlike their relatives across the strait, VCR ownership was soon pervasive, becoming a standard household item like the four wheel motorcycle or refrigerator. Given the isolation of villages (with poor access to print and other media) and the growing popularity of television viewing as opposed to involvement in traditional village activity, VCR penetration into homes in rural Alaska was bound to develop rapidly--reaching a level of roughly 84 percent by 1991. This level was higher than for the rest of the U.S., which saw an increase in VCR ownership of 10 percent in 1985, to 56 percent by 1990.¹⁶⁷

Cable Television

In tandem with the growth of VCR ownership was the development

of cable television. While cities like Anchorage and Fairbanks had access to cable, bush Alaska was far behind in accessing it. Nome had experienced KNOM-TV and a second system starting in 1971, while Kotzebue saw the startup of a small subscriber system in 1974, which relied on taped programming with little local production. This marked the first phase of cable's penetration into the region, but Eskimos would have to wait until the 1980s to have full access to the medium.¹⁶⁸

Cable advanced into the area on a larger scale in the early eighties, primarily in larger villages, ie., Gambell, Savoonga, and Unalakleet, and slowly spread to smaller villages which had the financial resources to support it. During this second phase of development (representing cable's ability to offer satellite-based program services rather than local tape-based offerings), private cable companies went into the region's villages, conducting viewer surveys and financial estimates of system construction.

Program packages containing six or more channels, ie., HBO, CNN, USA, Disney, Discovery, or superstations, were offered to prospective villages, with the RATNET channel inserted into the service. A separate channel providing for local access programming was usually offered if the need arose. With cabling costs in villages running from \$20,000 to \$30,000 per mile, and with high personnel and operating costs, monthly subscription costs for Eskimo viewers would range from zero to \$50 per month, depending on the ownership structure of the operation.¹⁶⁹

While private companies like UNITED Cable or Microcom, took

the lead in cable development, two other cable entities entered the scene, primarily in those smaller villages desiring service but least able to afford it. These were composed of either community-owned systems (operated by a community, regional, or local non-profit entity), or Telco systems, which were wholly owned subsidiaries of Alaskan telephone companies operating among the various villages.

Though cable installation provided Eskimos with greater variety in television entertainment, it was often at a cost which was difficult for many residents to afford, and represented a leap backward for viewers who were used to free television service from RATNET. For those villages which relied heavily on subsistence activities and had smaller incomes, cable was slower in coming, and often would require village government subsidization to become reality.

Despite financial considerations of system construction and subscription fees, Eskimos seemed willing to pay the costs, even if it required sacrifices in their monthly living budgets, for it was the option of choice which cable offered that made the cost seem reasonable. In Alaska overall, cable penetration to villages doubled between 1980 and 1987, reflecting the demand its services had generated.¹⁷⁰

By the end of the decade, 27 percent of rural villages supplied with RATNET had cable (68 out of 248), and roughly 15 villages along the Bering Strait were connected.¹⁷¹ Available statistics (done in the early 1990s) now showed that cable television

was accessible to more than 60 percent of Alaska's rural population, and this figure was ever rising as more villages signed on.¹⁷²

Private Satellite TV Usage

An option to regular cable TV service was that of private reception of TV and radio by television receive-only satellite systems (TVRO). While this was still a relatively undeveloped medium in villages possessing cable, the Bering Strait region witnessed the use of private TVRO systems which could tap into numerous unscrambled satellite feeds from the major networks, movie channels, and other services. Because western Alaska was usually at the edge of most satellite's footprints, TVRO systems required 3-5 meter antennas. A network of TVRO dealers emerged in Alaska, to provide services to those in the region who desired TVRO systems, though in the beginning, these earth stations cost in the range of \$4000-\$10,000. Most often, private TVRO sites were located in areas away from settlements, ie., construction camps, isolated homes, hunting and fishing camps in the interior regions, and along the coastline.

Numerous satellites which offered a variety of services were well within the viewing range of the Bering Strait. There are few specifics available concerning penetration levels of private TVRO systems in western Alaska during the late 1970s and early 1980s at the time of this writing. Individual TVRO systems were not widespread, but they represented another alternative to Eskimos who were not served by existing systems. With the advent of scrambled

signals, however, TVRO lost its luster in villages which had cable, since accessing these channels without cost was one of the benefits of TVRO ownership. The early days of private TVRO systems in western Alaska had little overall impact on Eskimo television since RATNET was the dominant signal across the region, though it was a godsend for those beyond RATNET or cable access. Satellite TV geared toward individual subscribers would not seriously challenge RATNET or cable television until the decade of the nineties.

Cable Radio

In addition to cable television channels, which in the last few years had increased up to 40 channels in some villages, these same systems began providing radio services from various stations around the country. Eskimos in Nome and other villages could tune into classical music from Chicago, country music from Nashville, 24 hour news services, sports channels, and numerous contemporary (CHR/AOR) music stations. The utilization of these signals was dependent on separate subscription payments for the services, as well as the availability of radio receivers which could access a cable input. While simple radios and "boomboxes" were ever present in villages (used for picking up regional stations), the numbers for sophisticated stereo systems which could best take advantage of cable radio were limited during cable's early introduction, though the ownership levels of these stereos was continually increasing.¹⁷³

For villages with RATNET only, the state inserted a subcarrier audio circuit into the television signal which carried KSKA (an Anchorage-based APRN radio station). This circuit provided listeners (possessing satellite receiving equipment) with statewide radio programming from APRN, as well as National Public Radio offerings and locally produced music programs from Anchorage. Listeners in Point Hope and other sites could also receive Eskimo language radio via satellite from KBRW, which uplinked its signals from Barrow on the North Slope.¹⁷⁴

These cable and satellite radio services offered competition to KICY, KNOM, KOTZ, KNSA and other stations whose signals could reach the Bering Strait. Despite competition, the Nome stations did not make any significant programming changes in response to the newly available channels, and Eskimo listeners would continue to rely on them in general for local and regional information, as well as entertainment. The overall impact on the regional stations was, however, a declining listenership during the daytime, and especially during the evening hours when television viewing was dominant.

Though Eskimos now had much greater variety in the programming they consumed (as delivered by cable), their participation in the control over program content was non-existent, instead accepting a passive role concerning the production of materials offered by these outside services. This did not appear to be a problem for many native listeners who appreciated additional choices. Their only power of decision making over such services, however, was to accept or reject programs via the channel selector.

The one alternative offered by cable television, as listed previously, was the local access channel option which was technically available in many villages. By 1987, 33 of the 77 cable systems in operation throughout the state had local access channels ready for exploitation.¹⁷⁵ To date, there has been little activity by community production groups on these access channels and the opportunity to develop local program material cognizant of the Eskimo's unique culture and social values still remains to be fully exploited through the local access option.

Future Considerations

The bottom line of these new developments in broadcast media focused on the need to reassess the traditional role of Eskimos in their participation with radio and television, both in the way they consumed programming offered by the new services, and in the way they participated with the creation of programming in those mediums (private and state systems) which were available for manipulation.

Concerning state TV as directed toward the Eskimo: satellite, cable, and VCRs had all reduced the reliance on RATNET as the sole technical means of television reception in remote Alaska, and a re-configuration of state telecommunication policies appeared imminent concerning the future of broadcast availability along the Bering Strait.

NOTES

1. William R. Hunt, Arctic Passage (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 161.

2. John Thomas Duncan, "Alaska Broadcasting, 1922-77: An Examination of Government Influence" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 1982), 15.

3. "Telecommunications," The Alaska Almanac-1984 edition, (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1984), 188-189.

4. John Thomas Duncan, "Alaska Broadcasting 1922-77: An Examination of Government Influence" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 1982), 17.

5. Duncan, 19.

6. Ralph Fondell, Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, interview by author, 2 August 1992, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.

7. Duncan, 85.

8. Ralph Fondell, interview by author.

9. Duncan, 118.

10. Ibid.

11. This writer was unable to secure any data which could estimate listenership levels during this period on both sides of the Bering Strait.

12. Duncan, 164-165.

13. Duncan, 163. This writer lived in Unalakleet from 1982-1984 and personally conducted on site investigations of the White Alice facility located outside of the village, and at other White Alice sites in western Alaska.

14. Ibid. White Alice sites provided both military and civilian long distance telephone and telegraph service, and was the first reliable telephone connection for many Eskimo villages to the outside.

15. Ibid.

16. Alascom Incorporated, "The End of White Alice, the End of an Era," Alascom Spectrum (March 1985): 19.

17. Mikhail Kuchmar, Chukotka State Telecommunications Committee, interview by author, 6 February 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

18. Duncan, 165.

19. Fondell, personal interview.

20. Duncan, 165; Fondell, interview by author.

21. KICY Call Letter 24 (Spring 1985): 2.

22. Ralph Fondell, personal interview. Note: The Covenant Church established the Arctic Broadcasting Association to be the legal entity holding KICY's broadcast license.

23. Only a few villages had telephone access at this time (mainly those near the White Alice stations), though most had one high frequency radio transmitter link with a regional trade and administrative center.

24. Fondell, interview by author.

25. Ibid.

26. Clarence Irrigoo, interview by author, 15 May 1992, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording. This writer, while working at KICY as news director in the 1980s, personally supplied news reports to Irrigoo for translation and eventual broadcast during the Siberian Yupik news timeslot.

27. Fondell, interview by author.

28. Ibid.

29. This information was ascertained by this writer, who worked at KICY at various times between 1984 and 1987, and is currently a board member of the Arctic Broadcasting Association which operates the station.

30. Fondell, interview by author.

31. Fondell noted that the AFRN 24 hour radio service curtailed soon after KICY's initial broadcasts. During the short period when both two stations were operating, KICY requested the army to keep the signal off in the daytime, and operate it only at night when KICY was off the air. The army agreed. The AFRN radio service soon ended that year (1960) after its transmitter--which was located in Nome's Bering Sea Hotel--was destroyed in a fire which gutted the hotel.

32. Fondell, interview by author.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Daniel Johnson, "Alternative Programming Strategies for Native and Russian Broadcasting in the Norton Sound/Bering Strait Region: Recommendations to KICY-AM/FM, Nome, June 1987," p. 7, Arctic Broadcasting Association Archives, Nome, Alaska.

36. Sveta Togiak, Murgen Nutenot, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

37. Ibid.

38. A study conducted by Norma Forbes found that roughly 67% of natives in villages without television listened to radio approximately 10 hours per day. See, Forbes, et. al., "Social and Cognitive Effects of the Introduction of Television on Rural Alaskan Native Children," Alaska Council on Science And Technology, contract 33-82, March 1984, 66.

39. Gordon Scott Harrison, "The Mass Media in Native Villages of Alaska," Journalism Quarterly, 49 (1972): 374.

40. Information ascertained by this writer while working at KICY, Nome, Alaska.

41. Harrison, 374.

42. Fondell, interview by author; KICY manager Ralph Fondell maintains that Catholic clergy operating throughout the western Alaska region actively dissuaded native believers under their care from listening to KICY's evangelical Protestant-based programming. KNOM would be a logical counter to KICY's broadcasts.

43. Duncan, 265; also information from this writer's prior knowledge of KNOM's history.

44. Associated Press (AP), "Jesuit starts Nome radio station," Anchorage Daily Times, 9 July 1971, 21.

45. Information from this writer's experience with both KICY and KNOM while living in Nome, Alaska from 1985-1991.

46. Fondell, interview by author.

47. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, Public Broadcasting in Alaska: A Long Range Plan, 1989 edition (Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission), 11.

48. Ibid., 13.

49. Ibid., 12-13.

50. Ibid.

51. Bruce L. Smith and Jerry C. Brigham, "Native Radio Broadcasting in North America: An Overview of Systems in the United States and Canada," Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media 36 (Spring 1992), 189; KYUK native staff percentages by 1991 was at 60% of total station personnel (both TV and radio), and its programming in Yupik was up to five hours per week.

52. Information obtained by this writer while visiting KYUK studios in 1985.

53. Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, Public Broadcasting in Alaska: A Long Range Plan, 17.

54. Ibid.

55. Duncan, 268.

56. Alex Hills, "The Alaska Telegraphics Project: First-Year Results and Second-Year Plans," in Finding Our Way in the Communications Age: Proceedings of the Chugach Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, October 3-5, 1991, by The Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1991), 4.

57. Ibid., 4, 13.

58. Smith and Brigham, 189.

59. Fondell, interview by author.

60. This writer does not mean to imply that there was no interaction between all four stations, as there has been from time to time mutual contacts, especially in coverage of events like the Iditarod Dog Sled Race, which is of interest for listeners in each station's signal area.

61. This information was ascertained by this writer from experiences gained while working with all three stations over the years from 1982-1991; Lynn Anderson, station manager, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 2 February 1994, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording.

62. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 21.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid., 22. The reader should note that while KBRW had yearly funding of \$700,000, its operational costs were also high.

65. Information ascertained by this writer, while serving as an instructor in Communications and Broadcasting at Covenant High School (1982-84), and station manager for KCHS. KCHS distributed its signal via a carrier current transmitter and not by free dispersion.

66. Nome is included in this list as KNOM has access to APRN programming, yet its financial support still comes from the Catholic Church.

67. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 38.

68. Statewide news had previously been available through KICY via its broadcasts of Associated Press reports, so the APRN material, while serving as additional material for listeners, was not the only available news to the Eskimo audience.

69. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 33.

70. "RCA Alascom Plans--Communications," Tundra Times, 23 October 1974, 7; In September of 1974, RCA Alaska Communications Inc. (Alascom) president Stephen Hiller announced the "Alaska Communications Plan," which sought comprehensive satellite interconnections throughout Alaska. Costing roughly 100 million dollars, the plan sought installation of over 70 satellite stations, a move which would make possible the eventual distribution of satellite television to rural Alaska.

71. Duncan, 136.

72. Duncan, 137; James Engwall, Arctic Broadcasting Association, interview by author, 3 June 1995, Nome, Alaska, tape recording.

73. The region still does not have a commercial television station, though commercial cable systems have expanded around the Bering Strait region.

74. Duncan, 167.

75. Duncan, 10.

76. Information obtained from personal observation in the villages (1982-1991); Alaska State Department of Administration, History and Current Management of State-Provided Television Service (Juneau, Alaska: Alaska State Department of Administration-Division of Telecommunication Services, 1984), 3.

77. Duncan, 229.

78. Congress, Senate, Senator Ted Stevens speaking on the need to develop satellite communication systems for Alaska, 91st Cong., Congressional Record (1 July 1970), 116:22400.

79. Duncan, 230.

80. Communications Satellite Corporation, Twenty Years Via Satellite: A Chronology of Events of Communications Satellite Corporation, 1962 to 1985, (Washington D.C.: COMSAT Public and Investor Relations, 1985), 9.

81. Michael Porcaro, "Mini-TV: The Case for Cassettes," Journal of Communication 27 (Autumn 1977); 188.

82. Daley, Patrick and Beverly James, "Ethnic Broadcasting in Alaska: The Failure of a Participatory Model," In Ethnic Minority Media Ed. Steven Riggs. p.27.

83. Duncan, 230.

84. Ibid.

85. Dennis R. Foote, "Satellite Communication for Rural Health Care in Alaska," Journal of Communication 27 (Autumn 1977): 173.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. These experiments showed local officials that satellite transmission of emergency radio links was preferable to shortwave transmission equipment; Michael Vaughan, Alascom Inc., interview by author, 19 February 1995, Magadan, Russia, tape recording; Robert T. Filep, "The ATS-6 Experiments in Health and Education: An Overview," Journal of Communication 27 (Winter 1977): 162.

90. Michael Vaughan, interview by author; Scott Robert Olson, "Devolution and Indigenous Mass Media: The Role of Media in Inupiat and Sami Nation-State Building," Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1985, 99.

91. Alascom Inc., "Spectrum News," Alascom Spectrum (November 1984): 15.

92. Vaughan, interview by author.

93. Duncan, 295.

94. Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 17-18.

95. Porcaro, "Mini-TV: The Case for Cassettes," 188.
96. Duncan, 295.
97. R.J. Madigan and W. Jack Pearson, "Television on the Bering Strait," Journal of Communication 27 (Autumn 1977): 183.
98. Ibid., 186.
99. Ibid., 187.
100. Federal Communications Commission, Report #17233, December 1979, Washington D.C.: GPO, 1.
101. Ibid.
102. Federal Communications Commission, Report #11887, October 1973, Washington D.C.: GPO, 1.
103. Ibid.
104. Porcaro, 188.
105. FCC, Report #11887, 1.
106. Porcaro, 189.
107. Ibid.
108. Federal Communications Commission, Report #79-868/15339, January 17 1980, 3.
109. Alascom Inc., "Spectrum News," 15.
110. Ibid.
111. Alascom Inc., "Spectrum News," 15; Federal Communications Commission, Report 79-688/15339, 3.
112. Satellite television service did not begin in the region until January 1977; Alaska Department of Administration, History and Current Management, 1.
113. Robert T. Filep, "The ATS-6 Experiments in Health and Education: An Overview," 159.
114. Daley and James, "Ethnic Broadcasting in Alaska: The Failure of a Participatory Model," 31.
115. James Orvik, "ECSD/Alaska: An Educational Demonstration," Journal of Communication 27 (Autumn 1977): 167.

116. Filep, 160.

117. Alaska State Legislature, House, Committee on Telecommunications, "Rural Alaska Television Network," submitted by H.A. Boucher and Eileen MacLean (Juneau, Alaska: Alaska State Legislature, February 1990), 8; Alaska Department of Administration, History and Current Management of State Provided Television Service, 1.

118. Duncan, 354.

119. Alaska Department of Administration, History and Current Management of State Provided Television Service, 1.

120. A. G. Hiebert, letter to Ms. Joan A. Kasson, Office of Management and Budget, State of Alaska, In A Report to the Alaska Legislature in Response to Intent Language Regarding Telecommunications in the FY 88 Operating Budget, January 1988 (Juneau, Alaska: State of Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Telecommunications, 1988), Appendix O.

121. Alaska Department of Administration, History and Current Management of State Provided Television Service, 1.

122. Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, "Village Selection Listings, July 1977," Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 1977, 1.

123. Alaska Department of Administration, 1.

124. Ibid.

125. Duncan, 355.

126. Alaska Department of Administration, 3.

127. Ibid., 1.

128. Ibid.

129. Michael Porcaro, letter to Daniel Johnson, 7 March 1987.

130. Ibid.

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Porcaro, "Mini TV: The Case for Cassettes," 189.

135. Porcaro, letter to Daniel Johnson.
136. Dwight Clift, RATNET Operations Center, interview by author, 3 February 1987, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.
137. Federal Communications Commission, Report# 79-868 /15339, 4.
138. Alaska Office of the Governor, Telecommunications Task Force: Recommendations (Juneau: Office of the Governor, 1978), 72.
139. Alaska Department of Administration, 1.
140. The Canadian CBC Frontier Package and the current Inuit Broadcasting System come closest in comparison to Alaska's system.
141. Richard Rainery, State Sponsored Television in Alaska: Alternatives for Delivery and Distribution, (Juneau, Alaska: Rural Research Agency for the Alaska State Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee, 1984), 3.
142. Robert Decker, United Utilities Inc., interview by author, 12 January 1987, Unalakleet, Alaska, tape recording.
143. Personal observation by this writer formulated from various correspondences with Alaska DOA Telecom personnel, RATNET operations personnel, and Anchorage television affiliates during from 1986-1991.
144. Alaska Department of Administration, 2.
145. Alaska Department of Administration, 5.
146. John Morrone, deputy director, Alaska State Division of Telecommunications Operations, interview by author, 13 October 1986, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.
147. Henry Ivanoff, the Bering Straits Native Corporation representative to the RATNET council, served as the chairman of this council for many years and had much influence over the final program decisions made by RATNET. This writer had regular conversations with Mr. Ivanoff about RATNET while living in Unalakleet, Alaska.
148. Alaska Department of Administration. 2.
149. Personal observation while living in Unalakleet, Alaska and watching the RATNET and LEARNAlaska channels during the period of 1982-1985.

150. This writer had regular correspondence with Dan Houseberg, director of the facility in Kotzebue, while serving as coordinator for the Northwest Campus (UAF) media center in Nome, and personally watched many of their video productions.

151. Peter Monaghan, "In Alaska's Vastness, Higher Education Reaches Those Who Hunt and Fish to Live," The Chronicle of Higher Education 32 (May 1986): 1.

152. Ibid., 20.

153. Ibid.

154. Personal observation based on teaching experiences at Covenant High School, Unalakleet, Alaska, from 1982-1984.

155. Alaska Department of Administration, 2.

156. Cary Bolling, Media Specialist, Northwest Community College, interview by author, 1 November 1986, Nome, Alaska, tape recording.

157. Kyle Franks, "Flexibility in Distance Instruction," LEARN/Alaska Teleducator 1 (Fall 1984): 2.

158. This observation was made from analyzing RATNET programming, as well as discussions with Tony Ramirez, liaison for the RATNET board members in Anchorage.

159. Richard Taylor, "Communications and Alaska Natives," in Communications Issues of the 90's: Proceedings of the Chugach Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, October 5-6, 1990, by the Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1990), 13.

160. This assessment comes from the writer's personal viewing of LEARNAlaska programming from 1982-1985.

161. LEARNAlaska did utilize a number of program advisors who lived in the villages, but from this writer's viewpoint, it appears they were not effective in assisting L/A programmers devise schedules which in fact did meet the perceived needs of natives as formulated from their perspective.

162. Rainery, State Sponsored Television in Alaska, 4.

163. See O'Connel (1977) and Mody (1979)--both studies previously mentioned in chapter 2.

164. Alaska Department of Administration. 2.

165. Rainery, 1; Mike Davis, former Alaska state legislator, interview by author, 2 March 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

166. Rainery, 2.

167. Larry Pearson, "Center of Information Technology Report," In Communications Issues of the 90's: Proceedings of the Chugach Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, October 5-6, 1990, by the Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1990), 55; John R. Howe, TELEVISION IN RURAL ALASKA. A Discussion and Update of Findings and Recommendations by Dr. Norma Forbes. Alaska Humanities Forum Project #16-90, August 1, 1991 (Juneau, Alaska: Alaska Humanities Forum, 1991), 9.

168. Duncan, 235.

169. Robert Decker, interview by author.

170. John R. Howe, TELEVISION IN RURAL ALASKA. A discussion and Update of Findings and Recommendations by Dr. Norma Forbes: Alaska Humanities Forum Project #16-90 August 1, 1991, 6.

171. Alaska State Legislature, House, Committee on Telecommunications, Rural Alaska Television Network: A Report to the Legislature, appendix 2.

172. Larry Pearson, "Center for Information Technology Reports," In Finding Our Way in the Communication Age: Proceedings of the Chugach Conference in Anchorage Alaska, October 3-5, 1991, by the Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1991), 55.

173. While no extensive surveys of Eskimo ownership of stereo systems are available to the knowledge of this writer, the materials presented are gained from the experiences this writer had while conducting mass media surveys in eight Eskimo villages in the Bering Strait region (1987).

174. Information from this writer, who had access to cable radio and television while living in Nome, Alaska from 1984-1991.

175. Howe, 6.

CHAPTER 7

U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS ALONG THE BERING STRAIT AND BROADCAST COVERAGE: A SELECTED SYNOPSIS (1900-1989)

In the beginning of the 20th century, Eskimos from Chukotka and Alaska kept up their traditional ties, with open travel back and forth, which included among other activities, general visiting and trading, arranged marriages, seasonal sharing of meat (bearded seal, walrus, beluga, bowheads, polar bear), and cultural festivities. Children born in Chukotka often moved with their families to the Diomedes, St. Lawrence Island, and vice versa. There was little government regulation in a number of villages, as Chukotka, though under nominal czarist control, was effectively under the influence of American trading activities.

1924 marked the Soviet consolidation over Chukotka, some seven years after the revolution began in St. Petersburg. There was little curtailment of travel across the strait by Soviet authorities, but they were quick to suspend the activities of American traders based in Nome. The Soviets set up trading posts in all native settlements, but Eskimos continued their trading with the Alaskans. The first permanent Russian settlement was established in Lavrentia in 1928.¹

During the next decade, Eskimos continued to travel somewhat freely back and forth (though checked at the border by officials), but the frequency of visits decreased. Travel from Gambell to Chaplino took roughly 24 hours (primarily in June or July), and groups of 25-35 people often went by motorized skin boats to other

settlements like Uelen, Dezhnev, Naukon, and others on the coast. The people had family gatherings, exchanged gifts, sold seal and walrus skins, sable, raw hides, and other native crafts, while the Alaskans traded these items at Soviet trading posts for consumer goods (flour, sugar, tobacco, clothing, etc.). Eskimos from both sides took up temporary residence in villages on the opposite coast often for one to two years before going back.²

In the 1930s, the Soviet administration began closing some Eskimo villages in Chukotka and forced many natives to relocate to Chaplino, Siriniki, and the new settlements of Wrangel and Uelkal.³ In 1937, Provideniya, a new supply port near the Eskimo village of Uriliki on Providence Bay was established, located 110 kilometers from Gambell, and 350 kilometers from Nome. From this spot, the Soviets constructed an administrative and logistical center which could oversee political control of the district, while supplying the region with the materials and personnel to develop this portion of Chukotka.⁴

U.S.-Soviet Control Concerns in the Bering Strait

Soviet border anxieties developed anew during the years of 1936 through 1938. Coinciding with this period of Stalin's brutal repressions and the operations of *gulag* camps throughout Magadan Oblast (in which millions of Soviet citizens were sent to and died) the oblast's southern border was to be tightly guarded in order to maintain secrecy. One event which exacerbated tensions in the northern area (from the Soviet perspective), was the activity of

a Catholic missionary--and sole caucasian--living on Little Diomedede. Father Tom Cunningham, a Jesuit priest, regularly visited Eskimos on Big Diomedede. Initial Soviet reprimands for prosyletizing the Chukotkan natives went unheeded, and Cunningham, during a visit to Big Diomedede, was seized at gunpoint by Soviet officers. He escaped by running across the ice to Little Diomedede, whereafter the Soviet government set a bounty of 1000 rubles for his capture. Consequently, they immediately imposed the first set of travel restrictions upon the Bering Strait. This prompted future requests by the Soviet Foreign Ministry to clarify border travel regulations with Washington.⁵

On February 7, 1938, the Ambassador of the USSR to the U.S. delivered a memorandum to the U.S. Secretary of State reflecting the desire of the Soviet government to establish procedures governing visits to the Chukotka territory by Alaskan Eskimos from St. Lawrence Island and Little Diomedede. The Soviet Foreign Ministry provided a statement defining acceptable conditions and procedures for visits and the overall regulation of traffic across the border.⁶

On March 6, the Secretary of State acknowledged the Ambassador's memo, and stated that the U.S. was in accord with the Soviet's description of procedures for supervising Eskimo visits to Chukotka. Teachers on Little Diomedede and St. Lawrence were designated as government agents by Washington and given responsibility to oversee travel by Eskimos to Chukotka via their issuance of documents for presentation to Soviet authorities stationed at various

Eskimo villages.'

In a final exchange of protocols, the Soviet ambassador acknowledged the American reply and suggested that the agreed procedures be put into effect on April 18, 1938. The number of Alaskan Eskimos allowed into Chukotka was set at 100 (maximum) per year, and their rights of stay were limited to three months. Import-export regulations were established, primarily dealing with guns, alcohol, objects of religious worship, currency, and printed matter. Despite the new travel regulations, visitation continued as previously, though Eskimos were now more aware of the delicate nature of government relations between the two countries.'

Cooperation along the Border: World War II

At the outbreak of World War II, the American government signed the "Lend Lease" agreement with Stalin, for supplying the Soviets with military aircraft. 7308 planes were flown from U.S. factories to the western front via Alaska and the Far East. Soviet pilots flew the planes from Nome across the strait to Chukotka (Uelkal to Anadyr or Provideniya to Uriliki) and beyond through Siberia to the front lines in Europe.'

In 1943, U.S. Vice President Henry Wallace visited the Soviet Far East, flying from Alaska to Uelkal (in the Chukotski District), then on to Magadan and Yakutsk.¹⁰ Relations between the governments were somewhat cordial along the strait during the Lend Lease period, though there was little travel at this stage by Eskimos back and forth, and practically no presence by U.S. military personnel

(for coordination of flight activities) in Chukotka. Chukotka natives faced extreme shortages of supplies during the war, contributing the bulk of their reindeer herds to feed Soviet troops on the western front, and the Alaskans were limited in their ability to assist them.¹¹

Beginning of the Cold War and the Closure of the Border

The joyous mood of victory by Alaskans and Chukotkans at the war's end was short-lived as Soviet occupation forces instituted control over eastern Europe, and Winston Churchill announced the erection of an "Iron Curtain" separating a world between Soviet and American spheres of political and military influence.

In the summer of 1946, St. Lawrence Island Eskimos undertook their last visit to Chaplino by skin boat. Ora Gologregen, who would return to Provideniya 41 years later was on the boat. During August of the next year (1947), the last group of Chukotkan Eskimos visited St. Lawrence and Little Diomed. Some Eskimos on Big Diomed relocated to Little Diomed the same summer. This would be the last time Eskimos could freely travel across the Bering Strait. During the winter of 1948, Naukonski (Yupik) and Diomed (Inupiat) Eskimos on Ratmanoff were forced off the island and relocated to Naukon on the Chukotka coast.¹²

During the spring of 1948, the Soviet blockade of Berlin commenced. The American-led "Berlin Airlift" began, and a general disintegration of government relations between the U.S. and USSR resulted. Under the pretext of a Soviet intrusion and spying act-

ivities into Alaska via the Bering Strait, FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover lobbied to close the border, noting on March 22, 1948, that "U.S. national security interests should outweigh the interests of local Eskimos." Hoover felt that Eskimos themselves could be suspected of spying activities, and used this reason as one of the pretexts for reducing Soviet influence in the region.¹³

After an exchange of diplomatic messages between the two sides, the Soviet ambassador on May 29, 1948, notified Washington that the 1938 agreement on cross-border traffic by Eskimos was terminated, and the Americans acknowledged the response.¹⁴

Between the days of June 16-17, 1948, the American State Department and Soviet Foreign Ministry exchanged final diplomatic messages confirming each side's intentions declaring the earlier border agreement null and void. From this date, the official Soviet policy of total closure along the strait began, while the State Department eventually sought rapproachment on the issue for the benefit of the Alaskans.¹⁵

Word spread slowly from Washington to Nome and the outlying villages along western Alaska via bush telegraph that the Soviets would no longer permit travel to Chukotka. During that month, with the waters of the Bering Sea at its best for boat travel, 32 Eskimos from Little Diomedede got in their umiaks to travel over to Big Diomedede, unaware of the Soviet's declaration of a closed border. The entire party was arrested by a Soviet border patrol and were imprisoned, being interrogated for 52 days. The Eskimos were accused by the Soviets of being American spies. Forced to sleep on

the rocks and suffering other ill-treatment, the Diomeders were finally released, with two perishing from malnutrition. Eskimos on both sides now understood the implications of the political barrier forced upon them, and life along the Bering Strait was interrupted as never before thought possible by these now-separated peoples.¹⁶

Activities Along the Sealed Border (1950s-1970s)

Ten years passed and there was no hint of cross-border activity. Soviet border guards enforced travel restrictions by maintaining posts along the coast and regulating Eskimo activities at coastal settlements. Big Diomede became a forward Soviet observation base within viewing distance of Alaskans on Little Diomede. Clandestine meetings by Eskimos on the ice were reported during various winters, but such meetings were not confirmed by Eskimo leaders in New Chaplino.¹⁷

In the late 1950s, the Soviets began a series of forced relocations of Eskimo settlements along the Chukotka coast nearest Alaska, a prevention measure aimed at discouraging potential travel on the ocean: Naukon was closed, with Eskimos sent to Lavrentia, as well as Penakwel (closed in the 1960s), and Nunamya (closed in the 1970s). As a result, the Naukonski Eskimo group, with no village of their own, now lived as a minority group among Russians and Chukchi, with their population approximately 400.¹⁸

In 1958, Old Chaplino was moved to the new site of New Chaplino. The Soviets gave as reasons for the move, poor living con-

ditions at the old site, and the ability of improved provision of supplies and housing at the new site (located 18 miles from Provideniya). Numerous elderly Eskimos committed suicide in protest of the forced move.¹⁹

During this decade (1950s), the CPSU implemented the policy of forced boarding of Eskimo children into Russian language schools built in every settlement in Chukotka. This action was part of an overall strategy to provide indigenous peoples with the opportunity to become further educated and integrated into the sphere of Soviet society. Many Eskimos viewed this as a catastrophic event which began dismantling the integrity of the Eskimo culture.²⁰

Radio in 1960

With the beginning of 1960, Cold War tensions between the two countries reached a peak and western Alaska was seen as a first strike area by potentially hostile Soviet forces. The initiation of broadcasting by KICV in April commenced as the Alaska military force was in a heightened state of alert, and the station devoted news time to covering the overall crisis with the Soviets, even while Soviet bombers flew along the western Alaska coastline on maneuvers. Soviet radio from Moscow increased their English language programming (propaganda) efforts directed to the American west coast, and these signals were noticeable in Nome. Soviet signals were beamed from central transmitters, though the Anadyr studios may have actively produced propaganda materials for broadcast during this crisis period as well.²¹

KICY, via its AP news reports, certainly disseminated the American position in the minds of those Soviet listeners in Chukotka who could understand the broadcasts, though the station had a policy to simply air news and did not labor to broadcast overtly propagandistic material. The local AFRS station served this purpose better until the Bering Sea Hotel fire put it out of commission in late 1960.²²

Both Anadyr and Nome would be effective broadcast instruments for the advocacy of national policy via their news operations, yet each remained isolated within the confines of the closed border going about their daily programming totally unaware of each other or their roles in the distribution of information to the other side of the strait. The stations would continue to relay news from Moscow or Washington during the ebb and flow of events throughout the decade, with each taking different positions, whether it be on the Cuban missile crisis, the Vietnam War, Soviet hegemony in eastern Europe, or the hundreds of other occurrences affecting the Soviet-American relationship. Their radio reports remained the primary source of news for the Eskimos on each side, and the status quo of radio relations across the strait would continue for almost three more decades.

The Decade of the 1960s

During the sixties, the border effectively remained closed, though undocumented contacts between Eskimos reportedly took place. Little Diomedes reported covert fraternization with border guards

stationed on Ratmanov (Big Diomede). An Alaska National Guard intelligence officer, Sgt. Renard Nichols, noted that Soviet guards periodically walked 4 kilometers across the ice to drink alcohol with Diomeders. This activity stopped in the latter 1970s when Little Diomede became a "dry" village. Vietnam and other areas of American-Soviet confrontation hampered efforts to open the border and diplomatic activity on the issue was practically nil.²³

U.S.-Soviet Detente in the 1970s

The 1970s were characterized by the U.S.-Soviet period of detente, but such a relaxation in political tensions did not have any impact on the Bering Strait. There was a renewal of interest on Diomede and St. Lawrence Island for reestablishing contact with Chukotkans, but with no concrete results. According to Krauss, the primary beneficiary of improved ties during this period was in joint academic and scientific involvement.²⁴ Independently of each other, development of native language programs in schools on St. Lawrence, Chaplino, Siriniki, and other villages began, and Eskimo programming from Anadyr promoted these language efforts. Eskimos on both sides had access to Enmenkow's broadcasts, and residents on St. Lawrence became active listeners. KICY, KNOM, and KOTZ continued with their native language features, which provided additional language support for those Chukotkan natives who could hear the broadcasts.

Soviet writer Yuri Rithue, a Chukchi, embarked upon his first in a series of visits to western Alaska, and published reports

which provided Soviet press and Chukotkan Eskimos with information about their relatives and living conditions in Alaska. Despite this new source about life in Alaska (viewed by many as propagandistic and presenting an overall negative impression of Alaska), his reporting provided a break in the communication isolation of Chukotka. Otherwise, there were no documented reports of contact between Eskimos during the early 1970s.²⁵

Despite the status quo of inactivity in the region, President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev's meetings provided a window of opportunity for Alaskans to penetrate the Far East, though not in the Bering Strait. Between 1970 and 1972, Alaska Airlines was given Soviet permission to offer flights from Anchorage to Khabarovsk (in cooperation with Aeroflot), hoping to develop new tourist routes while capitalizing on the momentary easing of relations during the detente period. The flights were not profitable and Alaska Airlines discontinued the route.²⁶

In 1975, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin, visited Nome, announcing that Soviet policy required that relations between the superpowers would have to improve generally before Eskimo visits could occur. The primary activity along the Bering Strait involving both sides was in connection with military operations, as Soviet and American air forces engaged in surveillance activities. Eskimos on St. Lawrence began finding evidence of clandestine Soviet military landings on the island, while American F-15 fighter planes scrambled from the Galena Air Force Base, regularly intercepted Soviet aircraft cruising along the western

Alaskan coastline.²⁷

Noting new developments in Eskimo political activity, 1977 saw the creation of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), an organization representing Eskimos from Alaska, Canada, and Greenland for the purpose of promoting Eskimo political, economic, environmental, social, and cultural goals across the circumpolar North. Many Eskimos hoped that the ICC would eventually include representatives from their brethren in Chukotka.²⁸

Illegal Crossings Across the Border

During the late 1970s, numerous attempts by non-native individuals to cross the strait at the Diomedes were reported in the Alaskan press, often by people seeking defection to the USSR. These activities were not reported in the Chukotka media. People with histories of mental problems or thrill seekers characterized this group, but Eskimos did not take part in these exploits. Alaska National Guard sources reported people attempting to cross over by walking on the ice, or on the water via rubber rafts, bathtubs, or small boats.²⁹

A Frenchman, Arnoud de Rosnay, windsurfed 100 kilometers from the village of Wales (Alaska), to East Cape, Chukotka in 1979. Soviet border guards frequently arranged returns of these individuals to American officials on the rocks of Little Diomede.³⁰

The New Era of U.S.-Soviet Hostilities

In 1979, relations between the superpowers deteriorated as the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Clandestine Soviet military in-

cursions continued to take place in the Bering Strait, and a Soviet soldier was found dead inside the decommissioned U.S. Air Force forward listening post at Northeast Cape, St. Lawrence Island.³¹

One year later, the new decade began with the inauguration of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States. The Reagan era was hailed in Alaska while silence continued across the strait. The President declared the Soviet Union as "being the focus of evil in our world," and American-Soviet relations progressively worsened. The Bering Strait remained closed and military activity on both sides intensified. Soviet aircraft increased their daily patrols near U.S. airspace, and interceptions by U.S. Air Force fighters became regular news items in radio broadcasts from Nome and Kotzebue.³²

In 1981, former Alaska governor Wally Hickel solicited an invitation to visit the Soviet Far East from Ambassador Dobrynin, and traveled from Moscow to Yakutsk. Hickel subsequently reemerged as a major proponent of Soviet-American ties in the region, representing both business and state government, yet his visit made no impact on the current state of relations at the time.³³

In October 1982, Eskimo soldiers from the Alaska National Guard reported sighting Soviet army *Spetznaz* (special forces) commandos emerging from the water on the coast of St. Lawrence Island. The reports made headlines in the Alaskan press and the state's National Guard went on heightened alert.³⁴

On the political side, in July 1983, the ICC approved a resolution from their General Assembly calling for Soviet Inuit par-

ticipation with the organization. The move sought to employ pressure on the Soviet government in the effort to open up ties with these Eskimos, but the Kremlin seemingly ignored it.³⁵

In September of that year, a Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 departing from Anchorage strayed into Soviet airspace along the Bering Sea and was shot down near Sakhalin Island. Soviet military installations went on heightened alert as a diplomatic war of words between Moscow and Washington ensued.

Twelve months later in 1984, an Alaskan vessel, the Homer-based Frieda K, was seized by USSR border patrols after accidentally entering restricted waters near Big Diomede. The boat was towed by a Soviet warship into Provideniya, and the crew was interrogated by KGB officers for one week. Major news coverage of the event began in the Alaskan and lower 48 press, with KICY and KNOM providing much of the information to press services. Soviet-American relations ebbed to another low point during this period, and upon the crew's release, the Soviets give stern warnings "never to enter Soviet waters again."³⁶

In October of that year, a controversy over the historic Wrangell Island ownership dispute between the U.S. and USSR reappeared in the Alaskan Press. The island--first discovered by English explorers north of the Bering Strait, later occupied by American traders prior to the Russian Revolution, and now settled by Chukotkan Eskimos originally from the Providenski region--was the subject of press reports based on erroneous information. U.S. Senator Ted Stevens (Alaska) traveled to Nome, and on a radio

interview broadcast by KICY, declared the island ownership controversy a dead issue, noting the U.S. government had long-recognized its status within the USSR.³⁷

The Emergence of Gorbachev

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev emerged as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (CPSU). A new period of Soviet societal change, characterized by the now-famous slogans *glasnost* and *perestroika* began, marking a new phase in Soviet-American relations. While Gorbachev launched his campaign to save the USSR from internal collapse, his political gestures to Washington sought to convince the White House that the Soviets were ready to become viable partners in cooperation with the West.

Within a short period, a relaxation of hostilities and expansion of scientific, educational and cultural exchanges in European Russia occurred. The first Reagan and Gorbachev summit met in Geneva, opening up hopes for Bering Strait Eskimos that the border could eventually open up.

Events in the Bering Strait: 1986

In the summer of 1986, the Inuit Circumpolar Elders Conference affirmed resolutions calling on the U.S. and USSR to extend to Inuit from both countries opportunities to reestablish personal links and family ties.³⁸ With non-governmental status recognized by the United Nations, the ICC embarked on new efforts to include their Soviet relatives in activities which promoted Inuit participation in environmental and political decision making in the

region.

Officials from the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs, representing Canadian Inuit, visited Siriniki, and in July, a Naukonski dance troupe from Lavrentia performed at the Asevic Festival in Greenland.³⁹

During the fall of 1986, the Alaska Performing Artists for Peace (APAP) conducted a musical concert tour of the USSR. Included in the group were residents of St. Lawrence Island who eventually made contact with Yupik Eskimo students from Chukotka studying in Leningrad. Their meeting represented the first direct contact between the separated Eskimos in many years.⁴⁰

In November 1986, Nome resident Jim Stimpfle, sent off a weather balloon from the shore of the Bering Sea toward Chukotka, in a symbolic gesture marking a new stage of efforts by Alaskans to open up the Bering Strait. The balloon--addressed to Soviets on the other shore--containing greetings and gifts from the people of Nome, never made its destination, but generated the start of focused state and national media coverage regarding Alaska-Soviet relations. There was no broadcast activity from Anadyr or Magadan concerning border relations at this time.

Within the next few months, residents of Little Diomed--in cooperation with Stimpfle--constructed a large sign with the words *MIR* (meaning "peace" in Russian) and installed it on the rocks facing Big Diomed, in direct view of the Soviet border guard's observation post. As a gesture of friendly intentions, the Diomeders hoped for some response from the border guards but receive

none. Soon after its construction, however, a photograph of the sign--as taken by border guards--appeared on the front page of the national newspaper PRAVDA. Soviet readers learned of Alaskan desires for cooperation in the strait, and soon, political gestures by the Soviets toward the American administration made the possibility of an open border seem feasible. Events in the following year would accelerate movement toward political cooperation between the two governments.⁴¹

Events in 1987

During the spring of 1987, Alaska Governor Steve Cowper affirmed the vision set by local Nome peace activists and quickly enlisted his Office of International Trade for the task of starting official negotiations with the State Department and Soviet Foreign Ministry offices. The response was directed toward advancing potential cultural, scientific, and trade relations between Alaska and the Soviet Far East. In the meantime, general interest across Alaska developed, and a campaign involving government, academic, business, cultural, and grassroots supporters ensued.

The City of Nome became a focal point for logistical activities dealing with the border issue, and the Nome Chamber of Commerce formed its "Committee for Cooperation, Commerce, and Peace" (CCCCP) to further lobbying efforts at the state, federal, and international level. Native groups from the King Island Eskimo community, St. Lawrence Island, and Little Diomedes became involved in this political lobbying process as well, though they remained

dependent on the local and state organizers to coordinate the lobbying.

Initial Soviet-American Activities in the Region

General Secretary Gorbachev set the tone of future cooperation in the Arctic with a speech made during this year in the northern Soviet city of Murmansk, stating:

The potential of modern civilization permits the Arctic to be made hospitable for the good of the national economic and other human interests of the states adjacent to the Arctic and of Europe and the whole of the international community... May the planet's northern regions, the Arctic, become a zone of peace...⁴²

Progress in Alaska-Soviet scientific ventures was achieved in 1987 with the development of the Alaska Siberia Medical Research Exchange, a joint project initiated by Dr. Ted Mala, of the University of Alaska-Anchorage, and representatives from the USSR Academy of Science, based in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk. The project sought to provide an exchange of medical knowledge on conditions in the far North, and later in the year, agreements were signed making this an ongoing program. Other U.S.-Soviet scientific ventures began operations in the Bering Sea, primarily in oceanographic studies dealing with polar bear and marine mammal migration.⁴³

In June, former World War II pilot and U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Thomas J. Watson Jr.--flying his small plane on a world tour--obtained permission to fly through Chukotka and across the strait to Alaska. His flight, using a route flown during the wartime Lend Lease program, was successful and generated publicity in support of promoting the border opening.⁴⁴

In August, following two years of negotiations, Lynn Cox, a long distance swimmer from California who set a record for the fastest swim across the English Channel, received permission from Soviet authorities in Moscow to swim between Little and Big Diomedes. In conjunction with scientists conducting studies on hypothermia, Cox's proposed attempt sought to merge scientific research with an experiment in goodwill between the two superpowers, and represented a historic opportunity for local Diomeders to legally travel across the water and seek information about relatives on the other side.⁴⁵

On August 7, accompanied by a rubber raft and walrus skin umiak with scientists, Eskimos, and Stimpfle on board, Cox successfully swam the 4 kilometer border in 39 degree fahrenheit waters to an awaiting Soviet delegation on Big Diomedes. The Soviets, who offered the Americans champagne and caviar on the island's rocky shore, also brought from the mainland two Naukonski Eskimos for the celebration.⁴⁶ They met with Diomeders for a short time, seeking information about lost relatives, but because of language differences (Naukonski and Inupiaq) communication could only be achieved by talking back to one man on Diomedes via CB radio who knew both dialects and provided translation.⁴⁷

Regional radio and television coverage of the event was later beamed across the state and was picked up by the national television networks. Cox was soon congratulated by General Secretary Gorbachev and the event stirred Alaskan peace promoters. Magadan-based radio and television correspondents delivered reports to

regional and central radio (as well as central TV in Moscow), along with print journalists from TASS (based in Moscow), marking the beginning of Soviet broadcast organization interest in exploring the development of relations with Alaska.⁴⁸

In early September, a Soviet stern trawler, the Zakharova, sailed up to the three mile limit off Nome to pick up a group of American biologists. The expedition hugged the western Alaska coastline on their way to study walrus and bearded seals in the Chukchi Sea.⁴⁹ Though the port call was unusual for Nome, Soviet vessels had by this year been making regular calls to Alaskan ports in the southeast and Aleutians for service and resupply. While the Soviets were granted docking permission in Alaska, the Chukotka coast remained off limits to American vessels, as had been the situation for the last sixty years.

Americans penetrate the Chukotka border

On September 19, a new page in the history of Alaska-Soviet relations was written when the NOAA Surveyor (a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ship), finished a resupply stop in Nome and headed for the Soviet port of Provideniya. The Surveyor, based in Seattle, was originally on its way to Barrow in connection with an ice study project, when the U.S. State Department gave word that the Soviets had granted the vessel permission to visit this normally closed port in a goodwill gesture. The primary mission of this diversion to Chukotka was to test Provideniya's port facilities for logistical and resupply purposes, and was a prelude to

other American shipping activities in the region, especially those involved with joint U.S.-Soviet fishery projects in the Bering Sea.⁵⁰

Before leaving Nome, Captain Walter Forester took on food, gifts, and messages from Eskimos and city leaders to give to the residents and natives living on the Bay of Providence, named by English sea captain Sir Thomas Moore nearly two hundred years before.⁵¹

Crossing the international dateline and the Soviet border on the morning of the 21st, the Surveyor was soon trailed by Soviet naval vessels and then guided into the port, marking the beginning of a two day visit. The vessel was kept under tight surveillance by military and border guard personnel, and after a ship inspection by authorities, the crew was allowed off the vessel in groups of 20 each. A reception hosted by Provideniya Mayor Oleg Kulinkin was held in the city hall, and welcoming speeches were made by Soviet officials, specifically dealing with peace, friendship, and nuclear disarmament. Captain Forrester reciprocated with a diplomatic speech, and then a question and answer session took place. The crew was given a tour of selected city sites and then hosted to dinner. During their stay, authorities kept citizens on the street away from the crew, closely guarding the Americans at all times.⁵²

The visit ended with a party hosted on board the Surveyor, and the Soviets bused in an Eskimo dance group from New Chaplino which promptly put on a long display of dancing and celebration in the ship's mess hall. During the dancing--which the crew described

as the best experience during the visit--Eskimos danced the "Raven Dance" and others in the same manner performed by their relatives on St. Lawrence Island. The captain, crew, and expedition members joined the Chaplino group during the last dance, followed by the handing out of gifts from Eskimos of Nome, which included a tape recorder and cassette tapes of Eskimo music as performed by the King Island Dancers.⁵³

The crew, on behalf of Alaskan Eskimos, raised questions with officials concerning visitation rights for Eskimos, though the Soviets did not have a ready response to their inquiries. Before the ship departed, a letter was handed to Captain Forrester by Mayor Kulinkin, addressed to the people of Nome. Containing greetings, as well as discussing various concerns dealing with past mistrust between the two governments, the Mayor wrote:

People of Nome, Let us be friends. Let us work together and trade together. Let us pool our resources so that we can have peace on earth. Why shouldn't the American city of Nome and Provideniya become sister cities.⁵⁴

Upon their return to Nome, the Surveyor visit sparked massive interest across the state and was the top story in radio and TV broadcasts. The captain was invited to present the results of the visit to a town meeting, where he informed Nome residents and Eskimo elders about Provideniya and the Chaplino Eskimos. Video footage of the Chaplino dancers was shown, offering St. Lawrence Eskimos in Nome the first opportunity to see the faces of those who lived directly across from Gambell. The video proved that Chaplino's traditional dances and songs were the exact ones danced by

the Alaskans, and after viewing, native leaders became more hopeful about the possibilities for an eventual reunion.

After delivering Kulinkin's message, city planners and activists took the letter and began a massive distribution of its contents to various state, congressional, White House, and Soviet Foreign Ministry officials. Copies of the letter and the Surveyor video emerged in numerous television news programs updating the Soviet border story. Magadan and Anadyr Radio broadcast reports from their correspondents in Provideniya, but there was no coverage on television.⁵⁵

Kulinkin's letter was a concrete indication of willingness by the Soviet side to provide access to Chukotka, and a flurry of activities on both sides began in the fall of 1987. With the Surveyor visit setting a precedent in Soviet policy affecting border control along the strait, Alaskans began asking themselves what would be the next move in opening up the region.

In October, Jim Stimpfle began promoting the idea of a flight from Nome to Provideniya as a way of officially declaring the border open, while tearing down the last vestiges of what had become known as an "Ice Curtain" between the nations. Armed with the knowledge that Provideniya residents were seeking to cooperate with the town, and focusing on the issue of the reestablishment of Eskimo ties, Stimpfle was effective in convincing various individuals and groups (as well as Alaska's congressional delegation and U.S. State Department--which supported tourism development), that it was only a matter of time before such a flight could take place. As

a result, numerous tourism firms began petitioning Soviet tourist agencies and officials with a variety of travel proposals.⁵⁶

Soviet authorities in Moscow began hearing about the Alaskan grassroots initiative, and official interest was growing, especially after the signing ceremonies in Anchorage of the prior-mentioned "Alaska Siberia Medical Research Exchange" project. To celebrate this signing and add attention to the growing Alaskan campaign for Eskimo reunification, Dr. Mala (himself half-Eskimo and half-Russian) and three Soviet colleagues attempted to fly from Nome to Little Diomede, hoping to cross Soviet airspace in order to circle around Big Diomede.

The flight (which took place in November) began with a send-off by Eskimo elders at the Nome airport, while local flight planners attempted to contact Soviet air controllers in Provideniya for permission to fly over Big Diomede. As the scientists flew toward the Diomedes, last minute coordination between the pilot of the Nome-based Bering Air's Cessna 120 plane and the Soviet border control on Big Diomede was foiled by poor radio communication, preventing the group from entering Soviet airspace at the last minute. The flight, however, gained national media exposure, while at the same time cementing a new cooperative scientific relationship.⁵⁷

Broadcast Activities (1987)

American broadcast media on the local, statewide, and national level, as well as foreign broadcasters, took on the story with great interest, as it represented a new twist in the overall thaw-

ing of relations between the superpowers. The theme of Eskimo reunification filtered through much of the reporting and Nome became a focal point for journalists who covered the story.

On a local basis, KICY continued their daily Russian religious programming as well as regular news features on the progress of relations in the strait. KNOM began a weekly 10 minute radio broadcast in Russian, produced by Therese Horvath--a Georgetown University graduate majoring in Soviet Studies--which also featured the latest developments in the campaign. Horvath directed the "Radio Bridge to Chukotka" program, specifically targeting listeners in Provideniya and other villages along the Chukotka coast, representing KNOM's first foray into Russian broadcasting. KNOM also developed a daily program called "Let's Learn Russian," which taught simple vocabulary to listeners.

In addition, KNOM hired Tim Gologregen, an Eskimo elder from St. Lawrence Island living in Nome, to begin Siberian Yupik news broadcasts which communicated information to Eskimos on the island. KNOM had no idea about the reception of their signal in Chukotka, but kept the Russian and Yupik programming in place.

In Kotzebue, KOTZ provided updates on the region's Soviet activities, and the Alaska Public Radio Network produced occasional reports highlighting the progress and activities of Alaskans involved in the venture.

Soviet radio broadcasts from Anadyr and Magadan during this period after the Surveyor was in a lull, primarily due to lack of information from their own government officials in Moscow in charge

of border negotiations. Regional Soviet media at the time had no contact with Alaskan organizers, though information about Alaska was provided to Anadyr radio by writer Yuri Rytheu, who traveled through the state in the fall of 1987, with Dixie Belcher of the APAP group. Radio journalists from Magadan secured information from published reports by the newspaper Magadanskaya Pravda, the main press organ of the regional CPSU, which received updates from Moscow.⁵⁸

General interest, as sparked by the Cox swim and "Surveyor" visit was maintained by the Eskimo Radio Department in Anadyr, and information was provided to them via Zoya Ivanova--one of the Eskimos brought to Big Diomedes and sister to Eskimo radio reporter Nina Enmenkow. Anadyr's Provideniya correspondent, Olga Karablova, was assigned to keeping track of local developments, but regular (sustained) radio coverage would wait until after the official border opening.⁵⁹

In the meantime, Alaska television stations KIMO, KTUU, and KTVA (Anchorage) began a series of reports on the progress of negotiations, as spotlights on those who were most involved in the process. Todd Pottinger of KTUU and Laura Bliss of KIMO took the lead in producing stories about the border developments and these were aired locally and across Alaska via the State of Alaska Satellite Television Project Network (RATNET). On various occasions, the Anchorage stations provided video feeds to their network headquarters in New York, though coverage was scant on the networks during this period of time.⁶⁰

From Nome, video reports covering various aspects of the project were produced and distributed by the University of Alaska Fairbank's Northwest Campus Media Center to various broadcast organizations across the state and country. The Media Center provided logistical support for the many press operatives coming to western Alaska during this period.⁶¹

International broadcasters took interest in the border story, and film crews from NHK (Japan), ARD (West Germany), Hungarian Television, and others descended on Nome for their reporting. Given the historic changes that were brewing in Europe, the Alaskan-Soviet story provided a compelling context for international television to compare the overall change in atmosphere between East and West.

The most notable television activity during the early half of 1987, was conducted by a Japanese film crew from NHK who were developing a multiserial documentary entitled "The Arctic." Gaining entry into Chukotka before other western media, the NHK crew filmed interviews with Soviet officials in Anadyr and Provideniya before travelling up to New Chaplino, where the Eskimos of that village had assembled for a town meeting. At this meeting, the NHK crew took interviews from Eskimo elders who specifically mentioned the names of relatives they thought still alive on St. Lawrence Island. Upon leaving the USSR, the NHK producer and cameraman travelled to Gambell, where they replayed the tape at a community hall to an expectant audience. For the first time in forty years, many St. Lawrence Islanders could look into a television screen and see

family members from Chaplino mentioning their names, asking questions, and making pleas to convince the authorities to permit a reunion across the water.⁶²

The NHK crew provided an important information link to activists in Nome and the state who were eager for general information about the situation in Chukotka, since to that point of time, no Americans were yet allowed to travel to the Soviet Far East.⁶³ Film crews from German state television (ARD) compiled reports on site at Magadan, Anchorage, and Nome in updating the German television audience about Soviet-American relations in the region.

In conjunction with activities calling for a "Friendship Flight," this writer first proposed in late 1987, a televised town meeting via satellite if the visit could be authorized. The idea was to allow for residents across Alaska and Magadan Oblast to view the historic meeting, since only a few would actually be able to be on hand to personally witness the event.⁶⁴ The idea was relayed to Alaskan broadcasters who promoted it, and was taken up by Alascom, Inc., the state's telecommunications carrier.⁶⁵

Ken Schaeffer, of the New York-based firm Orbita Communications (which organized prior televised U.S.-Soviet spacebridges), began discussions in Moscow with Gosteleradio on behalf of the Nome organizers. Schaeffer presented video reports produced by this writer concerning a "Bering Spacebridge" idea to Soviet TV chiefs Leonid Zolotarevski and Henrikas Yushkiavitshus, who had cooperated with Schaeffer on previous Moscow-Washington linkups.

Committed to the project with the view of gaining entry into

the emerging Soviet telecom systems market, Alascom subsequently assigned their vice president, Lee Wareham (who worked with this writer) to negotiate with the Soviet Ministry of Telecommunications in Moscow for authorization, in expectation of the flight's ultimate approval. As telecommunications would play a vital role in any future relationship between the countries, Alascom had much to gain from their subsidization of the town meeting concept. It would be up to the Soviets to approve the idea, however.⁶⁶

Diplomatic movement on the issue

Far away from the strait in Moscow and Washington, important developments took place on the diplomatic front which improved the chances for a break in border tensions. President Reagan began a series of positive overtures in support of new relations with the USSR, which prompted a summit meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev in December 1987. Gorbachev, during his visit to Washington, publicly stated:

The Soviet Union will be a ready partner for the new administration of George Bush--without long pauses and retreats--to continue the dialogue in the spirit of realism, openness, and goodwill.⁶⁷

He also called for a comprehensive international plan to protect the Arctic environment and to develop cultural links among the region's indigenous peoples. These statements provided ample opportunity for Washington and Moscow to develop the new political strategies and cooperation which would be required between them to effect its realization. In addition, Reagan and Gorbachev discussed Alaska-Soviet Far East relations, including open travel, trade,

and communications, which resulted in a U.S. government call for new proposals for Far East cultural and commercial ventures.⁶⁸

U.S. Senators Frank Murkowski and Ted Stevens, responding to constituent requests from western Alaska, began concentrated lobbying in Washington to promote the idea to federal and Soviet diplomatic offices.

The American State Department's Soviet desk began communicating with Stimpfle and the Alaska Governor's Office concerning developments in the region, and played a role in providing information about the Alaskan activities to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. In late December, former Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, wrote to former Alaska Governor Walter Hickel stating his hope that "ties between Alaska and Siberia will gradually develop to the benefit of both countries and those coldest places of our two countries could become the partners in the warmest relationships."⁶⁹

Border Developments: 1988

On January 12, after discussing flight proposals with Mr. Stimpfle, Alaska Airlines filed an application with the U.S. Department of Transportation for a certificate to operate scheduled air service between Nome and Provideniya. The airline agreed to provide a plane free of charge should Alaskan organizers succeed in gaining permission to fly to Provideniya, and understood their role as forging new transportation links to the USSR. The action required an amendment to the Bilateral Civil Aviation Agreement between the U.S. and USSR in extending the point of entry to Prov-

ideniya, and it would take several months of negotiations to conclude it.⁷⁰

In February, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze signed an agreement permitting the U.S. fishing industry first-time access to Soviet economic zones, including the Bering Sea.⁷¹

After a four month period of silence from Provideniya following the Surveyor visit, Mayor Oleg Kulinkin responded to a letter sent earlier by Stimpfle, stating his support of ongoing contacts, as well as the town's interest in sponsoring the Friendship Flight. Kulinkin raised questions about trips by Eskimos to visit their Alaskan relatives because, as he stated, "here emerges a definite difficulty, because the majority of the (Eskimo) citizens of the Chukotsk [sic] have lost contact with their Alaskan relatives, and don't even know them." He further asked for the names of Alaskan Eskimos who had relatives in Chukotka and promised to investigate on their behalf by broadcasting their names throughout Chukotka via radio. Kulinkin also stated that Eskimos in the Providenski and Chukotski districts were actively trying to reach their relatives from St. Lawrence Island.⁷²

Despite the letter confirming Provideniya's interest, Alaskan organizers still did not have an accurate assessment of Soviet attitudes regarding the initiative, principally from Moscow. Since regular telecommunication access to the region was blocked and Alaskan officials didn't even know the main political authorities governing Magadan Oblast, a breakthrough came in the form of a let-

ter sent by Yuri Rytkeu, to Stimpfle in February. Rytkeu wrote that many meetings and discussions about future contacts were made by local and regional officials, with the only roadblock being authorization from high level officials in the Kremlin. He stated that the mood among the region's residents for the visit was exciting, and that they were prepared to see the Alaskans soon.⁷³

On the political front, Gorbachev assigned the task of directly investigating the Alaskan situation to Gennady Gerosimov, then-chief spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Gerosimov, former chief editor of the Moscow-based English language paper Moscow News, came to Alaska upon the invitation of Dixie Belcher, organizer of the Alaska Performing Artists for Peace tour, and from the Siberian Gateway Project, an organization formed between the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce, the Governor's Office of International Trade, and the Nome Chamber of Commerce (CCCP).

In April, Gerosimov flew to Anchorage for a meeting of the Siberian Gateway Project conference, and spoke with Alaska Governor Steve Cowper and various government and private leaders concerning the border situation. On April 24th, Gerosimov flew up to Little Diomed for a meeting with island residents, while getting a first hand look at the border. Accompanied by a large press contingent, including various state and ABC network television journalists, as well as radio reporters from KICY and KNOM in Nome, Gerosimov spent the day visiting Eskimo families in their homes, addressing a village gathering concerning his perspectives on Soviet-American relations, and watching Eskimo dances put on by the Diomeders.⁷⁴

He remarked that "it was an experience to see how close we are geographically, and still worlds apart in other ways." Before his departure, Eskimo leaders petitioned the spokesman to speak directly with Gorbachev to approve a reunion of the region's Eskimos. The visit made international headlines, and Gerosimov soon reported back his findings to Moscow.

It was perhaps Gerosimov's personal influence on the Soviet government following his Diomedé visit which speeded up the authorization process for the eventual Friendship Flight. On the opposite side, Alaska's congressional delegation worked closely with U.S. and Soviet diplomatic officials--with Senator Frank Murkowski travelling to Moscow to work out transportation and communication logistics. The spring of 1988 saw a rapid escalation of messages back and forth between the governments in ironing out the details for the initial flight from Alaska.⁷⁵

In early May, the Soviets gave their authorization for the Friendship Flight, setting the date tentatively for May 31, 1988. During this month, both governments were preparing for another summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev--this time in Moscow. Both Alaskans and their Soviet neighbors waited anxiously for this summit, as it could have a major impact on overall relations and the border negotiations. Some worried that the summit might go badly, and planners' fears were borne out when the Soviets (prior to the summit) moved back the flight date without reason. Questions of the flight upstaging the summit, or bad timing were raised after notification of the delay. Senator Murkowski, aware of the delay,

contacted the White House and asked the President's staff to facilitate the issue through the summit process.⁷⁶

The summit took place during the last week of May, and headlines from the New York Times read, "Gorbachev Criticizes Reagan Seeing Missed Opportunities," yet the General Secretary called it a "major event." A statement regarding native contacts was made, and both leaders subsequently expressed support for the expansion of contacts between Eskimos.⁷⁷

Not knowing the exact outcome of the meeting, Alaskan organizers were quickly notified by the Soviet Foreign Ministry that a June 13, 1988, date was set for the flight to Provideniya. During the first week of June, Bering Air pilot Jim Rowe, accompanied by Alaska Airlines executives and pilots, flew a twin engine Cessna from Nome to Provideniya in order to inspect the runway and landing facilities at the Provideniya airport.

Officials were concerned about the ability of the Boeing 737 aircraft designated for the flight to land on the gravel runway, as well as the poor weather conditions usually experienced at the airport. After a successful inspection of the facilities, the Alaskan delegation met with Mayor Kulinkin and other officials to iron out last minute details before departing the same day.

Convinced that the airport was safe for landing, Alaska Airlines committed itself to making the June 13 target date. Soviet radio coverage of this visit was provided by Evgeny Berling, the Magadan Radio committee correspondent based in Anadyr, and both Nome stations issued reports on the visit.⁷⁸

While the delegation was in Provideniya, a group of St. Lawrence Islanders, on a walrus hunting expedition, was reported lost at sea. Later that week, Bering Air pilots, as well as planes from the U.S. Coast Guard joined the search, and were given permission by Soviet authorities to enter Soviet airspace to conduct the rescue. The hunters were eventually found and expectations between Soviets and Alaskans awaiting the Friendship Flight were high."

An event of great interest but with little notice occurred in Alaska that week, which marked a high point in relations already established between the Soviet merchant marine and Aleutian port cities. The town of Dutch Harbor put on a community feast for 600 Soviet sailors who disembarked from their ships after being invited for a day of celebration. Though far away from the Bering Strait, this event set a positive tone for the activities soon to occur further up north.

Broadcast Preparations for Coverage of the Border Opening

Given the historic nature of the Friendship Flight, which would open up a new chapter of relations along the Chukotka-Alaska border, broadcast organizations on both sides geared up to provide comprehensive coverage of the event. Satellite television coverage of the flight was planned through the technical facilities of Alascom, a result of last minute authorizations by the Soviet Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications in Moscow.

Alascom would fly in a portable satellite earth station, marking the first time that live television broadcasts from the

Soviet Union would be accomplished through use of an American domestic satellite.

The American press contingent assigned to the flight was coordinated by the Governor of Alaska's Press Secretary, David Ramseur. Broadcast representation consisted of TV reporters from KIMO, KTUU, and KTVA (Anchorage), CBS News (New York), UAF Northwest Campus Media Center (Nome), and a pool videographer; while radio coverage was assigned to one reporter from KNOM-Nome (who also provided Alaska Public Radio Network coverage). KICY and KOTZ staff were not represented due to limited seating on the plane.

Numerous journalists from state and national print press, ie., Nome Nugget, Anchorage Daily News, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and The National Geographic, rounded out the group. No Eskimo journalists were assigned to the press corp, though Tim Gologregen (KNOM) and Clarence Irrigoo (KICY) were in the delegation as guests.

Televised reports were to be fed to the Anchorage stations via the Alascom uplink, and then distributed across Alaska through newscasts over the RATNET system. While CBS had the only national crew, the Anchorage stations would provide footage to their network headquarters in New York.

The Soviets assigned as many press personnel as did the Alaskans for the event, including journalists from local and regional radio, Magadan Television, and Central Television and All-Union Radio. Victor Timakov, head of the regional CPSU Department of Press, coordinated the Soviet press operation.

The Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee assigned Eskimo Radio Department journalists Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Sveta Togiak, and Antonina Verbitskaya to cover the event as well as Tatiana Ochirgina and Evgeny Berling from the Russian Editorial Department. Magadan Radio also sent Berling to cover the event, while Valentin Gerosimov, Gosteleradio (Central TV) correspondent for Magadan, was assigned the main task of filming for both Magadan and Moscow.⁸⁰

Numerous print journalists from the local to national level, ie., Polarnik (Provideniya), Sovietskaya Chukotka (Anadyr), Magadanskaya Pravda (Magadan), Pravda and Izvestia (Moscow), were assigned to cover the story, noting an unusual competition among writers hoping to report the event.⁸¹

Though plans were made on both sides to independently provide sufficient press coverage, it was hoped that there would be some degree of interaction between the American and Soviet journalists during the festivities.

On June 11, one day before the Friendship Flight, a Mark Airlines C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying Alascom's GMC van loaded with satellite equipment, uplink antenna, and a broadcast package, left Anchorage and after a short stopover in Nome, flew to Provideniya to install the earth station ahead of the delegation's arrival 24 hours later. It was followed by a Cessna plane carrying Alascom technicians.⁸²

Upon their arrival in Provideniya, the crew on both planes spent the next few hours discussing logistics with Soviet offi-

cials. After driving their equipment van to the center of the city, a location near the Provideniya House of Culture (where the next day's meeting would be held) was found to be ideal for setting up the large antenna. The crew engaged the help of local workers in providing a concrete foundation for the antenna, and an astonished crowd of people watched the process of the earth station's installation.⁴³

By 4 A.M. the next morning, Alascom technicians had located the Aurora satellite and completed connections allowing for telephone, television, and radio communications for the journalists who would soon begin sending reports back to Alaska.⁴⁴

Soviet journalists were not able to take advantage of the system's capabilities, instead relying on the Soviet telephone system for on the spot radio reporting. The Soviet TV broadcasters relied on 16mm film, rather than video for their coverage, and reports to Central TV would be sent by plane to Moscow.⁴⁵

In the meantime, Alaskans scheduled to take the flight spent the evening in Nome at a town meeting to go over itineraries and last minute details. The evening ended as Governor Cowper walked onto the stage at the Nome Mini-Convention Center to dance with St. Lawrence Eskimo dancers celebrating the next day's history-making visit.⁴⁶

The Friendship Flight.

On June 13, 1988, an Alaska Airlines jet, dubbed "The City of Provideniya," lifted off the Nome airport runway at 11:08 A.M.

with 82 passengers, and landed at the Provideniya airport thirty minutes later, marking the official opening of the Soviet-American border after a period of forty years. The delegation, comprised of government officials, business leaders, press members, Nome flight organizers, and fifteen Eskimos, were greeted at the airport by a large group of children as well as top Soviet officials. Soviet TV and radio staff recorded the plane's approach and passenger disembarking, while the American reporters (first off the plane), began their coverage filming the waiting Soviet crowd.⁹⁷

As the Eskimo contingent descended from the plane, Tim Gologregen (the KNOM Yupik reporter) was immediately greeted by Eskimo journalist Nina Enmenkow, and both were amazed to discover that they understood each other clearly in Yupik. In front of television cameras, Gologregen (holding onto Enmenkow) exclaimed that the two of them spoke the same language, culminating in an embrace that would be viewed later in the day by Eskimos across Alaska.

As the Alaskan group lingered around the airport amidst the assembled crowd of Soviets sharing gifts and souvenirs, the three Eskimo journalists (Enmenkow, Verbitskaya, and Togiak), with help from Tatiana Ochirgina and Ludmilla Aynana, began recording interviews in Yupik with the Alaskan Eskimos standing on the tarmac.

The journalists were the only representatives of the Chukotka native people at the airport, since a scheduled Eskimo reunion was to take place later that day in New Chaplino. As the main delegation made their way into Provideniya (10 kilometers from the airport), Soviet officials informed the Alaskan Eskimo group that bad

weather had forced them to cancel helicopter flights scheduled to take them to New Chaplino. Instead, they would meet a few hours later with an Eskimo delegation at Provideniya's House of Culture.

As soon as the delegation reached the town's center, Anchorage TV journalists immediately began live satellite reports, starting with interviews of Mayor Kulinkin, followed by commentaries about the event. Laura Bliss, of KIMO, was typical of those reporting, showing viewers shots of the town, while being surrounded by a group of Soviet youths who shouted "Hello America" into the live camera.

While journalists were busy negotiating for time on the up-link, the delegation made its way to the outside steps of the House of Culture, where the first official proclamations were made by First Secretary of the Magadan Obkom Party Committee Vyscheslav Kobets, Alaska Governor Steve Cowper, and U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski.

Following these officials, Caleb Pungowiyi, representing Alaska's Eskimos stated to the gathered crowd:

We have met the same people. We have met our relatives,
we have met our friends, we have renewed relations that
may not have existed before."

Amidst the crowding of television cameras and microphones, two elderly Eskimo women, Ora Gologregen of Gambell and her childhood friend from Chaplino, Uksima, embraced each other and proclaimed to the world their joy and surprise in being reunited. This brief moment captured by the media and relayed by satellite was a definitive statement on the essence of the event.

Immediately following the outside ceremonies, the Eskimo delegation met with Chaplino Eskimos inside the House of Culture and began the process of accumulating information about family and friends. During this time, Anadyr's Eskimo Department reporters and the KNOM reporter (Claire Richardson) recorded the meeting and conducted numerous interviews. For the first time, the Eskimo staff received firsthand information about the status of Alaskan Eskimos, and these interviews would provide the bulk of Eskimo broadcasts from Anadyr during the following months.

At the end of the visit, an assembled audience of nearly 400 town residents and guests met with the Alaskan delegation in a formal ceremony to declare the new state of relations. After many speeches, the event concluded with Eskimo dancing. The Chaplino Eskimo dance group *Soleshko* first performed, followed by the Nome-St. Lawrence Dancers.

Finally, both groups danced together for the first time in decades. Televised scenes of the dancing were relayed to TV sets across Alaska, and the conclusion of the dance marked the end of the one day visit. The Alaskans departed late that evening, and the now-completed Friendship Flight sealed the new status of an open border.

Developments Along the Border and Broadcast Involvement: Summer 1988

Broadcast reports over both Soviet and Alaskan stations were made on a sustained basis following the trip, and the Anadyr Eskimo radio staff found an entirely new aspect to their programming by

including Alaska-Chukotka relations and Eskimo sociocultural information as a regular part of their reporting assignments.

With the opening of the border, Alaskan media found itself in the position (like the Anadyr and Magadan stations) of needing substantially more information to properly cover the Soviet story for an eager statewide audience. On a regional basis, KNOM, KICY, and KOTZ expanded their efforts in providing as much material about the Soviets to the degree attainable, and a quickly following series of events across the border would necessitate an expansion of coverage which gave the Alaskan broadcasters additional information to work with.

Movement by the ICC

Without knowing what would be the next step in cementing official government ties between Alaska and Magadan Oblast, a small delegation representing the Inuit Circumpolar Conference was invited by a worker's union of the USSR to visit Chukotka in August. The invitation was provided because the ICC had stated their desires for including Chukotkan Eskimos in the work of their organization.

Ten delegates representing Greenland, Canada, Denmark, and Alaska (including Eskimos from Nome, Diomedé, and Gambell), traveled from Copenhagen, Denmark, to Moscow and then on to Anadyr, Provideniya, New Chaplino, and Siriniki. The visit established ties with Eskimo political representatives and initiated Chukotkan involvement with the ICC. While attending a whaling festival in

Siriniki, the group was the subject of television coverage by NHK, as well as radio coverage by Anadyr correspondents. Ending their visit, the group provided interviews to the Eskimo Radio Department, and the agenda of the ICC's desire for Chukotkan involvement was broadcast throughout the region."

The next major event of importance to Eskimos took place during August with the visit to Provideniya and New Chaplino by the Bering Strait Expedition. Led by Drs. David Lewis and Mimi George, who conducted studies of Arctic native peoples, the expedition included twelve Eskimos from Gambell who joined the researchers aboard the ocean schooner Hawaiian Tropic Cyrano for a five-day visit to Chaplino, marking the return of Eskimo travel across the strait in the traditional method by boat.

It took the Cyrano 14 hours to sail to the Chukotka coast, some 60 kilometers from Gambell, and the Alaskan Eskimos spent their time visiting with village residents, recalling the past where Eskimos on both sides travelled back and forth, trading goods, participating in celebrations, visiting relatives, exchanging husbands and wives, etc. The Eskimo delegation did not find the Chaplino site they had always known, but the new site (New Chaplino) which was established after 1958. The visit ended with the delegation dancing with their Chukotkan neighbors on the streets of Chaplino to the beat of walrus skin drums."

The Bering Strait Expedition represented the first visit of Eskimos from Alaska to Chukotka by boat since 1946. In addition, the expedition sought to add strength to the growing arguments for

allowing Eskimos on both sides visa-free travel, which at that time was not permissible. The entire visit was filmed by a crew from KTUU-Channel 2, Anchorage, and was subsequently developed into a documentary program entitled "Through the Ice Curtain: An Eskimo Reunion" which was broadcast throughout the state via RATNET.⁹¹

The next major event in the region was the Soviet response to the Friendship Flight, this time with Soviet government officials, Eskimo representatives, and press travelling across the strait via the ship Dmitri Laptev from Provideniya to Nome. On September 8, 1988, the Soviet delegation landed at the port of Nome, where they were greeted by the residents of the town, who held numerous gatherings on their behalf. This represented the first opportunity for Chukotka Eskimos to visit Alaska after the forty-year break in ties. After a one day visit (now termed "The Friendship Float"), the delegation flew to Anchorage where they met with state officials and business leaders to further cement official ties between Magadan Oblast and Alaska.⁹²

Upon their return to Nome, the Soviets were treated to a community dinner where officials from both sides proclaimed a new era in relations for the region. Press coverage of the event from the Soviet side included TV journalists from Gosteleradio, and print journalists from the OBKOM CPSU Department of Press in Magadan. The ship also brought over an international press contingent, including an NBC Television News correspondent, as well as German and other European print journalists. KNOM and KICY provided local and statewide radio coverage via APRN, and televised reports were

filed by KTUU, KIMO as well as NHK television (which had a crew on hand in Nome). The delegation's Anchorage visit was covered by numerous local broadcast and print operations, and received attention in the national media. Soviet radio and TV reports were relayed back to Anadyr and Magadan by Valentin Gerosimov, the Gosteleradio correspondent, who also provided materials for national TV coverage from Moscow.

The only controversy from the visit resulted from a photograph with an inaccurate caption on the front page of The Nome Nugget, which showed Jim Stimpfle and Daniel Johnson hoisting a television set up to an awaiting Mayor Oleg Kulinkin on the deck of the Dmitri Laptev. Provideniya residents reading the paper Polarnik and listening to local radio assumed the TV was a gift to the people of the city rather than a private gift to the Mayor (who claimed it was his). During the forthcoming elections for city Mayor, the issue was brought up as a factor against Kulinkin, and he subsequently lost his bid for reelection."

In October, three California grey whales were caught in the ice near Barrow, and efforts by local Eskimo whalers to free them garnered international press coverage. Unexpectedly, the Soviets offered to provide an ice breaker to clear a path for the trapped whales, and a joint U.S.-Soviet rescue operation commenced. With every effort in the attempt generating worldwide exposure via a large press corp, Soviet-Alaskan relations in the Bering Sea took a positive turn after the whales successfully made their way to open sea. Updates during the rescue attempt were broadcast every-

day on Alaskan television and radio as well as Soviet radio, from satellite facilities provided by KBRW in Barrow.

Later that month, Governor Cowper sent a trade delegation to the Soviet Far East cities of Khabarovsk and Valdivostok in order to establish official government and business ties. Development of broadcast and telecommunication links was on the agenda.

Border and Broadcast Activities 1989

In February, the first Soviet Aeroflot flight from Magadan to Anchorage took off, bringing a delegation of CPSU officials, journalists, and natives--including Eskimos from Provideniya and New Chaplino. Returning on the plane back to Magadan (via Anadyr) were Jim Stimpfle and a group of eight Alaskans, representing the first visit by Americans to those cities flying direct from Alaska. Extensive media coverage of the Alaskans' visit was conducted by Anadyr and Magadan press, representing first opportunities for Soviet broadcasters to meet Alaskans in these formerly closed cities. Much discussion of native interests in the Bering Strait was brought up by the delegation."

In March, the "Bering Bridge Expedition," a joint Soviet-American expedition led by American Paul Shurke and Soviet polar explorer Dmitri Shparo, began in Anadyr, with 12 members skiing through 20 Soviet and Alaskan native villages on the Bering Sea coastline. The expedition sought to draw the communities on both sides closer together, while generating international attention to the new U.S.-Soviet cooperation along the border.

It had been 50 years since Alaskans had visited the villages of Chukotka listed on the expedition's itinerary. Eskimos from both countries were included on the team. Planned with the event was an official signing of border agreements between the governors of Alaska and Magadan Oblast--which was to take place on Little Diomedé when the expedition arrived.⁹⁵

The event would be the last major event involving joint media coverage within the Bering Strait target area up until the collapse of the USSR in 1991.

Large scale broadcast coverage of the expedition was planned and executed in both countries from the local to national level. Coverage over the Chukotka portion was conducted both by Soviet and U.S. journalists, while the Alaska route (after Diomedé) was covered solely by the American press corp. The highlight of the venture would be the expedition's crossing of the Bering Strait by skin boat to Little Diomedé, where combined U.S.-Soviet broadcast coverage would relay news of the expedition's progress, as well as the border signing ceremonies.

The Soviet press corp included the Chukotka State Radio Committee, which sent reporters from the Eskimo and Russian departments to provide regional radio coverage as well feeds to Magadan for broadcast throughout the oblast. The Magadan State TV and Radio Committee provided a film crew for coverage on Diomedé, while nationally televised coverage was provided by photographers from Channel 1-Moscow. Central Radio from Moscow beamed regular reports about the expedition from the contributions of their own reporters

on the scene, as well as feeds from the Anadyr staff.

Bering Bridge's main Soviet sponsor was the nationally-circulated Communist Party paper Komsomolskaya Pravda, and journalists from this paper and other Moscow publications rounded out the press corp.

In Alaska, radio coverage was provided through the western Alaskan stations (KNOM, KICY, KOTZ) who had reporters on the expeditionary route (in Alaska only), and their feeds were transmitted regionally to APRN member stations as well as to AP and other national wire services. Television coverage was unusually large, given the difficulties of reporting on site in remote villages subject to poor transportation logistics and extreme arctic weather conditions. An international broadcast contingent set up facilities in Anchorage, Nome, and Little Diomed, sending tape feeds to ABC News-New York, the Anchorage network affiliates, KSTP-Minneapolis, and NHK-Tokyo. Northwest Campus (UAF)-provided State of Alaska television feeds via RATNET, showing expedition footage over the Governor of Alaska's special broadcast timeslot.

Alascom, which had set up the telecom facilities for the Friendship Flight, set another milestone in providing unique broadcast services by installing a satellite earth station directly on the frozen ocean atop the international date line between the Diomed Islands. Assisted by a U.S. Army "Apache" helicopter delivering vital components in white out storm conditions, the Alascom crew was able to provide the awaiting press corp on Little Diomed with telephone and broadcast connections just prior to the

expedition's arrival.

As the expedition reached Diomedede, televised reports were made on the ice and directly uplinked to waiting stations across the U.S. which provided regular updates on the event. Eskimos in Alaska watched reports via RATNET, and were provided comprehensive information on both TV and radio.

The broadcast component of the expedition made it possible to relay to audiences on both sides of the strait the uniqueness of the territory and efforts needed to travel along and across the Bering Strait through traditional means (skiis, dog team, and skin boat). The Soviets press and state delegation travelled to Little Diomedede by helicopter upon the team's arrival, and spent less than six hours on the island before returning back.

The day's celebrations were sidetracked by the defection of two Soviet journalists who went to the local Army National Guard commander, demanding political asylum.

"Bering Bridge," which took 58 days to complete its journey from Anadyr to Kotzebue, set the stage for future joint U.S.-Soviet activities that would bring closer the natives of the Bering Strait. With the signing of the Bering Strait border protocol, precedents were set for further border activities and broadcast cooperation between Soviet and Alaskan journalists.

Summer Events

In June, Nome-based Bering Air, began regular charter flight service between Nome and Provideniya. The route provided direct

access to the Soviet Far East, circumventing the old route via Moscow and Anadyr.

During July, the schooner Cyrano began another series of visits to Chukotkan villages, providing Alaskan Eskimos another opportunity to visit relatives.⁹⁶ Also that month, the "Pilliken Expedition," composed of Soviet Eskimos and non-natives, travelled across the strait from Provideniya in walrus-skin umiaks, visiting different native villages along the Alaskan coast on their way to Nome.⁹⁷

The first direct telephone link between Alaska and Chukotka was set up in August, with a microwave system installed on St. Lawrence Island and Bechlameshlava (near Provideniya). The link vastly improved communication and coordination of activities, while giving Eskimos their first chance to speak across the strait by direct telephone links, rather than through tropo and satellite routing going around the world.

Alaska-Soviet Press Corp relations

Eager to expand their contacts with American journalists as well as to better their idea of the work environment experienced by the Alaskan press, the Union of Soviet Journalists organized an exchange program with the Alaska Press Club. In July and August, nine Alaskan journalists toured the Chukotka and Magadan regions, visiting print and broadcast facilities. Composed of representatives from both private and public print and broadcast media, the Alaskan contingent received a comprehensive overview of how mass

media operated in the Far East, while making contacts for future press cooperation between the countries.

In September, a delegation of Soviet journalists arrived in Nome to embark on a tour of press operations in six Alaskan cities, which further cemented press ties with their new colleagues throughout the state. What impact these visits would play in the development of regular press ties between the countries remained a matter for speculation, as each side worked under very different organizational schemes, with their own interests, agendas, and financial concerns."

Chukotkan Eskimo travel to Alaska

The first large scale gathering of Chukotkan and Alaskan Eskimos took place in September 1989, during the "Bering Strait Region Elders Conference." Thirty-eight Eskimo elders from various Chukotkan settlements, accompanied by a Soviet press contingent and government officials, travelled to Nome to attend the week-long conference. The time was spent with elderly Eskimos recounting family and historical ties, while official government and native delegations spent the time discussing political and social issues affecting the Eskimo population on both sides.

There was much press coverage, as KNOM and KICY provided daily broadcasts of the meetings, and Anchorage TV affiliates delivered reports from the convention over the RATNET channel. The Chukotka State Radio Committee sent three reporters from the Eskimo Department, as well as two from the Russian staff. The Magadan

State TV and Radio Committee sent TV and radio reporters. Radio Moscow sent a correspondent to cover the proceedings for national radio distribution, and numerous print journalists from across the oblast and Moscow were in attendance.⁹⁹

The Elders Conference set a precedent for achieving the long-desired goal of united Eskimo participation in political deliberations with the respective governments controlling the Bering Strait. It further facilitated cooperation between those Soviet and U.S. officials charged with administrative control over the region. The conference dedicated its proceedings to finding effective means of drawing government attention to their problems, especially in surmounting the legal and financial obstacles hindering native travel access and sociocultural integration. The week was spent in celebration of the Eskimo way of life, and was a pivotal point in the reestablishment of Eskimo ties.

To add to the state of goodwill existing between the governments, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Schevardnadze, meeting in Montana, signed a diplomatic agreement in late September which allowed visa-free passage across the Bering Strait by native people. The agreement allowed for 90 day visits for Eskimos coming at the invitation of their friends and relatives. The action permanently opened the region for Eskimos, and hailed a new era of cooperation between the two nations.¹⁰⁰

Within the next two years (up to the collapse of the USSR), cross-border Eskimo visits took place under a variety of contexts,

though primarily financed by Alaskans as the Chukotkan Eskimos found themselves under increasing economic hardship due to the deterioration of the Soviet economy and currency. Though the actual numbers of people travelling was small, normal ties between villages on both sides had developed, and the Eskimos were once again free to determine the nature and extent of their relationship.

The utilization of broadcast media in facilitating this relationship and nurturing media empowerment proved itself, though its future role is one which remained a question among the Eskimo leadership in both Chukotka and Alaska.

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93. Mayor Kulinkin personally asked this writer to assist him in clearing up the matter in the weeks before the election (1989).

94. This writer was a member of delegation which flew to Anadyr and Magadan in 1989.

95. This writer covered the activities of the expedition from Little Diomede to Nome, and had numerous conversations with the expedition's co-leaders, Dmitri Shparo and Paul Schurke.

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CHAPTER 8

TRANSITION IN SOVIET MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON CHUKOTKA ESKIMO BROADCASTING: 1982 THROUGH THE DISSOLUTION OF THE USSR (1991)

Eskimo broadcasting and native consumption of national media would remain static from its inception during the Brezhnev years up until the mid-1980s.

By this time (marked by the death of Leonid Brezhnev), the USSR struggled with the legacy of Brezhnev's "period of stagnation." It was a nation disillusioned with the failed promises of communism, still dominated by an ideologically bankrupt totalitarian Party, rife with personal corruption in government, and showing signs of increasingly visible economic deterioration.

Awareness of needed change, reform, and innovation emerged on a politically significant scale by 1982. Three years of aborted reform under the Andropov and Chernenko administrations made clear the need for serious restructuring under a new style of political leadership. A growing movement toward the repudiation of those foundations which underpinned the USSR's Stalinist-Brezhnev legacy emerged, but the CPSU, unsure of the consequences such a movement could generate, instead offered a quasi-return to the Leninist experience as the best means for effecting needed reform of the system.

The intent was to maintain the existing structure of government and society in a more efficient manner, and not the dismantling of the Soviet system which could occur if the original premise of Leninism proved historically and pragmatically unviable.

The Gorbachev Era Begins

In April 1985, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev was elected General Secretary of the Communist Party. He was given a mandate to reinvigorate the Soviet economy and political structures, though with a vague notion on the extent of reform needed to accomplish the task. It was a time of new realities in the USSR, which by now possessed a population relatively well-educated, somewhat knowledgeable of conditions in the rest of the world, and aware of the expanding national crisis which demanded a solution.

In tandem with the calls for revitalization and restructuring of the economy (perestroika) was a sobering realization of the necessity for increased openness (glasnost) as well as widespread access to the information required for effective economic planning. In this instance, glasnost would facilitate perestroika, but in actuality, both policy initiatives would develop and manifest themselves far beyond the original conceptions formulated by their proponents.¹

Gorbachev's glasnost initiative was a response to a complex set of policy problems which were seemingly unsolvable without consensus formation, and this implied the development of previously-restricted substantive political discourse across the country--a discourse that relied on notions of intellectual freedom and democratic participation for its effective realization. The task could not be initiated without widespread participation of the broadcast media, though it was unknown how the system--designed from a single vantage point--could manage to promote the minimum amount of plur-

alistic opinion supposedly needed to facilitate the innovative initiatives.

While to this point state television and radio (under its Gosteleradio structure) had been moribund creatively, and steadfast in its obeisance to Party control, the new political realities forced both CPSU and broadcast officials to reconsider the mass media's role in Soviet society.²

Gorbachev hoped for innovative applications of traditional media functions, which under its Leninist mode was to change the ethical and moral outlook of the people...while rousing the people to contribute to the economic goals of the leadership. Instead, the very purpose and structure of broadcast media would come under question.

As new forces sought a change in broadcasting from the old style to one which nurtured a marketplace of ideas--an obvious ingredient of the glasnost strategy--representatives from within the state broadcast hierarchy balked at serious revisions in the traditional role of broadcast media as a component of Party structure and power.³

In the years before Gorbachev's assent, broadcast policy was oriented toward documenting "achievements" in the various spheres of sociopolitical, economic, and cultural life. Television and radio seemed bereft of programming which reflected real life, instead projecting social rituals through which society established its identity. Dramatizations of social events, jubilees, state award ceremonies, holidays, and parades represented daily fare as

demonstrations of the social order, and Gosteleradio's program strategy--designed to convince the populace of the superiority of socialism--seemingly perceived as more important the necessity of keeping up appearances rather than projecting reality itself.⁴

In 1985, both Party and broadcast authorities were unprepared to define how a reorganized media--which allowed for a wider participation of alternative opinions and social analyses of a critical nature--could operate without seriously undermining their own positions.⁵ This scenario was applicable for those in power at the national level in Moscow and at the okrug level in Chukotka. With the heads of broadcasting at each level dependent on CPSU endorsement to maintain their powerbase, it was natural for broadcast administrations to resist threats which could result from a relaxation of control and access to media by those seeking radical restructuring or the demise of the established order.⁶

Soviet broadcasting had no experience in criticizing the CPSU or its governing policies, and the *nomenklatura* (Party appointees) installed by the CPSU at broadcast facilities across the country held their power by maintaining the status quo--in this respect--of programming based on Party-derived formulas and authorization.⁷

As in Chukotka, it was not in the interest of the regional broadcast administration to upset the control structure and operational procedures developed over long periods by the Party. This intransigence against reform was also responsible for the ritualization of a system bent on towing one political line, maintaining mediocrity in journalistic standards and creative output, and ef-

fectively blocking further development of the mediums. Chukotka TV and Radio replicated central broadcasting's production code and style as did every other state outlet, and the entire system was entrenched in such a fashion as to make any fundamental change seem revolutionary.'

The Press Revolution

Determined that no other course offered solutions to the problems at hand, Gorbachev initiated policies which, by slow stages, opened up the broadcast media to greater limits of freedom of expression and critical analysis, while extending the boundaries of press interaction with the West.

The glasnost campaign progressed through several tactical stages. While print media quickly took the leading role in establishing glasnost's *modus operandi*, national TV and radio soon offered carefully produced critical assessments of abuses by the state bureaucracy, of waste and mismanagement in the economic sector, and previously untouchable subjects, ie., corruption in law enforcement, failures in central planning efforts, the luxurious lifestyles of high Party officials, etc. Early broadcasts stunned audiences who for the first time could hear reportage from a government willing to admit shortcomings; yet the focus of criticism was directed toward individuals and not upon the fundamental system of CPSU governance from which they operated.'

Quickly testing the boundaries of glasnost, the printed media placed critical reappraisals of the past (primarily abuses from

the Stalin era and revisionist history) in its pages, allowing the most courageous of journalists and writers to speak out. All out assaults on the systemic legacy of Stalinism and even the Leninist foundation of Soviet control were restricted during this first year, and any serious analyses on the main problems in the country were conspicuously absent in central television and radio programming.¹⁰

Frozen Chukotka

While tangible signs of change slowly appeared in central mass media, 1985 remained a changeless year for the broadcast media in Chukotka. Radio and television viewers from the isolated Eskimo villages to the regional capital of Anadyr could see the beginnings of perestroika and glasnost solely from Moscow, with their primary sense of reform coming from central papers such as PRAVDA, IZVESTIA, and various periodicals.¹¹

For Chukotka--a sealed off political region under extreme Party, KGB, and military control and geographically the farthest point from Moscow--the initial impact of the new period of reform would be delayed longer than the rest of the nation, especially in regard to changes in mass media form and function. Okrug Party leaders appeared to doubt perestroika's possibilities for success, and were fully prepared to struggle against it in the hope that its demise would further strengthen the Party apparatus as well as bring the region back to pre-perestroika conditions.¹²

With this combination of controlling forces and anti-perestroika stance existing in the region, Chukotka's citizenry was dissuaded from active participation in reform efforts, and sustained their reputation for political inactivity and passivity (with the native population passive to the extreme). These conditions helped preserve the Okruzhnoy CPSU Party Committee's control over broadcasting from Anadyr, and their designated functionary at the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee (Chairwoman Ludmilla Shmelova) continued to enforce policies dictated by the Party chiefs. Accordingly, no changes were felt by the staffs of the radio and television departments; existing censorship organs maintained their functions, and production output mirrored that of previous years in form and content.¹³

Under such an environment, it was impossible for Eskimo broadcasting to experience any change in operations--and the Radio Department was prevented from covering serious issues related to perestroika and its potential impact upon the Eskimo people.¹⁴

The paradox for media consumers in Chukotka was the fact that while they could gain some sense of perestroika and glasnost via televised images or radio programs transmitted from Moscow, it was impossible to tangibly feel any impact in their local surroundings or through their local press--due to the heightened efforts of the Party to insulate the regional media and general population from change. Anadyr's journalists could only participate vicariously in the reform movement during this first year in the same way as viewers; by observing it on the sidelines and not directly partic-

ipating in it.¹⁵

In the first challenge to this state of affairs, a letter forwarded by local journalists to the regional Party committee called for the replacement of Chairwoman Shmelova, protesting her leadership and managerial practices. It seemed a dangerous move by promoters of glasnost within the press community--many of whom had been previously victimized by Shmelova's policies--and coming at a time when journalists were routinely dismissed for violation of even the smallest breaches of conduct. The attempt was quickly squashed since Shmelova was held in high regard by Party leaders as a loyal *apparatchik* (Party worker) who controlled the studios exactly in accordance with their requirements.¹⁶

Journalists were quickly reminded of the powers wielded by a local officialdom which steadfastly refused to follow even the slightest hint of relaxation in control--and this during a time which throughout the rest of the country came to be known as "the coming of Spring." Reform of broadcasting in the region would have to wait during the first few years of perestroika.¹⁷

Chernobyl's Impact on Glasnost and Information Policy

As the country completed its first year under perestroika, little fundamental change in information control had taken place. This was about to change with the Kremlin's handling of the Chernobyl nuclear accident in April 1986. In a true crisis for the government's domestic and foreign information policy mechanisms, official delays in alerting the nation and world to the dangers of

the explosion revealed the Soviet's intransigence toward effective implementation of the more liberal aspects of glasnost. It was a sign that the regime was prepared to carry on with old-line policies which promulgated secrecy and coverup. After a late-coming acknowledgement of the disaster by Soviet authorities (which had already been reported by western press), the Party (via Gostele-radio) sought to manipulate public opinion and legitimize its own actions through broadcast coverage which put carefully-controlled spins on the handling of the accident. Unlike previous incidents, Chernobyl's international impact forced a change in responsiveness and openness which had never been hallmarks of Soviet government information policy. The Kremlin lost a great degree of rhetorical control over the press and their ability to mold public opinion in the wake of the accident.¹⁹

After the Chernobyl affair, clear signs of change in press reporting occurred, with the press becoming more "truthful" and responsive to the needs of the media public. An emphasis on timeliness of reports happened as well.¹⁹ Further, events previously kept out of the media (crime, natural disasters, accidents, etc.) were beginning to make their way into news reports more often in the print media and to a lesser degree in the broadcast media.

Changes in Central Broadcasting

In 1986, central broadcasting began to exhibit noticeable changes in its program output. While the traditionally-favored programs on TV continued (news, sports, movies, documentaries,

musical performances, educational features, etc.) talk shows and live broadcasts of public debates appeared in large numbers, and Soviet TV witnessed the rise of dialogic journalism.²⁰ According to Muratov, programs whose featured performers were "answerers" and whose main action was provided by the questions of home viewers or studio participants grew swiftly in number.²¹ In essence, this new type of television journalism emerged as a form of social self-consciousness which sparked further inroads into the personalization of broadcasting.

Individual expression and interpretation of life and events affecting the country from a personal standpoint--rather than from officially sanctioned views--were allowed nationwide exposure for the first time via these programs. Soviet TV had encountered its initial taste of emancipation.

During February of this year, the first in a series of televised "space bridges" between the Soviet Union and the U.S. took place (Leningrad and Seattle), representing a breakthrough in Soviet broadcast policy. Viewers across the USSR were brought face to face with Americans who--while often expressing opinions in direct opposition to long-held Soviet tenets--proved remarkably similar in appearance, thoughts, and actions. The broadcast was probably the first television program made equally available to Eskimo viewers on each side of the Bering Strait. Though edited for broadcast, the space bridge proved that state media policy had a degree of flexibility by allowing such fare.²²

These programs--clearly approved of by Gorbachev and in line

with western expectations seeking signs of glasnost's viability-- had the effect of whetting audience appetites for greater exposure to western ideas, information, and entertainment. In reality, the Politburo permitted the telecasts as part of a strategy to inform the media public while preempting the influence of external information sources. This was a clear sign of retreat from previous strategies of dismissing western information services (ie., VOA, BBC, Radio Liberty) as propaganda, and Soviet television seeming labored to provide the types of news and information sought by their own audiences which had previously been the domain of these western services.²³

Many innovative programs, including morning and evening news and variety shows, youth programs, film documentaries based on perestroika themes, rock concerts, and controversial talk shows featuring tough discussions between audiences and politicians, emerged during the year. These programs (catering to different segments of the television audience) often challenged the authority of both government and the results of its perestroika campaign.

While both challenging and entertaining, these shows constituted a breakthrough in Soviet TV's normally mundane broadcast schedule. However, such experimental programming was deemed suspect by the Party, and in an effort to control the impact created by these new offerings, the scheduling or cancellation of programs was made according to the whims of Gosteleradio's decision making process, described by a leading TV producer as "controlled through resolutions, instructions, conferences, and telephone calls by the

Party-state apparatus."²⁴

The leadership of Gosteleradio soon came to face their potential inability to control program output as previously maintained, and a new hallmark of glasnost in television was revealed by the mergence of unpolished information not specially sanctioned by top authorities with the personal viewpoints of journalists, performers, or audiences. Such a situation would continue to enrage the Party leadership and broadcast managers who held as immutable the preeminence of the Party-state television system viewpoint over that of the individual.²⁵

Despite ever present threats of retaliation against the continuing openness and stylistic changes in television by the command structure, the pace and widespread confirmation of perestroika and glasnost among progressive elements within the CPSU and across the nation proved a powerful stimulus for a constant revision and creative expansion of broadcast services.

While kept in relative check during the first two years of Gorbachev's rule, television opened up even more to controversial programs which challenged both stylistic norms as well as the boundaries of acceptable and critical content. While still relatively behind the print media in elucidating the critical issues of perestroika, a movement appeared within Ostankino's studios aimed at depersonalizing standards of the medium while engaging more fully in serious analytical discussions of the times.²⁶

"Vzglad," an innovative variety-talk show targeted at young people appeared in 1987, and soon became the most popular Soviet

television show. One of the first productions to be aired live, it featured rock music; information of relevance to youth; and provided question and answer sessions between politicians, writers, and economists facing a young studio audience asking difficult questions about current problems in society. The program's format and range of issues widened its interest among all categories of viewers while raising problems for many of Gosteleradio's administrative staff.²⁷ A new trend in programming appeared which challenged established norms.

Where previous Soviet audience preferences were geared to movies, detective series, pop music shows, family programs, game shows, etc., and away from information programs of dubious propagandistic orientation (as reflected in pre-perestroika times), programs such as "Vzгляд" and other similar offerings caused a realignment in the priority audiences now attached to information programs.²⁸

As could be expected from a national audience vitally concerned with the new changes in society, investigative journalism programs sparked the greatest audience interest. Coverage of corruption and crime in the higher echelons of the government and Party, and stories on economics generated the most response from viewers.²⁹

The success of these shows (themselves subject to editing, interference, and cancellation by Gosteleradio) revealed how broadcasting began to facilitate the rapid politicization of Soviet society--a development which put Kremlin control over broadcasting in

a progressively weakened position. With the commensurate increase in the ability of journalists and the public to participate in televised forums with Party and government authorities to question their actions, Soviet television entered an increasingly difficult period. The worst fears of the Politburo, namely, the potential of TV to go well beyond the original confines of glasnost which they imposed, appeared close to realization.³⁰

Encouraged by the boldness of print journalists, some within TV's creative cadres sought to firm up their positions in offering new programs which went even deeper into the serious issues of perestroika. As a result, Gosteleradio bosses became more aggressive in negating the efforts of reformers, especially those whose material tacitly exposed fundamental problems in perestroika as well as the Leninist foundations which formed the bedrock for the CPSU's political existence. Those who followed a similar course on radio had to confront managerial opposition in like manner.³¹

More and more, tensions arising over the control of press coverage provided continuous conflicts between high Party officials, the nomenklatura which served as the directors of state media, and the professional staffs under them (journalists and creative types), who were quick to exploit the relaxation in censorship. It was clear that broadcasting's centralized administrative-command structure left the medium at odds with perestroika's principle of pluralism, and the intransigence of the ruling elite toward accepting greater relaxation of control as a price for achieving Gorbachev's aims became a central point of confrontation and

discussion between advocates of state broadcasting in its status quo mode versus those promoting total reorganization as well as independent mass media.³²

As the struggle for power in the wake of perestroika gradually intensified, radio and TV became both a weapon in the fight as well as one of its principle objects. It soon became apparent that if fundamental restructuring (or dissolution) of the political system was mandated, then the structure and operation of mass media would have to follow a similar revision--one that opened up the possibility of broadcasting independent of authoritarian control. This dynamic constituted a reference point for analyzing the continuously changing nature of Soviet mass media during the years of perestroika.

Change in Programming Policy--1987

Paradoxically, Gosteleradio's leaders in 1987 permitted the continuation of two previously inconceivable facets of programming which directly fueled the forces of irreversible change in Soviet programming policy; expanded live satellite television exchanges with the U.S., and commercialization. During this year, ABC Television developed a series of live broadcasts with Gosteleradio titled "Capital to Capital" which allowed Soviet viewers to witness televised debates between leaders of both countries. In one exchange, Peter Jennings and Leonid Zolotarevski hosted a debate on human rights between members of the CPSU Central Committee, USSR Supreme Soviet, government paper Izvestia, and leaders of the

United States Congress.³³

Approximately 80 million Soviet viewers witnessed the broadcast, providing new insights into their understanding of American viewpoints on human rights as well as criticisms on the nature of the Soviet order. Of equal importance, Soviet officials labored to define a wide open policy of glasnost in operation, as well as formally discounting the occurrence of direct Party interference with the press. While not factually true at that point in time for all media, such statements showed the growing inability of the Party to justify previous practices of censorship when confronted openly in international forums.³⁴

The Commercialization of Broadcasting

The transmission of "Capital to Capital" featured a new experience for Soviet viewers; American commercial advertising. Soon after, "Vzglad" began showing the first domestic-made commercials during its program breaks. This represented a major compromise in official Soviet attitudes toward capitalistic press practices and models based on private ownership and the profit motive.³⁵ While Soviet media had traditionally derided western commercial media for its denigration of "mass culture" and advertising as a pernicious tool of market forces, very few understood the role of advertising as a purveyor of mass culture and how it might influence the transformation of ideas of society and culture which were then taking place in the country.³⁶

Economic considerations in support of commercialization began to override previous philosophical tenets against it, and the "Capital to Capital" and "Vzglad" broadcasts clearly demonstrated the viability of this type of programming.

Gosteleradio directors were faced with increasingly complex financial problems connected with the state broadcast system, and saw advertising as a means to supplement funding normally allocated from the federal treasury.³⁷ Soon, commercials began to appear regularly on other programs, and Soviet advertising started its development--fueled by the growing euphoria over heightened prospects for business and the availability of western consumer goods.

Many producers within Soviet TV and radio responded to the introduction of advertising positively, though recognizing the problems associated with financing commercial production and distribution. "Vzglad" utilized advertising to significantly supplement the salaries of its employees, and their example propelled other programming staffs within Ostankino to follow suit.³⁸

Lacking the West's degree of commercial sophistication, Soviet TV's fledgling efforts were characterized by an absence of precise advertising policies, lack of ethical codes, low quality of presentations, a marked absence in the availability of products advertised, and "pitches" which greatly widened the gap between commercials and real life.³⁹

Of major importance; advertising altered the landscape of daily programming while providing a realistic financial rationale both for Gosteleradio managers seeking additional funds, and those

forces (within state media and private-public organizations) advocating the development of independent media.

Recalcitrance Toward New Trends in Programming

In a backlash against new trends established during the year, Gosteleradio continued to maintain old formats and program series which had been staples for years. "Vremya" (the main evening news program on the first channel), preserved its regular style of news coverage; ie., reports on a railway station in Murmansk failing to unload freight cars due to an official's fault; praise for conscientious workers in the Kurgan Region who excelled in bringing in the potato harvest, etc. This program concentrated on displaying examples of perestroika in action across the nation. Such daily reporting sought to reaffirm the CPSU's position in the course of reform; one which deemphasized the need for cardinal change, while reinforcing the idea of improving current structures and enforcing order.⁴⁰

In contrast to this strategy, a few news analysis programs appeared which represented a more independent approach to coverage of national affairs during the period. These shows offered information which revealed political tendencies (ie., growing influence of democratic-oriented political blocks within the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, protests in election results, criticism of the Politburo) aimed at providing a clearer picture of perestroika in reality. Many of these topics surfaced throughout interview and audience participation programs like "Vzglad."⁴¹

Undaunted, Gosteleradio began restricting the scheduling of novel popular offerings of this orientation, but unlike the past --when program decisions were made without question or with regard to audience preference--state TV planners soon encountered public protest and negative reaction in the print media when these controversial, yet popular programs suddenly disappeared. Audiences were becoming more participatory in the process of reform; they were more outspoken in support for TV's young and fresh personalities; developed a taste for western-style programming; and displayed critical attitudes towards Gosteleradio's hierarchical program decision making (one unused to public pressure).⁴²

The new programming environment whetted the appetites of Soviet viewers for more spontaneous, uncontrolled information and entertainment. The repudiation of old formats, the heightened sense of democratic participation by producers and audiences, the introduction of advertising, the growing relaxation of censorship and press freedom, and the momentum of opposition to CPSU policies and authority in the wake of perestroika constituted some of the forces which for the first time seriously challenged the established order of state broadcast form, function, and output.⁴³

Ethnicity Issues Facing Television

Concerning the issue of television's utility in the Party's overall plan to facilitate interethnic relations and socialization within the USSR, it was clear that failures in Central TV program policies toward this goal mirrored general failures in Soviet soc-

ialization policy. While regional broadcast services targeting large ethnic populations in the various republics had long been in operation, central broadcasts were formatted from a Soviet or "Russian" perspective which necessarily precluded serious multiethnic representation. Such a long term policy could not be maintained in light of ethnic tensions and growing political unrest occurring across the country after 1985."

Being relatively subdued during the Stalin and Brezhnev periods, the threat of nationalism and ethnic tensions increased rapidly as perestroika continued, and the role of central broadcasting's coverage (or non-coverage) of the myriad issues of importance to the country's non-Russian population was itself a focus of controversy. For Eskimos in particular, the idea of television serving as a tool for expression of self-interest and self-determination (or simply as a mouthpiece to voice complaints about substandard living conditions, low salaries, or general frustrations) was an idea far remote from reality at this point in time.

Since Central TV was a center stage for revealing to the citizenry the nature and development of Soviet glasnost and perestroika, the inclusion of information pertaining to ethnic involvement in the course of national reform, and the opportunity to broadcast ethnic political and economic positions in ways which could force tangible changes in Soviet central government policies, was a prerequisite for meeting the demands of the country's increasingly restless minorities.

From a national perspective on the need for reform of ethnic

broadcast policy and the difficulties faced in achieving it via changes in the approach used by central broadcasting, Soviet media researcher Ellen Mickiewicz concluded:

These reforms have drawn attention to television's political utility. However, even with the increased regional authority over broadcasting, the seriousness of ethnic tensions has made national television coverage of ethnic issues and its representation of ethnic groups a critical policy issue.⁴⁵

Subsequent changes in Soviet press and telecommunication policies would eventually provide enhanced opportunities for ethnic peoples to implement broadcasting in ways more cognizant and representative of their unique position, though this would be more true on a local and regional basis than at the national level. For the Eskimo Radio Department, local Party support for their efforts might include funds for an additional staff member, but not in a relaxation of editorial policies which could let them air serious grievances over the air.

Regardless, the ethnicity issue of broadcasting was yet another facet of the overall movement seeking change in the decades-old system of totalitarian media supervision, and the establishment of alternative channels independent from Kremlin control.

The Impact of the VCR

The introduction of videocassette recorders (VCR) to the Soviet Union provides communication researchers with an opportunity to analyze the impact consumer video technology had in the eventual disabling of state information control. Ten years after the introduction of the Sony Betamax to the West, VCRs began making their

appearance.⁴⁶ Before 1985, there were no manufacturing plants producing these recorders, and the few that were in operation were foreign-made models brought in by diplomats, journalists, and citizens travelling abroad. According to one researcher, the cost of a Japanese VCR was equivalent to six month's wages for the average worker.⁴⁷

After 1985, Soviet manufacture of VCR units began in the town of Voronezh, producing a model known as the Elektronika VM-12.⁴⁸ The decision to begin manufacturing appears to have been a compromise made by Soviet authorities concerned with the implications of a technology able to disseminate information uncontrolled by Party or government structures, while seeking advantage of the new technologies currently available in the West.

During the first year of VCR production, only 250 officially-approved movies were available, yet a growing black market was distributing contraband tapes, including pornography and movies with negative portrayals of the USSR, ie., Sylvester Stallone's "Rambo" and "Rocky" series. In response, Soviet legislation was enacted making the storing and distribution of films of a seditious character a crime punishable by up to two years of imprisonment.⁴⁹

In the later years of perestroika and glasnost, VCRs gained immensely in popularity, domestic manufacturing increased, importation of foreign recorders and movie titles expanded, and the Soviet government gave up its efforts in controlling the new medium. VCRs provided alternative sources of information and entertainment which were in great demand by a public seeking to understand the

new sociopolitical realities aroused by glasnost and opened up new avenues for personal reflection about the conditions of life in the USSR and the West. VCRs presented new competition to Soviet television, offered much greater variety in programming options, and sparked the eventual establishment of small cable systems throughout the country.

In Magadan Oblast and Chukotka, the introduction of VCRs mirrored trends in the central and western parts of the country. With its proximity to Japan, foreign recorders were more easily obtainable, though prices limited purchase to people of political and economic means. VCR ownership was considered a status symbol, linking Soviet owners with their counterparts in the West. Soviet-produced models, however, were scorned as inferior and consumers were willing to purchase Japanese models three to four times more expensive.

For Chukotka, the limited availability of movie titles and the expense of purchasing hardware kept the VCR from making much impact on the region's viewing public during this period. Few, if any, Eskimos owned a VCR.⁵⁰

The status of Chukotka broadcasting in 1987

After two years of viewing broadcast reform from the sidelines, regional media in Chukotka continued in a static form, with journalists waiting patiently for perestroika to make a tangible impact on the attitudes and actions of the region's Party and bureaucratic machinery. Unlike other sections of the country which

witnessed the rise of democratic political organizations and groups advocating political and broadcast reform, Chukotka had yet to experience such developments in 1987. By this time, however, the regional Party leaders, bureaucrats, military, and broadcast administration began to realize perestroika's inevitable course of change on society, forcing them to confront how to enact the process of reform throughout Chukotka.⁵¹

Though philosophically opposed to reform, Chairwoman Shmelova and the editorial leadership of the TV and Radio Committee began cosmetic changes in programming (early 1987), which seemingly pretended to mirror trends of reform but in actuality were half-hearted attempts to go along with the new political "line" promulgated by Moscow. Local journalists accused them of not supporting perestroika as evidenced by the lack of substantive changes in the way program content was produced and disseminated. In addition, journalists were still kept in tight reins by the censorship organs and most could claim that the growing freedoms in journalism engendered by glasnost at that time could still not be experienced in Anadyr.⁵²

Journalists began to feel the winds of change during the latter half of the year, as central broadcasting (primarily TV) and the print media accelerated press reforms. For Chukotka press, leadership in the expression of non-official viewpoints was taken by the regional newspaper Sovietskaya Chukotka, and soon many of their journalists were asked to provide analyses for Chukotka TV and radio news programs. While these initial attempts by the TV and radio studios for airing controversial non-Party viewpoints

were closely controlled by Chairwoman Shmelova, it was clear that the topic of reform would quickly become a major component in all programming transmitted from Anadyr.⁵³

In the summer of 1987, an event which portended the opening up of Chukotka to the West also made a major impact upon Chukotka broadcasting's controlled information apparatus and how it disseminated views concerning the non-Soviet world: the visit to Anadyr by former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union (and IBM Computer Chairman) Thomas J. Watson Jr. Watson had petitioned the Soviet government for permission to fly his personal plane across the country, and was granted the opportunity to be the first American allowed into Anadyr in many years.⁵⁴

In a nightmare for the regional KGB and Party officials, Watson's unrestricted access to excited journalists and crowds on the street resulted in numerous reports on regional radio and TV which cast an entirely new light on people's understanding of America, as well as the degree of isolation which had been effectively maintained around Chukotka.⁵⁵

The Watson interviews provided a direct counter to the propaganda about America and Alaska which had been carefully disseminated by central and regional reporting in the past, and for the first time, censorship policies could not be employed to control coverage of a major news event. Spurred on by the new possibilities for relations with Alaska, and surprised by their ability to engage in unrestricted reporting during Watson's visit, regional journalists became more assertive in pressing for greater reform

within the Chukotka broadcast committee.⁵⁶

Shifts in National and Regional Broadcast Media Operations: 1988

The year of 1988 would see the rise of heightened changes in the media landscape both on a national and regional basis, as public controversies and the Supreme Soviet's deliberations over draft laws seeking to decentralize and dismantle the government administration inevitably affected the politics of broadcast journalism as well.

Movement on greater broadcast reform within the central media and wide scale reformulations of broadcast programming and content over state TV had a resulting impact on the operations of Chukotka broadcasting. In addition, this was the year of the region's opening up to Alaska--an event of significant importance which would ultimately influence the changing nature of Chukotka's political and mass media establishments.

Trends in Central Programming: TV

Soviet television in 1988, began to display an ever-widening variety of programs unlike those offered in the past, with the more serious offerings (ie., interview programs, political analysis, news) delving deeply into the course of perestroika. These programs openly criticized negative phenomena and discussed alternatives to reform from both government and independent perspectives. News and information became more comprehensive and was decreasingly "edited for the public at large." Previous tenets on what consti-

tuted permissible topics for discussion were increasingly abandoned, while the medium became generally more aggressive in covering domestic affairs, developments abroad, and displayed greater involvement in programming relationships with foreign broadcasters.⁵⁷

Entertainment shows became prioritized and emerged in new contexts, driving away the perception of TV as a boring medium of officialdom. Viewers could start the day watching "120 Minutes," a Soviet version of the American morning news and variety format transmitting live and featuring domestic and international news, political commentary, rock videos, aerobic workouts, cartoons, sports and weather, and other features.⁵⁸

Across the daily broadcast schedule, Soviet TV provided international satellite linkups; interviews and question and answer programs based on perestroika themes; live studio programs for youth; popular music concerts (including American artists); science shows; detective series; sporting events; travelogs; foreign films; educational features; and various shows targeting different segments of the population in new formats. In contrast, political broadcasts--such as coverage of the proceedings of the USSR Supreme Soviet and other bodies--persisted.⁵⁹

As the face of television changed, Gosteleradio's leadership was caught in a delicate balance of offering visible alternatives in programming fare and allowing critical discussion pertaining to the course of reforms, while still maintaining its ability to manipulate and censor information deemed anathema by the Party. As 1988 progressed, however, it became increasingly difficult to mute

the myriad voices of people and issues circulating on the airwaves, and the Kremlin continued to loose ground in its control over the press.

In recognition of the impact the electronic media was having on the growing politicization of the nation, Gosteleradio Chairman Alexander Aksyonon, asserted the government's compromise stance on the role of broadcasting stating:

In the conditions of perestroika and glasnost, our journalists can tackle any subject of social significance. There are no taboos. Our TV viewers and radio listeners--that is, all Soviet people--determine the social significance of subjects. Criticism on radio and TV is one of the real opportunities for Soviet people to use their constitutional freedom of speech...and with the aid of TV and radio, people can really influence the course of the current restructuring and further improvement of all aspects of our life.⁶⁰

While this quote was targeted to a western audience--representing a glossy account of Gosteleradio's acceptance of new realities in programming--the statement was roughly in line with the status of broadcasting in the central media during this latter stage of glasnost. Freedom of the press and deregulation in broadcasting, however, were issues in 1988, which the Party would continue their opposition to--especially in Chukotka. Yet reform on the national airwaves provided the incentive for innovation at the Chukotka studios.

The Rise of Cable Television

Cable television networks represented a new phenomenon in the Soviet media system, emerging during this phase of perestroika.

While cable has been used for a long time in distributing trunk signals within the Soviet transmission system, individual reception of programs from independent programmers was a new development.⁶¹

The establishment of small cable TV networks in Moscow and other cities represented an alternative choice for viewers seeking program options outside of state channels. While its impact at that point in time was minimal, cable was seen as a potential competitor to state broadcasting, and equally important, as much more conducive to independent control and program variety.⁶² Cable's penetration into Chukotka would occur later than experienced in other sections of the country.

Trends in Programming: Chukotka TV and Radio

Early in 1988--as the nation witnessed more radical changes in the political and economic sectors--calls for the Chukotka Party machinery to participate more fully in perestroika sparked parallel developments of glasnost within the regional TV studios. Taking their cue from Ostankino's news and commentary programs (which exhibited a new frankness in critical reporting) the editorial board at Anadyr introduced a series of TV news programs which explored previously restricted topics.⁶³

Though unused to investigative reporting critical of political forces in the okrug, journalists appearing on newscasts discussed drawbacks in the Party's administration over various sectors of the socioeconomic infrastructure; reported on political infighting within the upper levels of the Okruzhnoy CPSU Committee;

and opened up the possibilities for experts and citizens to appear on camera (and in the radio studios) to air criticisms publicly.⁶⁴

Quickly, these newscasts became a forum for controversial subjects, ie., *exposes* on the actions of bureaucrats, protests against the dismissal of reform-minded directors at various workplaces, reports on failures by state organizations to meet state planning goals, discussion of elections to replace city and regional authorities, etc.⁶⁵

Journalists who were aware of emerging independent political organizations promoting democratization and rapid change within the region, invited their leaders to take part in live debates. Alexander Ljubosh, a journalist and early advocate of democratic reform within the state broadcast committee, noted that Chairwoman Shmelova (under orders from the Party 1st Secretary) continued her efforts to censor information which directly challenged CPSU authority by enforcing the old system of prior approval for aired texts.⁶⁶

Journalists who went ahead and aired information from texts previously crossed out by Shmelova (or her deputy at the radio studio, Alexander Shegulov) still faced the procedure--as in earlier times--of reporting to the chairwoman or Party representative for a disciplinary discussion.⁶⁷ As the year progressed, however, Shmelova retreated from this tactic because of increasing pressure by journalists across the various media who protested against censorship.

The further central media embarked on press reform and openness, the less the administration of Chukotka could justify their

previous practices limiting free expression by the region's mass media. With the system of authority remaining in place, however, journalists continued to be intimidated by the Party's exercise of power."⁹

The Eroding of Propaganda in Broadcast Content

A reversal in the normal procedure of placing propagandistic content across all program features was perhaps the most notable characteristic during this phase of Chukotka's media reform. After nearly three years of glasnost and consistent intolerance (by factions within the national mass media) for past press restrictions and forced propagandistic program output, broadcasting evolved to the point where Party propaganda found little credibility as it was forced to compete with the new ideologies of change promoted by rising press freedom.

Audiences normally insensitive to the old program fare quickly became supporters of the new trends in programming, and a new level of activism appeared via public participation with reporters and their productions. Chukotka residents who marveled at the changes in central broadcasting and took part in its experiences vicariously, were increasingly frustrated with the marginal reform of their own regional services, and were less tolerant of any continuation of propagandistic information coming from the Party."

This was a major source of concern for the Okruzhnoy CPSU Committee, who still relied on Shmelova to preserve some semblance of Party control over information transmitted over the airwaves. Her tactics included pressuring staff to conform or resign.

Eskimo Radio: Reasons for the Status Quo

Radio would remain more conservative than television in the early months of 1988 (and later), keeping with their regular schedule of programs on the All-Union Radio timeslot. Radio at this stage still transmitted rehearsed and recorded programs with scripts subject to Shmelova's final approval. Live programming was out of the question due to fears by the leadership of being unable to control message output, and radio journalists (both Russian and native) continued their practice of submitting program annotations before airing. Radio's higher state of regulation seemed due to its conformance to national radio practices as well as the fact that its audience was much greater (than TV), and spread throughout the entire okrug.⁷⁰

Despite a more relaxed programming environment for local TV which often utilized the services of reporters from the radio departments, the Eskimo radio staff did not actively seek opportunities for introducing procedural changes in their program output. Instead, the regular spate of shows consisting of village news and cultural items persisted. They held back from delivering critical reports aimed at addressing serious problems facing the Eskimo populations in the listening area.⁷¹

In line with the general attitude of native journalists not to provoke confrontation with Shmelova or Shegulov for fear of reprisal or dismissal from their positions, Eskimo broadcasts would be the last programming venue of Chukotka Radio to change with the times.⁷²

The native intelligentsia, on the other hand, were looking for the Eskimo Department to seize upon the changing winds experienced by the Russian media in addressing native problems and providing relevant commentary of importance to their population. A segment of this group felt the Eskimo staff failed in this regard.⁷³

Disabled by continued adherence to self-censorship, it would take the opening of the Bering Strait to spark serious reevaluation within the department as to what should constitute the future form and content of Eskimo broadcasting.

Impact of the Border Opening on Regional
Broadcasting: June 1988

With the primary forces of change for regional broadcast reform coming from Moscow, the opening of the Chukotka-Alaska border and the forces unleashed by that occurrence took the region's mass media establishment by complete surprise.

As outlined previously, the Watson visit to Anadyr; the Lynn Cox swim at the Diomed Islands; and the climax event, namely, the "Nome-Provideniya Friendship Flight," initiated a new era for Chukotka in general, and its broadcasting structure in particular.

The first practical result of the border opening was the Soviet government's decision to declassify Chukotka as a politically closed area. Immediately this forced a reassessment of administration policies by the Magadan Oblast and Chukotka Okrug Party committees which had to deal with a wide array of issues resulting from the need to hasten socioeconomic reform as well as overseeing the new relationship with Alaska--and the implications this would

have in the region's political, social, economic, and cultural spheres.

The force of Gorbachev's initial calls (made three years earlier) for developing glasnost as a requirement for facilitating the process of perestroika, was now felt more than ever by the Oblast CPSU apparat. Without a revamping of press policies and procedures by state media to service the growing demand for information demanded by leadership and public alike, the enactment of concrete reform would be difficult. While the Chukotka media was technically equipped with the personnel to deliver such vital information, a complete repudiation of censorship policies would have to take place, as well as a radical change in the thought patterns and ideological understanding existing in the minds of press, officialdom, and public alike.

Decades of misinformation and propaganda by the Party quickly unraveled as Chukotkans struggled to accept that a different world (with a higher material status and democratic political environment) lay just across the strait, waiting and ready to begin a new phase of partnership, to which Chukotka could greatly benefit.

Chukotkan broadcasters, in this respect, had to figure out how to implement a system of research and reportage which could adequately meet the new requirements of honesty and openness in covering the burgeoning range of critical coverage issues facing the okrug, as well as the prospect of Alaska. Even so, continued tensions over the degree of free inquiry exhibited by journalists would remain as Party bosses feared the implications of giving the

press free reign.⁷⁴

Eskimo Broadcasting Emerges

Perhaps the greatest impact of the border opening on Chukotka was upon the Eskimo people via their exposure to Alaskan Eskimos in Provideniya during the "Friendship Flight" activities. With this opportunity, Anadyr's Eskimo radio staff collected numerous interviews on tape which gave them their first comprehensive account of the Alaskan's true state of affairs. Nina Enmenkow, in her recollections about that first meeting stated:

I met many people there and had so many tapes recorded, that I could get my listeners to be acquainted with the life in Alaska, and how our relatives and people live in Alaska. I was interested in everything, because we did not know anything at all. That was a new thing for me and my listeners.⁷⁵

Soon after the flight, Enmenkow and Togiak put together a series of reports primarily from these interviews and broadcast them over the following months to a native audience eager for information about their relatives. Such broadcasts were a complete reversal in the usual counterpropaganda programming about Alaska designed for the Chukotka audience--a far cry from the days when Anadyr's editorial leaders forced the staff to produce program titles like "Victory of the Leninist Native Policies in Chukotka," or "Two Worlds, Two Destinies."

Eskimo listeners across Chukotka were shocked to hear reports given by Enmenkow and Togiak--discovering that information provided by Soviet radio about Alaska throughout their lives was basically

untrue and that in fact, their living conditions were worse than their Alaskan relatives.⁷⁶

The staff obtained further information about the lives of Eskimos across the circumpolar North from interviews with visiting ICC representatives who visited Anadyr later that summer.⁷⁷

For the remainder of that year, Eskimo broadcasting was distinguished by its new worldview of Alaska and the lives of its people. Conspicuously absent from the remainder of their program schedule, however, was critical discussion over the status of perestroika among the Eskimos in Chukotka, or information covering the major problems experienced by the people.⁷⁸ While not blocked by the editorial leadership from pursuing generic coverage of the Alaskan Eskimos, the staff maintained extreme caution with the Shmelova administration, and did not venture far into untested waters concerning criticism over domestic affairs.

Changes in Russian Language Coverage

In contrast to the reluctance of native reporters, the border opening sparked a new degree of boldness by the Russian editorial boards at both radio and television. Chukotka Radio journalist Evgeny Berling, who was assigned coverage of the Friendship Flight, noted the general change being experienced at the Anadyr studios:

There had been significant progress in the Russian language media--though there did not come up articles dealing with solutions of common problems, but negative facts. The main idea was that people were freed from the fear of being stigmatized for their political views, and people had an opportunity to voice their opinions and to get more diverse information rather than one-sided information shaded by the Party censors. That has had a significant effect and is of great importance."

Berling's assessment reflected the slow mergence of the regional journalistic environment with that of the central mass media, in which press freedoms and a heightened sense of opportunities for critical coverage of society became noted tendencies.

Two externally instigated events in early 1989, prompted further changes in the media environment for the Chukotka studios: the signing of a protocol with the University of Alaska on information exchange via television; and American press coverage within Chukotka of the joint U.S.-Soviet "Bering Bridge" expedition. The protocol statement officially opened up media relations with Alaska, and acknowledged the priority of establishing an atmosphere of free inquiry and information access between both countries. Journalists at the Anadyr studios saw this signing as a symbol of greater changes to come, especially in the further loosening of censorship controls still in place at that point in time. The protocol paved the way for the later introduction of satellite television broadcasts from Alaska to Chukotka."

The "Bering Bridge" expedition (travelling by ski and dogsled from Anadyr, across the Bering Strait, and finishing in Kotzebue), saw the arrival of over 100 reporters and other Americans to the city. Their presence on Anadyr's streets and in the broadcast studios had a major impact on the Soviets--most of whom had never had contact with Americans.

The Chukotka broadcasting establishment was forced to alter their standard modes of operation to cover the event, as well as abandon their previous negative rhetoric against the U.S., now that

average citizens could for the first time make personal contact and form their own opinions. The Soviet journalists saw first hand the reporting styles and field technology used by the Americans, including their live broadcasts from the field via satellite--further revealing how far behind in many respects the Soviets were in their technical operations. In addition, Anadyr's press corp witnessed the independent mode of journalistic endeavor by the American reporters, contrasting markedly with their own procedures of coverage delivered by official sources and disseminated only after official approval.⁹¹

Of great importance to the Eskimo radio staff, was the opportunity to receive reports concerning the many native villages in Alaska which were on the expedition's itinerary. For Enmenkow, Togiak, and Verbitskaya, the information received further opened up their perspective of life in western Alaska, allowing them to provide indepth coverage on their neighbors. The event also provided the Eskimo staff the chance to schedule future visits to Alaska, now that the Chukotka-Alaska relationship was officially sealed.

"Bering Bridge" served to accelerate further changes in journalistic coverage at the Chukotka studios and solidified the new working relationship between Soviet and Alaskan press. Later that year, a large press contingent from Anadyr (including the Eskimo staff) participated alongside an international press corp covering the already mentioned "Bering Strait Elders Conference" at Nome in November 1989. The conference provided the Eskimo journalists with

a chance to investigate the native Alaskan press situation; develop cooperative programming exchanges with regional stations; and study the journalistic methods of the Americans.⁹²

**Acceleration of National Broadcast Reform and
the Emergence of Independent Media (1989)**

During the previous year--with state television continuing to function in its mode of nomenklatura-Party administration--voices within the media publicly questioned the ability of the state system to enact major reform, and subsequently called for the development of broadcasting structures independent of Gosteleradio authority and financing. In June of 1988, journalist Vladimir Tsvetov's articles advocating the rise of "alternative television" were given prominent display in central newspapers. He wrote of the impossibility of creative effort under ideological control; of TV being monotonous and dominated by dilettantism, depriving viewers of the right of any choice. Salvation from this state of affairs was seen in the creation of a parallel, independent television.⁹³

Tsvetov's writing sparked public controversy which would hasten reevaluations about central control over TV. A pluralistic system of both state and private broadcasting was in the offing, with descriptions for alternative broadcasting defined as "second," "independent," "public," "popular;" and state-owned structures as "official," "protocol," and "presidential" (noting the political shift of Gorbachev's strategy in legitimizing his power base through the office of President rather than General Secretary of the

CPSU) .⁸⁴

Proponents of the existing system saw possibilities for alternative TV by making the two All-Union services (Channel One and Two) independent and competitive with each other, yet even the infrequent airing of programs offering alternative positions were generally not supported by television managers--a situation indicative of why the competitive option held little promise at that moment.⁸⁵

Theoretical debates in the press concerning the operation of state TV and radio brought out serious questions, ie., to what degree could the broadcast structure be considered a reflection of the state insofar as it reflects the interests of the people; what is the optimal relationship between government-owned and other forms of broadcasting; and what is the political status of telecommunications and electronic media?⁸⁶ Forces within the Soviet press became increasingly outspoken in response to these questions, as well as to Gosteleradio's control methods.

On the television screens, these issues were being brought to the forefront of discussion (as well as the larger questions of government reform) via the live televised sessions of the new Congress of People's Deputies.⁸⁷ The nation became fascinated with these sessions, and witnessed first hand how the power of television could be wielded by individuals voicing their views in an uncontrolled and spontaneous live broadcast.

The changing political climate and the growing demand for further press reform soon fomented a series of government decisions

which would lay the foundation for an independent broadcast media system stretching from Leningrad in the west, to Eskimo villages in the Far East.

The New Law of the Press

By December 1989, public pressure for clear changes in the press prompted the USSR Supreme Soviet to introduce a comprehensive revision of existing statutes governing mass media with the proposed law entitled "On Press and Other Forms of Mass Information." Adopted in June 1990, the law represented a breakthrough in Soviet policy, officially conceding the end of the state's monopoly status over the press, while making provisions for individuals, public organizations, and political parties to found and operate media.⁸⁸

While the implications of this law set the tone for further developments in non-state media, its immediate impact on the creation of new media and journalistic activity in Chukotka was negligible. However, it provided the Chukotka studios with the means to break away from the administrative oversight exercised by the Magadan State TV and Radio Committee--though this was more in response to the actions taken by the Chukotka regional government in seeking an overall separation from Magadan's political and economic jurisdiction.

The law's more permissive tenets allowed for movement by state broadcast centers within the Soviet Far East in establishing cooperative programming relationships with other regional studios independent of Central Television's oversight.⁸⁹ The most tangible

sign of change for Chukotka was seen in the creation of small private cable systems in many of the district centers (note: to be explored in a later section). Operations at the Anadyr radio and TV studios did not change perceptibly after the law came into effect, with some staffers noting that certain aspects of the law's provisions did nothing to strengthen or encourage the independence of the journalist.³⁰ However, this period represented an awakening time for Eskimo and Chukchi journalists who slowly became more assertive in their reporting and who for the first time could envision the possibilities for independent native media development.³¹

Later in 1990, the decentralization process taking place was reconfirmed in a presidential decree, "On Democratization and the Development of Television and Radio Broadcasting in the USSR," that redefined the status of state broadcasting.³² President Gorbachev requested the Supreme Soviet to enact a law on broadcast regulation which in essence promulgated the view that state television and radio should be independent of any political party.³³ This was in line with the momentous changes taking place in the USSR's political landscape just prior to the decree, culminating with the repeal of Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution, which ended the legitimate monopoly role of the CPSU.³⁴

Gosteleradio Chairman Leonid Kravchenko stated that the essence of Ostankino's new programming policy would be in making TV less politically-oriented, while introducing more information, entertainment, and cultural-artistic fare. It was an attempt to steer away from the rash of politically exacerbating public affairs

shows and legislative proceedings featured during the previous two years. In addition, Ostankino's Channel One was soon perceived as the "presidential" channel, serving primarily as Gorbachev's mouthpiece for elucidating his administration's policies.⁹⁵

A noticeable facet of the decree affecting Gosteleradio's powerbase was Gorbachev's definition of the organization's property as inviolable, and any seizure of existing state communication facilities to initiate independent broadcasting was precluded.⁹⁶ Further, the decree also forbade the conversion of state television and radio programming into a means for transmitting the personal political views of Gosteleradio employees.⁹⁷ The paradox of seeking change while maintaining traditions of authoritarian media practice emerged, however, as Ostankino's administrators cracked down on those seeking opportunities to reform the system, and the old structure (controlled by the Party apparat) essentially stayed in place. In protest of this state of affairs, the Leningrad TV station was forcibly taken over by the municipal Soviet of People's Deputies, who wanted to assert their right to speak on the air.⁹⁸

In Lithuania, which had just announced its cessation from the USSR, the first action taken by its parliament was to switch off the Leningrad channel in defiance of Gosteleradio's authority. The Soviet government quickly accused Lithuanian Television of denying access to political opponents (ie., Russians), and its Vilnius broadcast facility was subsequently stormed by Soviet army troops and put under Moscow's jurisdiction.

The notions of democracy and independence in media which was

touted by Gorbachev's reforms was shattered by that incident and caused many journalists across the nation to renounce their membership in the CPSU."

Far away in remote Chukotka, what Gorbachev's decree actually implied for independent-minded staff at the Eskimo Department as well as those within the Russian staff, was that subtle censorship still remained an issue to consider whenever a journalist desired to articulate movements or trends in the political realms which they personally supported. In addition, the commandeering of existing production facilities at the radio and TV complex for private work by the local staffs was out of the question.

Independent establishment of broadcast endeavors by recently formed native associations was in reality, impossible to achieve. While they could legally operate a production center using their own finances (which was negligible) and technical resources, the possibilities for creating private broadcasting existed more in theory than practice. Scarcity of available production equipment combined with the fact that there was little to no market for broadcasting equipment made it difficult for both natives and Soviet enthusiasts to start new media ventures.¹⁰⁰

The final obstacles of securing frequencies and broadcast permissions proved fatal to any independent developments in Chukotka. Only ministries or state bodies could apply for frequencies from the Ministry of Communications, and the procedures involved in this process did not allow for private concerns to participate. Their only alternative would be to form joint ventures with either

Gosteleradio or the Ministry of Communications, and this clearly precluded the notion of independent control.¹⁰¹

With the CPSU still strong in Chukotka, and with the impact of Moscow decrees muted by the actions of leaders within the Okruzhnoy Party Committee and State TV Committee (who were against independent media developments), actual decentralization of broadcasting would not occur within the region's state-owned infrastructure during 1990.¹⁰²

The one bright spot for Eskimo broadcasting, however, was the first time appearance of Eskimo-produced television programs in Anadyr aired during the Chukchi TV Department's evening timeslot. Though limited to short reports (5-7 minutes) and produced approximately once per month, this opportunity provided Enmenkow, Verbitskaya and Togiak the chance to experiment and hone their skills with the new medium. With transmission of the broadcasts confined to the Anadyr city region, few Eskimos actually viewed these early programs, but new ground in Eskimo adaptation of media had been broken.¹⁰³

New Alternatives to State Television in Chukotka: Cable and Satellite Systems

As mentioned earlier, cable's penetration into Chukotka began quietly in 1989, and progressed in the region by early 1990, with systems installed in Chukotka's district centers and some settlements. At the national level, a cable association was formed (The Union of Cable and Broadcast Television) which sought to exploit opportunities to develop independent alternative channels.¹⁰⁴

Initially, the development of cable networks was stalled by the opposition of Chairwoman Shmelova, who was against the idea of opening alternative channels of information beyond her committee's control. Private cable nets were soon to appear however, with the majority of these systems originating in apartment complexes. The average cable operation was primarily equipped with a VCR and low power cable modulator with distribution averaging from twenty to seventy apartments. Eventually, Shmelova's opposition waned, especially in light of the new media law's statutes which permitted the operations.¹⁰⁵

Large multipoint distribution systems had not yet penetrated the region primarily due to financing problems, and to the Chukotka broadcast committee's continuing lack of support for cable. They advocated over the air transmission for television distribution instead.¹⁰⁶

Most private cable nets programmed a combination of Soviet, American, or European movies without securing copyright permission. Fourth or fifth-generation tapes with amateur translations were typical for these systems. Technical quality of broadcasts was usually poor, a result of reliance on non-professional equipment and non-broadcast quality source material.

Regulatory, economic, technical, and copyright issues were factors which impaired the expansion of cable in the okrug. There were numerous legal and regulatory problems for individuals and cooperatives seeking licenses with most channels operating illegally on a clandestine basis. Communication authorities often did

not concern themselves with these small systems as long as there was no technical interfere with state broadcast transmissions.

The shortage and expense of coaxial cable and demodulators represented another reason for slowed cable penetration. Subscription fees obtained from small viewer bases often did not provide sufficient capital to expand the network to other customers.¹⁰⁷

Satellite Systems

Following alongside the development of cable, the next technical development for television consumers would be the advent of the home satellite receiver. Before 1987, private satellite ownership was basically prohibited and its technology unavailable (except to those in the engineering community).

Like VCR's and cable, private satellite ownership engendered questions regarding the reception of uncontrolled information from foreign sources. While the Soviet Union had a very developed state satellite system for distributing the two central television and radio channels, control over earth stations was always under the Ministry of Communications, and not viewed as a consumer technology.¹⁰⁸

In 1987, Ted Turner introduced CNN news broadcasts to Soviet hotels in Moscow and Leningrad, marking the first approved reception of American programming inside the USSR using small consumer-type earth stations.¹⁰⁹ Only select individuals could watch the broadcasts--primarily foreign visitors and Soviet citizens granted access to the hotels.

The acquisition of receivers, signal converters (LNB, feed-horn), and dishes was highly controlled and in most cases unavailable commercially. In June 1990, with the passage of the new mass media law, the Soviet Union witnessed the development of a fledgling home satellite industry. The emergence of this industry (primarily understood for private reception of existing Soviet TV channels as well as foreign ones), was dependent on the initiative of private entrepreneurs rather than state-supported efforts.¹¹⁰

The earliest, and subsequently largest domestic satellite equipment manufacturer was the Crosna company. A lone businessman collected a group of Soviet satellite engineers, adapted military equipment designs for consumer versions, purchased a state-owned production plant, and singlehandedly established the Soviet consumer satellite market.¹¹¹

Though there is little information on when the first DBS systems were installed in the okrug, the most likely places for its appearance was in remote areas unserved by central television. While hundreds of systems were set up in the central regions of the country (most accessing international signals), a few made their way to reindeer camps, hunting lodges, construction sites, and other spots in Chukotka and neighboring Kamchatka.¹¹²

Apparently, no systems were installed in Eskimo villages, partially because all had at least one state channel available, and few would have been able to afford its purchase.

Crosna would eventually install an experimental downlink at the Ministry of Communications building in Anadyr which received

central television signals, but the system was not offered for public consumption.¹¹³

Alaskan Television in Magadan Oblast and Chukotka

One of the most interesting applications of consumer satellite systems in the USSR was the introduction of American television broadcasts to the Far East as relayed by the State of Alaska Satellite Television Project.

In January 1990, the first American satellite earth station was installed in Magadan (by this writer) allowing Soviet viewers to witness the U.S. State of the Union speech by President George Bush.¹¹⁴ Additional earth stations were installed in Anadyr (November 1990) and Provideniya (March 1991), providing reception to all viewers in these towns.¹¹⁵

These systems provided a new "window" into American society and probably altered a few perceptions previously held by Soviets of American life, contrary to those fomented by Soviet press and television reporting. Eskimos in Provideniya could regularly watch brief Alaskan native news segments on a local Anchorage television station.¹¹⁶

The Alaskan channel's impact on viewing audiences could be partially felt through its ability to provide a language environment conducive to learning English. The Alaskan broadcasts helped Soviet consumers gain some sense of the role of commercial advertising in a market-driven economy and provided first hand knowledge of retail prices on consumer products through the daily airing of

the game show "The Price is Right." A new phenomenon occurred in these towns while this program was aired: workers shifted their morning breaks to coincide with the show and gathered to discuss prices for comparison purposes.¹¹⁷

Though programming benefits were debateable for an audience unable to speak English and unfamiliar with the societal orientation these programs were based on, it is clear that Alaskan television was having an impact on how Russian viewers gauged the quality and effectiveness of their own national and regional services. The satellite channel's popularity also coincided with an increase of VCR ownership in the region.

After the opening of the Bering Strait, many Soviet visitors to Alaska made it a priority to bring back televisions and VCR's. It was a common sight to watch Soviet delegations line up at the Anchorage International Airport boarding gates with boxes containing multistandard TV equipment, as these were often their primary purchases. American movies played on these sets gave many Chukotka residents, in conjunction with Alaskan TV, a daily televised view of American life. Many people would gather in the apartment of a new owner to view the latest movies brought from Alaska or watch the RATNET broadcasts. Over the next few years, the availability of foreign video libraries increased in cities and villages across Chukotka.¹¹⁸

For the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, daily access to Alaska satellite broadcasts provided much needed information on Alaska and the rest of the nation. To the dismay of many

staffers, however, the broadcasts revealed entirely different norms of programming, content, and production codes, displaying a level of professionalism which seemed far beyond the ability of the local studios to equal. It gave them a yardstick to measure their own capability, while giving journalists a new appreciation for their Alaskan colleagues.

It would be difficult for Chukotka broadcasting, given its orientation, controlling structure, and technical base, to break from its entrenched operative mode in the effort to revitalize and change in a manner more reflective of what they viewed on American programs. Change would require a transformation of Soviet broadcast regulation and financing strategies before any modification of Anadyr's practices could take place.¹¹⁹

Gosteleradio Restructuring: Committee to Company

Early in 1991, Gorbachev issued a second decree on broadcast restructuring which officially dissolved the State Committee for Television and Radio (Gosteleradio) and created the All-Union State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company. Gosteleradio's assets and executive staff were transferred to the new company and a separate council was created to coordinate operations with the broadcast systems within the various Soviet republics (which would now work independently of Moscow). The move also allowed for the reorganization of regional broadcast studios, though Magadan and Anadyr declined this option at the time.¹²⁰

In signing the decree, Gorbachev elaborated three major points: that the monopoly of television and radio broadcasting must remain (a clear retreat from the existing Law on the Press which advocated decentralization); that state property could only be turned over to a company (ie. a reorganized local-regional broadcast entity like that in Chukotka) which conformed to rigid Party positions; and that the administrative relationship between the Union and individual republic broadcast companies be fashioned on the basis of strict vertical subordination.¹²¹

Despite the limitations of the decree, the more daring studios gained greater freedom in setting goals and detaching from Moscow--as far as funding and the technical infrastructure would permit. In maintaining federal control over broadcasting, the All-Union Channel One was designated an organ of the national Supreme Soviet and Congress of People's Deputies, while the government of the RSFSR remained the only Soviet republic without television and radio stations of its own. This perceived inequity--as viewed by the republic's parliament and government--became a major source of controversy between them and the federal authorities.

Convinced that operating their own broadcast system was an inherent component of the republic's sovereignty, the RSFSR authorities went ahead and formed the All-Russian TV and Radio Company, operating within the jurisdiction of the RSFSR Ministry of Press and Information.¹²²

Russia soon demanded control over the second national channel for use by its own production company. The All-Union company balk-

ed at these demands, holding the view that its second national network could not be turned over to any single republic without sufficient financial compensation.¹²³

With the Union company (in conjunction with the USSR Ministry of Communications) in control over the entire technical infrastructure across Russia (including Anadyr's studio facilities and transmission network), its chairman ruled out any disbursement of broadcast property, as well as provisions which could give Russia its own channel. This action further hampered the efforts of Radio Russia, which a year earlier, had their timeslots over the two All-Union Radio channels (Radio 1 and Mayak) removed in a backlash over controversies pitting republic interests against union policies.¹²⁴

In the early months of 1991, the All-Russian Television and Radio Broadcasting Company was given roughly four hours on Union TV Channel 2's weekly schedule, but its relationship with the Union company's leadership progressively worsened.¹²⁵

During the spring of 1991, Gorbachev maintained the primacy of the All-Union's right in depriving the Russian Republic of obtaining their stated broadcast demands. Further, negative sentiments by the central government displayed toward not only Radio Russia, but also against positions taken by the RFSFR state bodies (the republic's Congress of People's Deputies and Supreme Soviet) served to increase the political turmoil taking place within the country.¹²⁶

In June, as the impending *Union Treaty* was about to be signed (which would radically realign the political nature and republican

relationship of the Soviet Union), the prospects of the RSFSR not signing the treaty became a possibility, especially since it was seemingly denied the information infrastructure deemed vital for promoting its sovereign actions. On June 10, the USSR Ministry of Communications stripped programming transmitted for Russian TV from across the USSR of its priority status, representing a further escalation of hostilities directed against the interests of the RSFSR and the growing power of recently-elected Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The opportunity for reversing this state of affairs would eventually manifest itself the following August.¹²⁷

Chukotka during the interim

Throughout this period (early 1991), the Chukotka broadcast structure and studios experienced little change, as could be expected from their isolation from the central political scene. There was no official reorganization of the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee even after Gorbachev's second decree creating the Union company, though there was further relaxation in program operations, primarily in television, but not radio. The Eskimo Radio staff by that time had sent reporter Sveta Togiak to Nome, Alaska, where she worked with Alaskan native leaders while gathering further information for Anadyr's Eskimo broadcasts.¹²⁸

Contacts with native journalists in Alaska were made by the staff and cultural program relationships were discussed. Critical discussions of native problems began to be aired frequently by Enmenkow and Verbitskaya, especially after the founding of the

national "Association of Indigenous Peoples of the Soviet North," and its regional divisions in Chukotka. Reflecting the growing movement of native political empowerment, critical reportage and a more comprehensive viewpoint concerning the circumpolar Eskimo world became central components of broadcast content.¹²⁹

Programs of a political nature directed against Chukotka's ruling authorities were still somewhat absent in the Eskimo Department's material, as CPSU power persisted up until the days of the August coup. While maintaining their attitude of caution with the heads of the Radio Committee, the Eskimo staff were able to adopt a more open attitude and felt some of the advantages in press freedom which had, by now, become an ever-widening reality experienced by those working within the Soviet mass media system.

The August 1991 Coup

The foundation of the Soviet Union, along with its notions of press theory and control established over a seventy year period, collapsed during a three day struggle in mid-August. On August 19, in a last ditch attempt to reimpose hardline Party control over the country by sabotaging the signing of the proposed Union Treaty, The State Committee for Emergency Situations in the USSR (composed of eight Soviet ministers led by Vice President Yanaev) placed Mikhail Gorbachev under house-arrest and proclaimed themselves in charge of the country.¹³⁰

In Moscow, politicians immediately labeled the action a *putsch* (coup) and the nation was plunged in a crisis of control--

the outcome of which was unknown by all parties involved. A battle had begun between the forces of communism and advocates of democratic rule in government, with the winners determining the future of the state. The next day, Yanaev and his associates ordered the shutdown of independent print press and took control of the newspaper PRAVDA (which delivered the initial pronouncements of the State Committee).¹³¹ They further assumed control over the All-Union TV Channel One while the second national channel's transmissions were interrupted. Normal programming over Channel One and All-Union Radio was preempted, while the studios of the All-Russian TV and Radio Company were prevented from broadcasting.¹³²

On August 20, television viewers in Magadan Oblast and Chukotka expecting the normal morning schedule instead were treated to a series of music concerts which were interrupted by announcements describing the orders of the state emergency committee. Information from the government of the RSFSR and President Yeltsin was withheld from central broadcasts, and news reporting from Moscow was absent. It was difficult for audiences across the USSR to gain a clear understanding of the events unfolding in the capital by way of central broadcasting.¹³³

The only possibility for state broadcasters in the oblast to obtain visual information from the capital during the first few days was through the Alaska satellite TV earth stations installed in Magadan, Anadyr, and Provideniya: RATNET programming included regular reports by the NBC News crew stationed in Moscow.

Regional radio and television varied in the way it delivered

broadcasts during the putsch, with the actions of the staffs reflecting the struggles going on between supporters of the coup leaders and those against. In Anadyr, the acting directors for state TV and radio, Alexander Shegulov and Natalya Popova, issued orders to transmit the decrees of the State Committee and prevented the airing of statements by Yeltsin (who opposed the coup) which were received via teletype. This was in response to the decisions issued by the coup leaders, and those given by the State Organization for Protection of Rights of Chukotka (headed by leaders of the okrug Soviet, KGB, military, Internal Affairs Ministry, and prosecutor's office) which refused permission to air or publish documents from the RFSFR President or Supreme Soviet Presidium.¹³⁴

While the CPSU hierarchy in Anadyr moved quickly to support the coup, a majority of the journalist's collective denounced the prohibitions, yet followed the Chukotka security committee's orders during the first two days. The delay in taking positions on the coup (either pro or con) revealed a press corp still afraid to stand up against the Party apparat, and while most claimed it was prudent to take a neutral position, their fear of standing against the coup would spark bitter controversies in the journalistic community later on. On August 19 and 20, the broadcast committee was instructed not to produce any programming locally (including Eskimo radio), but to simply retransmit the radio and TV channels from Moscow controlled by the State Committee.¹³⁵

The need for independent information and confirmation of the true situation in Moscow prompted deputies of the Chukotka Okrug

Soviet--who supported Yeltsin--to disregard initial teletypes coming from the Interior Ministry and central broadcast reports. They instead asked a visiting American to forward messages from their assembly to the Russian White House via the U.S. Embassy in Moscow by telephone.¹³⁶

During the same time period in Magadan, a similar situation happened concerning the lack of information and the indecision of various groups on whether to support the coup or not. Having no video information about the Moscow events, the TV committee's only source came from RATNET and other U.S. news services operating on the Alaska satellite. Images of tanks on the streets of Moscow, as well as other events in the city were viewed from the RATNET signal by local journalists who immediately described what they saw during their local evening newscasts.¹³⁷

The residents of Provideniya were perhaps recipients of the best independent coverage of the coup events in the entire country, since the RATNET signal was beamed directly into every apartment 24 hours daily. Eskimo viewers in the city had the same source of news as their relatives in St. Lawrence and other parts of the Alaska who anxiously watched and waited for a conclusion to the coup. On August 20, the Alaska signal was cut off, but quickly resumed after protests had been lodged from around the city.¹³⁸

Role of Telecommunications During the Coup

One major miscalculation by the leaders of the State Emergency Committee was in underestimating the role telecommunications

would play in determining the final outcome. While they sent army troops to take over the Ostankino studios and the main telephone exchange, the coup leaders were hard pressed to impose the type of control over communications which was possible in the USSR before the advent of the information revolution. They forgot to cut the phone lines.¹³⁹

Though it was momentarily possible to wrest control of the national TV and radio channels, it was impossible for the State Committee and its supporting personnel to counter the methods of communication used by the opposition in the form of cellular telephones, fax machines, e-mail, video cameras, satellite systems, shortwave radios, xerox machines, computer publishing equipment, and numerous devices which allowed people across the country to receive, discuss and transmit information during the coup.

Access to these technologies could empower the citizenry to alter the results of prearranged government actions for the first time, thus making it possible to change the nature of Soviet political life.

The clearest example to be seen was in the strategy employed both by Yeltsin's government and individual supporters of democracy who used such tools to communicate quickly (via telephone lines and teletype) across the country, and to international forums with their views and subsequent calls for deposing the coup leaders. This was possible because the Emergency Committee did not shut down Moscow's main satellite relay station.¹⁴⁰ Access to teletype messages sent by Yeltsin, the Russian Supreme Soviet, and other gov-

ernment representatives provided pro-democracy advocates with ammunition to counter the efforts of the Party apparat which had so quickly lined up in favor of the *putschists*.

In Anadyr and Magadan, many journalists secretly wrote reports and stored them deep into their computer hard drives, waiting for the earliest opportunity to transmit them to the local *typographia* (printing plant) for publishing and distribution. Armed with information received from telephone calls to friends in Moscow and other places; equipped with images from foreign news sources (both TV and radio), and able to send their articles to a wide circulation via e-mail or fax, reporters had the opportunity to disseminate information across the oblast in ways which would have been impossible in earlier years.¹⁴¹

In the meantime, native villages without access to telecom devices received information about the coup through the traditional means of wall papers distributed at various locations. Eskimos could read statements issued by the Russian President, Supreme Soviet, and Ministry of the RFSFR among others.

By August 21, events had changed to where it became clear that the coup had failed. Leaders of the State Committee were arrested; Gorbachev emerged from his confinement declaring the CPSU dissolved; and the Party authorities in Chukotka declared their allegiance to the government of the RFSFR.

That day, Boris Yeltsin, issued a decree, "About the Means of Mass Information of the RFSFR." As a result, he dismissed the head of the All-Union TV and Radio Company, Leonid Kravchenko

(replaced by Yegor Yakovlev), and the organization was appropriated by the government of the Russian Republic. The first All-Union TV channel was placed under control of the RFSFR for the creation of an All-Republic television network (eventually termed "Ostankino"), with the second channel also appropriated by the RFSFR. All of these services (including All-Union Radio channels and the regional television and radio companies across Russia) were placed under the authority of the Ministry of Press and Information of the RFSFR, headed by Michael Polteranin.¹⁴² Yeltsin ended his decree by stating:

The heads of all means of mass information of the Russian Federation must perform quick work to take the information about decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the RFSFR, the President of the RFSFR, and the government of the Russian Federation...to the people.¹⁴³

Aftermath of the Coup

Yeltsin's administration quickly began the dismemberment of various All-Union ministries and committees overseeing press, broadcast, and telecommunication structures. With the entire government system in great flux during the coup's aftermath, the RSFSR's bold retaliation against every vestige of Soviet authority was clearly reflected by the way it assumed control over the state broadcast structure. Polteranin's office had de facto power over all aspects of television and radio, both nationwide, as well as at the oblast and okrug levels.¹⁴⁴

It would be up to this ministry to determine how the reorganization of state broadcasting would be accomplished, in terms of

its legal structure, personnel makeup, technical infrastructure, program policies, and finance. The ministry's influence equally extended to the realm of nurturing the development of independent broadcasting, which at this point was in its infancy, but of personal interest to Polteranin, a former journalist.¹⁴⁵

The failed coup signaled the ushering in of a new era for Russia, not only from a political perspective, but also in the understanding of the role of the press and information technology in society. The potential for entirely new developments in the way information could be managed--based on democratic notions of the inviolability of freedom of thought, expression, and the press--loomed large in the minds of many throughout the state broadcast system. The end of the coup served as a starting point for seizing upon new opportunities in journalistic endeavor which now appeared possible under the current political situation.

Despite early expectations for a complete makeover of the broadcast structure, it was clear that a clean break from former assumptions over the nature, administration, and future direction of mass media in Russia would not be easily accomplished, especially as it depended on those who now wielded power within the Yeltsin government.

While the doctrine of a monopolized television was clearly on its way to collapse, the old Soviet notion of broadcasting being primarily a tool for expressing the opinions of those in power, did not in any sense disappear with the rise of Yeltsin's authority. This was evidenced by the second national TV Channel becoming a

reflector of Yeltsin's policies and pronouncements, while staying dependent on subsidies from the federal budget which Yeltsin now controlled. During the days following the August events, however, the appearance of Russian control over television was not deemed a negative consequence by most, but an act which signified the triumph over the last vestiges of Soviet broadcast control.¹⁴⁶

In addition, a positive aspect of change could be seen in the new possibilities perceived by promoters of private broadcasting as well as the many individual production studios within the central and regional state broadcast organizations. While in the months after the coup it was too early to assess the true potential for these entities, decentralization within the state organs and outside private development held out the most promise for effecting radical change in broadcasting.¹⁴⁷

To summarize, the future of Russian mass media would be partially subject to the ebb and flow of continuing political and economic crises which continued inside the country after the coup and up to (and beyond) the breakup of the USSR. In addition, the entire media system would still have to come to terms with an environment of government authority which at times wavered between authoritarian and democratic tendencies, since the power to enact censorship at will could be accomplished at Yeltsin's prerogative.

Post-Coup Changes in Broadcast Structures

As noted earlier, control of all broadcasting after the August events was assigned to the Russian Ministry of Press and Infor-

The End of the USSR

The final fate of the USSR was sealed when on December 21, 1991, the presidents of eleven former Soviet Republics meeting in Khazakstan announced the end of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The declaration, known as the Alma Alta Accords, was the final act in dissolving the Soviet central government (ending Mikhail Gorbachev's official role as USSR President), while officially embracing the sovereignty of the new Russian Federation. The CIS accords essentially represented an economic and political relationship of independent republics without a common citizenry.¹⁴⁸

Six days after the CIS proclamation, the Russian Federation issued its first law on mass media which set the course for future developments in broadcasting. In it, the rights of establishing independent mass media operations were provided to individuals, private groups, and state organizations. In addition, Yeltsin affirmed the policy of maintaining state-subsidized broadcasting in tandem with private mass media.¹⁴⁹

Realignments in the administration of the post-coup structure were then made: the old All-Union TV Company operating Central TV Channel One was liquidated, and its administration rechristened as Ostankino--with the mission to become a CIS-oriented channel. The second national channel (designated as the main government service) continued operations under the All-Russian State Television and Radio Company, but was now subordinate to the jurisdiction of the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation.¹⁵⁰

In addition, the old All-Union Ministry of Communications was dissolved and a new administration placed under the authority of Yeltsin's cabinet of ministers. Renamed as the Russian Ministry of Communications, Informatics, and Space, and led by Minister Vladimir Bulgak, the ministry assumed many of the responsibilities and obligations of the former All-Union service, and was charged with setting priorities and objectives for telecom developments in the republic. The ministry maintained control over the state's technical broadcast infrastructure, including Chukotka.¹⁵¹

Reorganization in Chukotka

While restructuring occurred quickly at the national level, reorganization of the state broadcast system at the oblast and okrug levels proceeded at a slower, more confused pace. Since the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee had declined prior reorganization into a company during the Gosteleradio change process of 1990, it was now forced (by the new media law) to liquidate its administrative structure. This was necessary in order to be in compliance with new regulations designed to eliminate vestiges of the Communist-era organization overseeing broadcasting in the region.¹⁵²

With another law on the federalization of state property recently introduced, the Chukotka State Committee had a further reason to complete the restructuring process since their physical plant and utilization of Ministry of Communications-owned transmission facilities was under question.¹⁵³ Of greatest concern to

those facing the prospects of reorganization were three issues; administrative control, finance, and program policies.

Just prior to the enactment of the new media law on the 27th, the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee was abolished, Chairwoman Ludmilla Shmelova was dismissed (by vote of the radio and TV staff), and a new entity entitled the "Chukotka State Teleradio Company" emerged. The company was composed of three founding entities; the Ministry of Press and Information; the state administration of Chukotka (Governor's Office); and the worker's collective of the Teleradio Company in conjunction with the TV-Radio Center.¹⁵⁴

The new company's internal administrative structure represented a mergence of both radio and TV operations under one general director, with managing directors for TV and radio immediately under him. Some questions arose as to the legality of the move since it was done before the law took effect, but nevertheless, the new Teleradio Company's authority was recognized and confirmed by the Ministry of Press and Information in Moscow.¹⁵⁵

The reorganization was hailed as the beginning of a new era of broadcasting in Chukotka, especially now that it was freed from the type of restraint imposed previously by CPSU oversight. Proponents of freedom of the press looked forward to the new possibilities made available by restructuring, but at the same time, the implications of this move, combined with the breakup of the USSR, necessitated cautious concern as to the future viability of state-subsidized broadcasting in the region, not to mention private media

development.

For the Teleradio Company, such implications included; how state financing could be secured to both maintain and improve existing operations; how broadcasting could adapt to new conditions of a free market and commercialization; and how programming would be reoriented to meet audience needs and expectations. The process of assessment and realization of concrete measures to deal with these implications would evolve over a long period of time amidst the general uncertainty affecting broadcasting throughout the country. The primary concern to both state and private broadcast advocates came down to the simple question of finance, while all other issues could be dealt with accordingly.

Given the collapse of the old union financing structure for broadcasting, the Teleradio Company's administration quickly concluded that funding from Moscow and the Governor's office would barely cover staff and basic transmission costs, with no monies available for upgrading services or expansion of TV coverage throughout the okrug via satellite.

But with the removal of Shmelova, the election of Vladimir Tckachov as Chairman, and the complete breakdown of the old system of oversight, Chukotka state broadcasting entered a new era, with the output of programming to be decided upon and disseminated by individual rather than central control.

Eskimo and Russian programming staffs were absolutely free in determining the form and content of broadcasts, since new Chairman Tckachov stated that programming decisions would be the re-

sponsibility of the individual studio staffs and not his office; anyone could do what he or she wanted. Tckachov's directive could thus be construed as a symbolic act in declaring the transition of state broadcasting in Chukotka from totalitarian to democratic rule.¹⁵⁶

The days of press restriction so long maintained by the tenets of Leninist theory had finally been put to rest, and for the first time, broadcasting could commence in both state-supported and private modes. Such was the new philosophy of broadcasting defined for Chukotka at the beginning of 1992.

For the Eskimos of Chukotka, especially, the time had finally come where new possibilities for media empowerment, both inside the state structure and independently, appeared within their grasp.

NOTES

1. For a cogent analysis on the fundamental premises of perestroika and glasnost during its first few years of implementation, see; Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Grand Failure (New York: COLLIER BOOKS, Macmillian Publishing Company, 1990).
2. Sergei Muratov, "Soviet Television and the Structure of Broadcasting Authority," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991): 176.
3. Elena Androunas, "The Struggle for Control over Soviet Television," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991): 185.
4. Muratov, "Soviet Television and the Structure of Broadcasting Authority," 176.
5. Ibid., 178.
6. Ljubosh, interview by author.
7. Anri Vartanov, "Television as Spectacle and Myth," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991): 166.
8. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 May 1995, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.
9. Ivetta Knyazeva, "This is Radio and Television Mosocw," Soviet Life 5 (May 1988): 11.
10. Brzezinski, The Grand Failure, 43.
11. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
12. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 May 1995, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.
13. Ibid.
14. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Director, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Committee, interview by author, 9 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.
15. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 7 October 1995, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.
16. Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 May 1995.
17. Ibid.

18. Marilyn J. Young and Michael K. Launer, "Redefining Glasnost in the Soviet Media: The Recontextualization of Chernobyl," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991): 104.

19. Ellen Mickiewicz, SPLIT SIGNALS (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 64.

20. Mark Long, World Satellite Almanac. The Complete Guide to Soviet Transmission and Technology (Indianapolis: Howard W. Sams & Co., 1987), 100; The top Soviet TV shows in 1986 were, #1 Vremya (nightly news), #2 "International Panorama" (Sunday roundtable discussion of international affairs), #3 "What, Where, When" (Q & A program for youth), #4 "Farmer's Hour" (agricultural tips for rural viewers), #5 "Kinopanorama" (A showcase of new films), #6 "World of Animals" (nature program), #7 "Traveller's Club" (travelogue series), #8 "Incredible/Obvious" (popular science program), #9 "Zdarovia" (health and fitness series).

21. Muratov, 173.

22. Ivetta Knyazeva, "MEET THE MAN YOU KNOW," Soviet Life 5 (May 1988): 16. Vladimir Pozner noted that the first space bridge of this type was on September 5, 1992, when a collected group of Soviet youth at the Ostankino TV center watched a live rock concert from San Bernadino, California, with the California crowd being also able to see the Soviet audience.

23. Ellen Mickiewicz, Split Signals, 49.

24. Anri Vartanov, "Television as Spectacle and Myth," 170.

25. Yelena Chekalova, "Glasnost Tumbles Down on TV," Moscow News, (No. 25) 1991, 14.

26. Ibid.

27. Vartanov, "Television as Spectacle and Myth." 162.

28. This author's wife appeared on a segment of "Vzglad" in 1987.

29. Vartanov, 163.

30. Nina Aghisheva, "TV: LITTLE CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM," Moscow News (No. 2) 1991, 4.

31. Vartanov, 170.

32. Muratov, 179-180.

33. Novosti Press Agency, "Human Rights as seen by both Sides," Soviet Life 5 (May 1988): 13.

34. Ibid.

35. Svetlana Kolesnik, "Advertising and Cultural Politics," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991): 51.

36. Kolesnik, 52.

37. Kolesnik, "Advertising and Cultural Politics," 52.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Yelena Chekalova, "Glasnost Tumbles Down on TV," 14.

41. Ibid.

42. Muratov, 179; Sergey Muratov, "Television and Democracy: who will prevail," Moscow News (No. 14) 1991, 10.

43. The investigative news program "600 Seconds," produced at the Leningrad TV studios led the new programming developments, for its audaciousness and style of investigative journalism, however, it did not get nationwide distribution. Other shows of note included "Dvenadtsati etazh" (The Twelfth Floor), "Mir i molodezh" (World and Youth), and "Deistvuyushchiyetsa" (CAST), from, Vartanov, "TV as Spectacle and Myth," 162.

44. Ellen Mickiewicz, "Ethnicity and Television News," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991): 153.

45. Ibid.

46. Mickiewicz, SPLIT SIGNALS, 12.

47. Mickiewicz, 11.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Evgeny Kuchin, director for the Chukchi Television Department in Anadyr noted that even by 1992, few Eskimos owned VCR's, and that most likely, the first VCR in the village of Siriniki was one brought over by Alaskan Eskimo John Waghiyi.

51. Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 May 1995.

52. Collective of the Chukotka Teleradio Committee, "Open Letter to the Chairwoman of the Chukotka Teleradio Committee," Sovietskaya Chukotka, 5 October 1991, 4.

53. Valeri Ivanoff, Editor, Sovietskaya Chukotka, interview by author, 10 March 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

54. Gunnar Knapp and Elisa Miller, ALASKA-SOVIET FAR EAST TRADE: OPPORTUNITIES AND STRATEGIES (Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Office of International Trade, 1988), II-9.

55. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 7 October 1995, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.

56. Ibid.

57. Ivetta Knyazeva. "This is Radio and Television Moscow," 10.

58. Pyotr Smirnov, "The Breakfast Show," Soviet Life 5 (May 1988), 2.

59. Ibid.

60. Knyazeva, 11.

61. Yuri Shugaev, deputy-Director, Magadan State Communications Committee, Division of Land Lines and Microwave Systems, interview by author, Magadan, Russia, 1 December 1991.

62. Muratov, "The Structure of Broadcasting Authority," 177.

63. Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 May 1995.

64. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 7 May 1996, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Tatiana Ochirgina, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

68. Evgeny Berling, Journalist, interview by author, 28 January 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

69. Ivanov, interview by author.

70. Enmenkow, interview by author.

71. Sveta Togiak, Murgen Nutenot, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

72. Enmenkow, interview by author; This writer was given the impression that the native journalists were all very afraid of the authorities both at the Radio Committee and the Anadyr CPSU committee, and consequently did nothing to provoke their wrath. This attitude was prevalent among the majority of Eskimos in Chukotka.

73. Ochirgina, interview by author.

74. Ljubosh, interview by author, 7 October 1995.

75. Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992.

79. Berling, interview by author.

80. "Protocol between the University of Alaska Statewide System and the Government Committee of the Soviet Ministry of the USSR for Television and Radio Broadcasting (Chukotka Okrug Committee) and the Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, Signed February 28, 1989, Anadyr, Russia," Chukotka State Teleradio Company archives, Anadyr, Russia. This writer served as the representative for the University of Alaska.

81. Ljubosh, interview by author, 7 October 1995; This writer served as a journalist in covering the Bering Bridge Expedition, and delivered television reports from an Alascom-installed satellite earth station mounted on the frozen ocean directly between the Diomed Islands in March 1989.

82. This writer served as the primary broadcast coordinator for the Elder's Conference, and worked extensively with the Soviet press corp.

83. Sergei Muratov, "Television and Democracy: who will Prevail?" Moscow News, (No. 14), 1991, 10.

84. Ibid.

85. Vartanov, "Television as Spectacle and Myth," 169.

86. Muratov, "Soviet Television and the Structure of Broadcasting Authority," 182.

87. Max Tackachenko, editor, North American Service, Radio Moscow, interview by author, 1 February 1992, Moscow, Russia, tape recording.

88. USSR Supreme Soviet, "ZAKON Soyuzu Sovyetski Sotzialisticheskikh Respublic O PECHATI I DROOGI SREDSTVAH MASSOVOY INFORMATSI" (Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, About Press and Other Means of Mass Information), Sovietskaya Kultura, 5 December 1989, 3.

89. Muratov, "Soviet Television and the Structure of Broadcasting Authority," 177.

90. Berling, interview by author.

91. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 4 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

92. Elena Androuanas, "The Struggle for Control over Soviet Television," Journal of Communication 41 (Spring 1991), 198.

93. USSR Office of the President, "Ukaz," Izvestia, 19 July 1990, 1.

94. Mickiewicz and Jamison, "Ethnicity and Soviet Television News," 152.

95. Chekalova, "Glasnost Tumbles Down on TV," 14.

96. Olga Bychkova, "New Company, old ways," Moscow News, (No. 7) 1991, 5.

97. Mickiewicz and Jamison, 152.

98. Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992.

99. Ibid; Ivanoff, interview by author.

100. Ochirgina, interview by author, 4 May 1992; Ljubosh, interview by author, 6 May 1992.

101. Androuanas, "The Struggle for Control over Soviet Television," 198.

102. Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 April 1992.

103. Ochirgina, interview by author.

104. Mickiewicz and Jamison, 151.

105. The distribution depends on the initiative of the cable operator, his funding sources, and the availability of coaxial cable, which was in short supply across the country.

106. Vladimir Tkachov, Chairman, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 5 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

107. This writer discussed cable developments with numerous operators in Provideniya and Anadyr during this period. Most solicited technical assistance from this writer.

108. Vladimir Chuganov, director, Chukotka Office of the Russian Republic Ministry of Communication, Informatics, and Space, interview by author, 5 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

109. Ken Schaeffer, President, Orbita Communications, interview by author, 12 December 1987, New York, New York.

110. USSR Supreme Soviet, "On Press and Other Means of Mass Information."

111. This information was gained during a personal visit by this writer to the Crosna Manufacturing facility in Moscow, Russia in June 1992.

112. Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee staff, "Something about Radio and TV in Chukotka," Sovietskaya Chukotka, 5 October 1991, 4.

113. The Crosna Company installed downlinks in Anadyr in order to prove their operational capability. For unknown reasons, nothing was done with the downlinks. Personal observation by this writer during visits to Anadyr in 1989 and 1990.

114. Hal Bernton, "The Super Bowl: Soviets are apt to miss out," Anchorage Daily News, 27 January 1990, 1; Lana Creer-Harris, "Johnson returns," The Nome Nugget, 15 February 1990, 3; Hal Bernton, "Soviet Students pick up American TV," Anchorage Daily News, 14 February 1990, 2; The earth station was purchased and installed by Daniel Johnson, on behalf of the University of Alaska Statewide System, at the Magadan State Television and Radio Committee television studio, Magadan, Russia, January, 1990. A second system was installed at the Magadan State Pedagogical Institute later that year by this writer on behalf of the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

115. "Na Ekranax Teleprogammi Alyaski" (On the screen--Alaska teleprograms), Polyarnik, (Provideniya, Russia), 24 November 1990, 1; A. Gorlinski, "Alyaska predlagaet televizioni most" (Alaska offers television bridge), Polyarnik, 29 November 1990, 3;

A. Gorlinski, "Alyaskinskoye Televidenye-Okno V Drugoy Mir" (Alaska Television-Window on another world), Polyarnik, 23 November 1990, 2; The Magadan and Anadyr installations were done by Daniel Johnson and David Eagleson. Eagleson personally purchased the Anadyr system, which was placed at the facilities of the Anadyr State Television and Radio Committee; Johnson and Jim Stimpfle purchased an earth station which was given to the people of Provideniya and placed at the Provideniya Orbita station in Uriliki.

116. This programs was Alaska Native News with Jeannie Green, produced by Jeannie Green and KIMO Television, Anchorage, Alaska. Green later developed HeartBeat Alaska which was a native-oriented news show which could be picked up by Chukotka Eskimo viewers. Green also produced a program segment with this writer, specifically addressing Eskimos in Provideniya (April 1992).

117. Alaskan-Russian Far East News, "RATNET beams New Years Greeting," Russian Far East 2 (1992) 2.

118. From this writer's personal experience.

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CHAPTER 9

TRANSITION IN STATE-SUPPORTED BROADCAST MEDIA IN WESTERN ALASKA AND POST-SOVIET BROADCASTING IN CHUKOTKA

The Beginning of Decline in State Broadcast Subsidization in Alaska: Television

The years of 1986-87, witnessed the beginning of a general decline in state budget revenues, and funding for the distribution of television (transmitters, satellite uplink/downlinks, tape delay center, and maintenance services) declined 26 percent. Consequently, the State Legislature withdrew funding for LEARNAlaska (1986), and villages were left without educational television services. The state began a systematic effort to review its support of RATNET looking at ways to reduce service costs while exploring options to get out of the television business.¹

In 166 out of 248 communities, RATNET was the sole source of television programming, reflecting the growing penetration of cable in bush Alaska, which to some, provided the context for the state's eventual withdrawal of the service. By January 1988, RATNET remained the only entertainment channel available for over 60 percent of native villages statewide, and for 30 percent of the Eskimos in the Bering Strait region.²

Despite the new financial pressures, Alaska had reached a point where its satellite distribution system became one of the largest (number of sites) in the world. From the perspective of the State of Alaska's telecommunication policy organizers, it appeared that the Eskimo people were well taken care of since recep-

tion was provided to every village and the RATNET Council was given power over programming decisions. This viewpoint, however, rested more from a framework based on technical issues rather than effective programming on behalf of natives. Endorsing the former view, by 1985, Alaska had achieved what Alaska Senator Ted Stevens had called for fifteen years earlier on the U.S. Senate floor:

This is the beginning...Adequate intrastate communication, as well as communication to the lower 48, has always been a problem--one that 20th century communication advances has only partially solved. No Alaskan community enjoys the benefits of live television...We must go now to the satellite system which offers the ultimate solution to our communication needs.³

To illustrate the latter view, Chairman of the Alaska State House Special Committee on Telecommunications, Red Boucher, stated in 1989:

We created a satellite network ...that brought information, education, and entertainment in a new form to parts of the state that had no telephone, television or radio...but the policy infrastructure that created them was short-lived. The emphasis had been placed on the delivery system, not the product, technology, not information. In a word, without a plan without a vision. We couldn't even be sure that systems such as RATNET were doing more good than harm in rural Alaska. We'd lost our policy leadership and we were suffering because of it. We're still suffering.⁴

Satellite and telecommunications technology provided abundant options for television service in the Eskimo villages along the Bering Strait, but with the state system then in place, it was clear to many inside private and state media circles that satellite-delivered cable, TVRO systems, and VCRs had all reduced the reliance on RATNET as the sole technical means of television reception in remote Alaska. A reassessment and eventual reconfiguration of

state telecommunication policies and systems would impact the future of state-sponsored broadcasting to the region.

The Debate over Continued State Support

During the course of the State House Committee's work in 1989, a number of questions arose concerning the necessity of continued state financing of the current broadcast and telecom system. Many of them touched upon philosophical, political, socioeconomic, and technical issues guiding state support for broadcasting, and became points of debate in legislative discussions. Had budget revenues been maintained, the need for reassessment may have been delayed for a later date, but such was the urgency of the issue at that time. The main issues revolved around the following:

- a. Should the State of Alaska maintain its commitment to assure the provision of broadcast television (and radio) service to all Alaskans?
- b. Should the State of Alaska be in the broadcast business at all?
- c. What is the value of broadcasting compared with other state-provided services given declines in the state budget?
- d. Does maintenance of RATNET inhibit the development of private commercial television operations in rural Alaska?
- e. What is the justification of RATNET; and is its survival contingent on the assumption that the state is responsible for providing alternative programming (content wise) normally unavailable in rural Alaska from commercial providers?
- f. Why is there a continued inability to establish an effective telecommunications entity which can guide state developments and coordinate the conglomeration of special interests involved with the state system.⁵

These questions surfaced while the state was seemingly adrift in

the area of strategic planning, from an administration standpoint. A general trend which had begun in the late 1980s, would extend through the early 1990s, characterized by a general relinquishment by the DOA of its prior activist position in telecom planning and development, followed by a concomitant desire to dismember elements of the telecom infrastructure. Questions posed during this time period were understandably difficult to answer, as well as being equally arduous to enact solutions to remedy the situation, given the complexities of the myriad technical issues, administration oversight, political factors, financial considerations, and other entities seeking input into the decision making process.

As the House Special Committee on Telecommunications raised these issues for discussion, sides were immediately taken both for and against state support. Those favoring continuation of the existing system were composed primarily of rural-based legislators; personnel from public broadcasting sites and broadcast advocates involved with the system; RATNET personnel; Alascom (which wanted the transponder revenues); Anchorage commercial stations with large program slots over RATNET (which wanted to maintain higher ad rates for statewide coverage); the Alaska State Department of Education; the University of Alaska; and groups representing rural viewers who desired the signal's continuation.

While very few groups were actively opposed to the discontinuation of state support, the most vocal advocates against maintaining the subsidy were urban-based legislators (whose constituencies did not receive RATNET); factions within the Department of Adminis-

tration and its Division of Telecom Operations; those in disagreement with RATNET's programming functions and performance; some private cable operators; and others with vested interests against the system's perpetuation.

According to some analysts, the body best able to project the benefits of state support, was for some reason, unable to effectively communicate its position to those in the Legislature deciding the future of the RATNET system--this was the RATNET Council. The House Special Committee issued a report stating, "The RATNET board does not seem to have taken a larger view of the role of RATNET in Alaska, and there is no one to articulate such a view and present it on the board's behalf."⁶ Henry Ivanoff, from Unalakleet, was the board's chairman and ultimately responsible for coordinating the involvement of viewers with the service.

From the advent of the TV demonstration project, Eskimos were to be involved in the decision making process at RATNET, but there was a conspicuous lack of focus by native organizations and the RATNET board for developing policies and activities seeking more effective utilization of state broadcast facilities (like RATNET) in meeting defined goals.

A survey on television involvement conducted by this writer in seven villages within the study region confirmed a lack of information about the activities of the RATNET Council, their representatives, and the possibilities for direct involvement in program decision making.⁷ Though targeted specifically for the Bering Strait region, this writer's survey reconfirmed the results of sim-

ilar surveys conducted in western Alaska in 1978 and 1982, which revealed that less than 25 percent of viewers were familiar with the RATNET program selection process or knew of those responsible for it.⁸ What evolved over a period of years was a scenario where RATNET Council members, most of whom had long-term appointments, exercised power over program selection without true mandates from their constituents, hence programming often reflected the personal interests of individual council members.

From this perspective, it was clear to understand the House Special Committee's frustration with the RATNET board in elucidating its position to those ready to determine its fate. In response to these concerns, D'Anne Ferguson Hamilton, an Eskimo journalist from Kotzebue noted:

...but for whatever reasons, there aren't Natives deciding what we see and hear in the Bush. RATNET is the main source of information in the Bush; yet how much say do Natives actually have in deciding what actually goes on the air? I know that Barrow, Kotzebue, and Bethel all have now and in the past had Native representation at RATNET, but when you look at Native versus non-Native population in the Bush, is it fair representation? And even if it is, is there any way we can offer more culturally relevant options to the 'Wheel of Fortune' or 'The Price is Right?'

In actual fact, the RATNET system as conceived and operated could not provide for the degree of cultural relevancy as sought by individuals such as Hamilton. Even the assumption that a RATNET Council composed of regional representatives from native corporations could accurately assess the needs of their constituents (from a cultural, educational, and entertainment standpoint) and then de-

cide upon relevant programming from the offerings available proved questionable. Further, some legislators were even challenging the council's right to exist, since (in the opinion of the state's attorney general) the RATNET Council was not a legally-constituted body vested with statutory authority. These sentiments arose partially because of the perception that RATNET members, who had the unique ability to hold seats for life, seemingly rebuffed inquiries by some legislators concerning program decision making, giving the impression (to many) that they were the experts and that the legislators should mind their own business.¹⁰

Options for Restructuring RATNET

The Legislature was finally presented with a listing of options concerning the direction state subsidization could take. These included:

- a. Maintaining the RATNET system at then-current funding levels per fiscal year (\$2.8 million).
- b. Maintain RATNET but with reduced funding. Savings would be realized through lower transponder charges.
- c. Substitute PBS content (from APBS stations) for RATNET content along with reduced funding.
- d. Eliminate the budget for a statewide television channel.

During the ensuing discussions within the Legislature, it was clear that the state would sooner or later have to put the issue up for a final decision, despite the complications involved. RATNET had become more than a state-subsidized entertainment service to native communities; it was in essence a central nervous system for the information needs of much of Alaska.¹¹

According to an Alaska Legislative report on RATNET, the service provided Alaska's rural population with the following: television programming to 248 villages (a large percentage of which did not have alternative service); emergency broadcast capability throughout the state; provision of live or taped instructional programming for classroom use; statewide news and weather; a measure of entertainment; the power to influence programming (via the RATNET Council); access to Alaska state government (and congressional) proceedings and activities; University of Alaska data services; Alaska Public Radio (via subcarrier audio relay of KSKA-Anchorage); a paging service for state troopers and officials; and opportunities to affect rural economic development.¹²

Any decision on RATNET would impact many services the rural communities in the Bering Strait had now taken for granted. Despite lowered state revenues, people asked if Alaska could afford to be without the possibilities made available by the RATNET-state telecom infrastructure. It was amidst this tangle of interests and potential impact assessments that the Legislature found itself in that year, unable to form a consensus of opinion concerning the fate of the state system and RATNET. No actions were taken, except for appropriating funds to maintain RATNET at its usual funding level for the next few years.

In the years up to 1995, constant debate would ensue, always relating back to the questions of the benefits of state subsidization versus private sector development; the decline of available state funds to support existing RATNET and APRN infrastructures;

the expansion of private broadcast media options, and the need to promote greater local and regional involvement in television programming through alternate channels.¹³

In an effort to reduce RATNET's operational costs, the state appropriated (in 1990), 2.4 million dollars to replace Alascom-leased earth stations (including sites around the Bering Strait). While staffing costs for the tape delay center remained fixed, RATNET's overall budget was trimmed further through renegotiation of satellite transponder lease payments, and it saved an additional \$500,000 per year by utilizing the replacement earth stations.¹⁴

In 1993, the state authorized a Telecommunications Information Council, headed by the director of the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, to develop a planning effort known as the Satellite Interconnection Project (SIP). SIP was conceived to establish parameters for integrating and coordinating state-supported video services including RATNET, the University of Alaska, Department of Education, and the public broadcasting network. Through this effort, the state hoped to further define RATNET's role amidst the other state-supported services comprising Alaska's telecommunications network.¹⁵

With the advent of digital compression technologies, SIP postulated that the RATNET signal could be expanded to include additional channels for other purposes. How those channels were to be utilized and funded remained a question. As with past planning efforts seeking to elucidate directions for the State of Alaska in telecom management, the SIP recommendations (though valuable), did

not radically impact subsequent decision making by the State Legislature.

RATNET was still important to Eskimo viewers in the Bering Strait region as well as the rest of the state, despite the absence of native-oriented programming. Hence, yearly debates within the Legislature concerning its funding and viability was a perennial occurrence. Despite the cost containment measures and maintaining a minimalist operation, the RATNET structure could fall apart if the Legislature determined that further budget reductions were in order, thus viewers in the villages had little assurance of continued reception of state-provided television on a sustained basis. Though KYUK-TV in Bethel might continue even if RATNET failed, its inability to reach the Bering Strait remained a strong point in the argument of pro-RATNET advocates.

In addition, the issues of local and regional programming control over existing state television systems (through transferral of state equipment or licenses) was still an unsolved question in the years up to 1995, with state executive and legislative committees exploring options on how elements of the telecom system could be handed over to community-based entities in ways which absolved the state from responsibility if problems should arise.

The state satellite delivery system, as well as the notion of state subsidization as originally conceived and operated, virtually remained intact through 1994, with no major change in state telecommunication policy toward RATNET taking place. Authoritative action was seen by some as being taken only when state budget allo-

cations were no longer feasible, yet few doubted such change would take place as state broadcasters became accustomed to regular legislative appropriations, despite yearly threats to end them.¹⁶

The RATNET system continued to be funded (though down to \$1.2 million in 1993), and would remain unchanged in its basic control structure and program format until 1995.

Programming Issues on RATNET: Native Orientation and the Status Quo

The presentation of Eskimo-oriented programming over RATNET had traditionally been very minimal for various reasons: RATNET's reliance on the Anchorage commercial stations (possessing little to no native-oriented content); minuscule production output from various statewide native producers meeting professional technical standards; and RATNET's policy of limiting native-produced programs of a region or language-specific nature. With no production budget, RATNET could not produce programs, and insufficient funding limited opportunities for independent native production centers. RATNET's statewide policy limited the ability of stations like KYUK and KBRW to find regular slots on the statewide program schedule. As a result, RATNET's overall broadcast content remained fairly static throughout its years of operation, reflecting national network schedules, while still providing for some Alaska-specific content each day.

The RATNET Council did solicit native-oriented programming which fit the service's guidelines, with the result that cultural, public service, and statewide-based programs appeared on an infre-

quent basis. Perhaps the best-received programs specifically directed toward Eskimos (and Alaska's native community) on a yearly basis were the annual Alaska Federation of Natives Conferences; features like the KYUK-produced gameshow "Ask an Alaskan;" the periodic series "Alaska's People" and "Tundravisision;" and coverage of special statewide events ie., The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race (which traveled through Eskimo villages to the finish in Nome).

While such germane programming could not be termed as designed solely for Eskimos, it nevertheless was construed by many as a highlight of RATNET's Alaskan-based schedule, and commanded high viewer interest. From its inception in 1977, to the beginning of the 1990s, however, very few news-oriented programs targeted to natives were aired, nor were there any weekly formats offered which served as an information vehicle for Eskimo concerns.

By 1991, new attempts to address native programming needs again began in earnest primarily through the efforts of a few individuals. One program appearing on RATNET, designed by and produced for natives, was the short news magazine "Northern Lives" aired during the KIMO-TV evening statewide newscast. Produced by Jeanie Greene, an Eskimo from the Kotzebue region, "Northern Lives" developed a format featuring events and personalities from around Alaska, utilizing non-professional video materials sent in from native villages as well as features self-produced by Greene.

Though Greene claims she continued the program despite a hostile administrative environment at the KIMO studios, her features found a very receptive audience among RATNET viewers, who

liked seeing "big events, traditional celebrations, profiles of town elders, and village life in general."¹⁷

Encouraged by the success of "Northern Lives," Greene left KIMO and developed a new program series entitled "Heartbeat Alaska" which began airing weekly over RATNET in 1992. "Heartbeat Alaska" was a 30 minute native news program, produced from Greene's independent studio in Anchorage. The show received a Sunday evening prime time slot over RATNET, and appeared on other Alaskan stations as well as native television channels in Canada and Greenland.¹⁸

According to Greene, the program "covered stories that often don't fit network affiliates' view of the news." Typical segments featured elders conferences, health issues in the Bush, regular activities in villages, reviews of national native concerns, cultural items of note, etc. The program was based on a standard news broadcast approach, with Greene serving as an in-studio anchor introducing edited video reports sent in from villages. Designed to make viewers potential program contributors, "Heartbeat Alaska" became one of the highest-rated programs on RATNET, and proved that native-oriented programming was not only deemed vital by Eskimo audiences, but in fact was logistically viable, given the commercial success of Greene's production operations.¹⁹

Greene personally proved that RATNET could become a true forum for native viewers by creating an environment in which sustained production of materials for broadcast could be achieved via cooperative efforts between motivated individuals across Alaska's scattered native communities and native-owned production studios.

Within two years, a second weekly news program appeared on RATNET targeted specifically to the native audience utilizing the village contributor approach pioneered by "Heartbeat Alaska." "North Country News," produced by Blueberry Productions in Anchorage, established itself as a news magazine show concentrating on top news stories of the week affecting natives in rural Alaska. Airing for 30 minutes on Saturday nights, "North Country News" also featured roundtable discussions with various native leaders and journalists addressing issues of importance to the Eskimo and Indian communities.²⁰

With an audience estimated by Blueberry at 100,000 viewers, "North Country News" received immediate affirmation from across the state, which further aided its efforts in establishing a network of contributing news stringers. In addition, the producers were successful in obtaining financial support for the program from cash-rich native corporations such as the North Slope Borough, and Doyon, reversing previous trends by such entities who contributed little to native broadcast efforts in the past.

The importance of these programs rested in their laying the groundwork and setting precedents in the process of having programming produced by independent native media operatives broadcast regularly over the RATNET system. While not the first to supply material over the network, Greene and Blueberry's producers represented the new vanguard within Alaska's native community advocating media as a strategic tool in the overall effort for strengthening native positions and power in the State of Alaska.

Public Television: Bethel

While RATNET's existence continued to be debated, state support of western Alaska's sole TV operation in Bethel (KYUK) remained in question. As previously noted, since KYUK did not reach the Bering Strait, its survival was not a major consideration for the villages in this study, however, the station was a prime example for the rest of the state on how public TV could be operated from a native perspective, and how it could survive amidst the threat of state budget cutbacks.

Since its proven track record for effective service to the Kuskokwim region was beyond dispute (providing the highest levels of native language air time in the state; being consistent and progressive in their production capabilities; and successfully establishing funding procedures to access private, state, and federal funds), KYUK was viewed by many seeking change in the RATNET system as the most viable entity to replace the state's tape delay operations and transmission center in Anchorage.²¹

While KYUK as well as other public stations across the state exhibited some of the highest viewer contribution rates per capita in the country, yearly funding debates within the Legislature put its appropriation levels at risk, thus the station found itself in the same situation as RATNET concerning its operational viability. The station continued in the early 1990s with its regular program format intact (a combination of PBS, network, state, and locally produced shows) while maintaining its commitment to native broadcasting. In its native broadcast role, some have even credited the

station with helping Yupik culture and language survive in the region.²²

KYUK would maintain its primary mission of service to the Kuskokwim region up until 1995 with the reorganization of the state television system. Changes in their operations and its impact on service to the Bering Strait region will be discussed in a later section.

State Support of Radio Services Along the Bering Strait

While television was a focus of debate early on, state support of the Alaska Public Radio Network (APRN) also came into question as state revenue shortfalls continued into the 1990s. While the Bering Strait region had access to private stations like KICY and KNOM, the two APRN stations (KOTZ, KNSA) were important links for providing comprehensive radio coverage to the rest of the study region.

Concerning total penetration of radio services to Eskimos statewide (including stations KYUK, KBRW, and KDLG), seventy-seven native communities could be reached by public radio, noting that 97 percent of the population of Alaska had such access.²³

In 1988, the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission (via the Legislature) appropriated roughly four million dollars to maintain fifteen full-service and five repeater public radio stations.²⁴ Given its public affiliation, it had been relatively easy--during Alaska's big budget years--to generously contribute to public broadcasting. The state's prime contribution from a funding per-

spective, was its ability to help stations like KOTZ and KBRW meet minimal funding requirements which would then allow them to receive federal matching grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and PBS. With such assistance, KOTZ, KBRW, KYUK, and KDLG could support native-oriented programming, an important alternative choice which was not available from KICY or KNOM. Listeners, in addition, had access to state and national programming from APRN and PBS, and the formula for public-supported radio in the Bush appeared to work well--as long as state and federal support was maintained.

With declining state revenues, radio, like RATNET, came under the same legislative scrutiny, and it was apparent by 1989 that similar restructuring or financing options would have to be implemented by the state if public radio was to maintain its existence in rural Alaska. The following options were put forth by the House Special Committee on Telecommunications:

- a. Maintain then-current funding levels to the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission for support of public radio and TV (approximately \$10,000,000)
- b. Reduce funding levels (support for KOTZ, KBRW, KYUK, KNSA, KDLG down to \$1,300,000).
- c. Continue funding, but for stations reaching rural areas otherwise not served.
- d. Fund a single statewide public radio station (rural stations would become repeater sites without programming staffs)
- e. Eliminate all funds for public radio in Alaska except KSKA (Anchorage)

The consequences of any decision by the Legislature corresponded

to that affecting RATNET, for at stake was the continued viability of a public-supported radio system which could adequately serve the information needs of Eskimo communities along the strait which could otherwise not support commercial radio. It made little sense to dismember a communications system that took years to implement and maintain, yet compromises would have to be made (in personnel and operational support) if the system was to survive the state's budget crisis.²⁵

Any withdrawal of state funding meant a concomitant inability to secure federal funding for the rural stations in western Alaska, thus forcing promoters to increase funding at the local level, primarily from individual and corporate contributors. If the single statewide option was chosen, KOTZ and other stations would become translator sites which would not qualify for federal funds, making it more difficult to solicit local contributions. Native-oriented programming and independent program decision making at the local level would be lost.

As with the RATNET issue, the Legislature did not commit to either the dismantling or enlargement of the Alaska Public Radio Network. Beginning in 1990, what commenced was a gradual decrease in appropriations for station funding, and by 1993, state subsidization of public radio fell to \$3.7 million for all operations.²⁶ Consequently KOTZ and the other stations scaled down their activities. The funding decreases did not change their orientation toward native programming, but it did have an impact to some degree on the levels of native language offerings and locally produced

program output.

In 1994, the CPB revised its grants program to increase funds for minority-controlled, rural, and sole-service stations, which implied increases for KOTZ and other stations if the state and local funding levels remained constant. However, APBC funding levels were destined to decrease, a fact of dismay for native radio supporters. Given this financial outlook, the bottom line for native-oriented stations could simply be stated as "less finance, less staff, less native content."²⁷

APRN Native Program Offerings

APRN regularly offered program features in its weekly schedule tailored specifically for native audiences around the state. Highlighted programs available on APRN-member stations included the daily native-oriented news program, "National Native News," produced out of Anchorage by Gary Fife since 1987. The program gave native Alaskans information about issues of interest to native Americans nationwide, and served as a vehicle for promoting networking among various native-based media across the U.S.²⁸

Another APRN program--designed from a regional perspective--was "Alaska Voices Live," produced by KSKO-McGrath. The program consisted of a live call-in format which was broadcast simultaneously by KOTZ, KYUK, KBRW, KNOM, and KSKO. The show was an effective forum for airing diverse opinions on various issues affecting rural Alaska, and proved how multiple stations could cooperate together in providing relevant information to its listening aud-

ience.²⁹

APRN stations, in conjunction with activities of other out-of-state native media organizations--for example, the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, and the National Federation of Community Broadcasters--possessed opportunities to provide a comprehensive view of issues and information deemed vital to the interests of natives. It would be up to each station, however, to determine how best to combine local production efforts with network-provided programming in meeting the goal of serving the perceived needs of its audience. Those who could successfully do this stood a better chance at maintaining their yearly appropriations amidst the state's continually dwindling budget for broadcasting. Such was the challenge for KOTZ and KNSA for staying on the air.

1995 would be a pivotal year concerning the direction of public radio in Alaska from a financial and programming standpoint--one which would not hold out much promise for the strengthening of radio services on behalf of the Eskimo.

Private Television Access Along the Bering Strait

While the options for state-supported broadcasting waned as the nineties progressed, the Bering Strait witnessed an increasing diversification in the range of broadcast services available. By 1995, every Eskimo village in the study area had been wired for cable television, and VCR penetration into homes was roughly 85 percent, if gauged against Pearson's statistics from 1991.³⁰

RATNET, as well as movie channels, sports channels, superstations, home shopping channels, and a multitude of other entertainment choices could easily be accessed by subscribers in villages, though only RATNET provided programming from statewide sources.

C-Band TVRO satellite installations were also increasing, but seemed to have little response in the majority of villages where cable existed. TVRO remained primarily the domain of a minority who lived outside of villages, at remote locations, in fish or hunting camps, etc.

For Eskimo viewers, the advantages of increased choice were offset by the rising cost of services, as well as the disadvantage of being consumers of programming produced without regard to native preferences and orientation. Many village cable subscription rates easily exceeded \$50 per month for full channel packages, making television a big expense for those in lower income brackets. For this reason, free television from RATNET remained the option of choice for some, and for those desirous of Alaskan content.

Urban-based radio services from the lower 48 provided additional incentives for those buying cable packages, and Eskimos in places like Nome and Kotzebue had access to six or more stations.

Private Radio: KICY and KNOM

From the late 1980s through the mid-1990s, radio programming from both KICY and KNOM remained relatively fixed in content and orientation. Both maintained schedules formatted to include popular music, news, information features, Christian programs, and

other materials. While KNOM maintained more of a native orientation in relation to its regional outreach to villages and Eskimo cultural features, little existed in the way of native language programming, with the staff primarily caucasian.

KNOM, through the end of 1995, maintained its commitment to produce programming for Eskimos on both sides of the strait in the form of "Radio Bridge to Chukotka," aired once per week, featuring news, information and stories translated in Siberian Yupik.³¹

KICY, though continuing to actively engage listeners from various villages, had less of a reliance on cultural programming, and maintained a more overt Christian presence in its daily broadcasts. While there were Eskimos represented on the station's board of directors, no natives were on the staff, and the only native language program continued to be the short daily newscast in Siberian Yupik by long-time volunteer Clarence Irrigoo.

Both KICY and KNOM continued their familiar modes of operation, while holding on to their respective audiences. They maintained a strong presence throughout the Bering Strait region, but their listenership levels decreased as new media options in the villages increased. Both stations planned to upgrade their transmitter power during this year, with KICY seeking FCC approval to be directional at 50,000 watts nighttime; a move specifically made in providing Chukotka radio listeners with a stronger signal for the station's evening Christian broadcasts in Russian.³²

The Nome stations have religious organizations behind them, effectively guaranteeing their operations for the long term. Whe-

ther they could be adaptable in meeting demands for increased native orientation, staffing, or language use in daily broadcasts remained an issue for speculation, since neither station felt compelled in those directions.³³

Implications for the Eskimo in Media

The central facet of these new developments in broadcast media focused on the need to reassess the traditional role of Eskimos in their participation with radio and television, both in the way they consumed programming offered by the new services, and in the way they participated with the creation of programming in those mediums (private and state systems) which were available for manipulation.

All the advantages of telecommunications technology could be accessed in every Eskimo village, providing unlimited possibilities for information retrieval and dissemination, as well as a multitude of services which could be received via satellite and fiber optic interconnections.

It appeared (to state media planners) that Alaska was well on its way to providing for the communication needs of Eskimos in remote Alaska. However, controversy was brewing within the culture to clarify the needs and methods to implement a system that was more conducive to exploiting the native position.

Reorganization in State-Sponsored Broadcasting: 1995

With the beginning of 1995, further declines in the Alaska State budget forced Governor Walter Hickel and the State Legisla-

ture to effect a dramatic series of reductions in appropriations for the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission (which funded public-supported radio and TV stations across the state.³⁴

While the APBC and DOA had contemplated a total phase out of state funding for all public television and a reduction for radio operations, it eventually made compromises in its appropriations so the telecom infrastructure could remain relatively intact. During the spring of 1995, intense debate commenced within the Legislature concerning exact funding levels for the system. In March, the Alaska State House demanded 25 percent cuts to both RATNET and APRN, in addition to 100 percent cuts for television.³⁵

For stations such as KOTZ (facing the 25 percent state cut coupled with a 45 percent cut in federal funds over three years), and KYUK (facing a 68 percent cut in combined funds for TV and radio), the Legislature's proposals would have cemented a new policy to eventually end support of broadcasting directed toward rural Alaska.³⁶

As a result of these threats, intense lobbying by rural legislators and numerous interest groups forced the House and Senate to reassess their appropriation figures. The Legislature decided upon a one year allocation of \$4,324,000 to the APBC for radio and TV, though it ended its deliberations with a decision to dismantle the RATNET system as then-existent.³⁷

In addition, a subdivision of the entire radio network into regional groups was enacted by the APBC, with the following entities: The Associated Alaska Public Broadcasting Stations (AAPBS);

Coastal Region; Southcentral Region; and Interior Community Radio.

Table #4 ALASKA PUBLIC RADIO NETWORK REORGANIZATION

AAPBS: (Serving the Bering/Chukchi Sea Regions)

KOTZ-Kotzebue	KNBA (Kowanak) -Anchorage
KNSA-Unalakleet	KSPD-Sand Point
KYUK-Bethel	KUHB-St. Paul
KDLG-Dillingham	KIAL-Unalaska
KCUK-Chevak	KBRW-Barrow
KMXK	

COASTAL REGION: note:stations merged sales/engineering/
accounting, and promotion departments

KHNS-Haines	KRBD-Ketchikan
KTOO-Juneau	KFSK-Petersburg
KCAW-Sitka	KSPK-Wrangell

INTERIOR COMMUNITY RADIO

KZPA-Fort Yukon	KUAC-Fairbanks (providing program streams to entire group via satellite)
KIYU	
KSKO	
KTNA	
KCHU	

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

KSKA-Anchorage	KDLL-Kenai
KBBI-Homer	KSRD-Seward

The compartmentalization of stations on a regional basis forced individual member stations to cooperate more closely with each other in financial, technical, and programming efforts. The subdivision further provided a demarcation of lines for lobbying efforts aimed at increasing legislative appropriations for group stations on a regional basis. KOTZ or KNSA were no longer alone in their efforts to increase their budgets, now that they could tap into a strengthened organizational lobby constituted by the AAPBS.³⁸

After the reorganization, KOTZ and KNSA received roughly \$240,000 in 1995, enabling them to maintain operations, but at a lowered capacity in terms of personnel and production. Budget allocations the next year would fall by \$20,000 for the two stations and time would tell on whether the new grouping could boost AAPBS' state appropriations.³⁹

In deciding how best to continue support for established APRN sites, the idea of replacing direct state grants for public broadcasting funded from state taxes, with private commercial contributions facilitated via tax credits, was given serious thought by the DOA. As never before, the necessity of public contributions to ensure the survival of these stations was brought to the forefront of attention to audiences in their primary service regions.

Though the issue of finance of APRN was not solved as of this writing, it is clear that public radio in the Bering Strait would require new strategies for maintaining operations, as well as an increased effort by native entities (private, tribal, and corporate) to cover fiscal shortfalls in state and federal funding.⁴⁰

The End of RATNET

In a conservation move to maintain some semblance of the existing RATNET system while setting policy precedents aimed toward the eventual cessation of state subsidization for television, the APBC decided to terminate the RATNET tape delay center in Anchorage, moving its operations to the facilities of KYUK-TV in Bethel. As the legal status of RATNET was terminated, a new entity titled, "The Alaska Rural Communications System" (ARCS), rose to take its place.

During its official announcement outlining the new ARCS system in May, KYUK management stated that the primary intent of the new development was to create a "true" rural Alaska network, one different from the previous entity which was in essence an extension of services from an urban non-native perspective to bush Alaska. The ARCS-KYUK liason was not directly associated with the existing public TV network, but accessed its programming.⁴¹ ARCS would have some degree of constituent control with an advisory board (appointed by the Governor rather than native corporations), but would operate financially through a combination of viewer, state, and CPB funding.⁴² Though KYUK had the experience to implement a full program stream to the satellite network using PBS, national network, in-state, and local materials, the Legislature did not provide any monies for upgraded technical facilities, additional personnel, or program allocation expenses which KYUK needed to meet this increased demand on services.⁴³

As part of the compromise to keep the system afloat, the APBC

received a one-time appropriation of \$800,000 which was designated solely for payment of satellite transponder fees to Alascom." KYUK's usage of the transponder would eventually be paid for under the budget of KUAC-TV. While KYUK was able to eventually secure funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce for the equipment upgrading of its facilities, it was unable to substantially increase its budget for programming. This factor would be a constant concern, determining the quality and quantity of programs produced specifically for the rural Alaska audience."

Even with an 85 percent native audience, Bethel could no longer place a high priority on region or language-specific programming, nor on native-oriented programming in general. Though the program stream contained a higher percentage of PBS offerings, ARCS would continue to feature commercial fare from the Anchorage stations during the evening hours as RATNET had. KYUK would provide regular opportunities for native productions, like "Heartbeat Alaska," "North Country News," and the KYUK-produced "Tundra Vision," while scheduling documentary features of relevance to Alaska on a weekly basis."

Station manager John McDonald estimated KYUK's monthly costs at \$100,000, and with reductions in the APBC's appropriations for ARCS eminent, the station required its weekend operations to be viewer-funded, marking the beginning of true constituent financial support for the statewide satellite system. In any event, the State of Alaska was nearing its final pullout of support for commercial television, nearly twenty years after its initial push to

provide TV entertainment to Eskimos in rural Alaska.⁴⁷

Alaska Public Television Group Reorganization

As part of the APBC reshuffling, three public TV stations (KUAC, KTOO, and KYUK) were now identified through the system designation known as "Alaska One." Though program sharing would not change radically, there was now a greater reliance on shared telecom interconnection, with KUAC providing the primary network program stream.⁴⁸ With appropriation cutbacks slated on a continuous basis by the APBC, ie., (\$4,452,754 for 1996 and \$4,153,000 projected for 1997), downsizing and increased reliance on non-state revenues would constitute priorities for a system seeking to maintain past service levels while facing an uncertain budget picture. It was clear that with an overall decline in the state operating budget (due to lowered oil revenues), and a Republican-dominated Legislature seeking further funding cuts, public TV in Alaska would never be the same as in its glory days of the mid-1980s.⁴⁹

It remained to be seen how successfully the ARCS system could continue its provision of television service to the Bering Strait region in the future given the stress placed upon the network from the Legislature's gradual withdrawal of support for KYUK. Such a scenario provided a new opportunity for Eskimos in the region to develop strategies for promoting and organizing broadcasting based on their own subsidization and effort, rather than relying on the old framework of state support and control which faced an uncertain future.⁵⁰

In the meantime, new cable and satellite-based broadcast and information services were increasingly available to Eskimos, providing alternatives to the existing ARCS system. These developments were a fact of increasing concern to advocates of public-supported media serving western Alaska--but one of opportunity to those seeking new methods of media empowerment as a means for furthering the Eskimo position and strengthening communication opportunities with their brethren in Chukotka.

Developments in Chukotkan Broadcast Media through 1995

Following the aftermath of the August 1991 coup, including the subsequent changes in laws affecting mass media and the beginning of state broadcast reorganization, serious questions about the future of Chukotka's broadcast infrastructure began to be posed. As the next year approached (1992), journalists within the Tele-radio Company debated the issue in a published report circulated to people throughout the okrug via the regional newspaper Soviet-skaya Chukotka, stating:

What kind of TV and radio will be in Chukotka? Who is going to help? How much will the Soviet be able to control the function, or will it be under the head of the Administration of Chukotka and the Chairman of the Tele-radio Company? 150,000 TV viewers and radio listeners are in the region...what are they going to have from this media reorganization. The same problems in the region are many, and to take care of these problems there needs to be financing, the creation of new structures, and modification of the old state structures. Are we going to see TV from Anadyr throughout the okrug, and will we have the possibility to see TV from Alaska? Would programs be interesting, will we have more time for broadcasts? We have lots of questions, how, and who, will take care of them. But one thing is clear; that in the conflict situation which has taken place within the State Teleradio Company collective, the loser can be society.⁵¹

In essence, there would appear very little change (aside from editorial freedom) in the new company from its earlier activity during the Gosteleradio days concerning staffing and the methodology of its operational practices, since it maintained the same basic core of people at the Anadyr site. For example, the Eskimo Radio Department within the new company maintained its two full-time journalists who continued producing the regular weekly time-slots with their traditional program titles and features.⁵²

The most notable change within the new company was in the merger of the technical and programming departments: whereas before, when journalists and technical production specialists had separate functions, now journalists had full control over production facilities and became responsible for on air control of broadcasts.⁵³

The technical transmission infrastructure inherited from the Soviet network continued, making the broadcasts available (theoretically) to more than 90 percent of the okrug's population via wired radio and 9-megahertz shortwave broadcasts (relayed from the Magadan retranslator site). However, wired radio systems in many of the native villages (including New Chaplino and Siriniki) remained in poor condition, and the Eskimo staff claimed that the signal could not be heard by natives in the interior tundra regions.⁵⁴

New developments appeared separately from the state media by those in the private sector pursuing cable operations, private radio, and the formation of independent production studios, yet actual progress in these areas would remain negligible well beyond

the beginning of 1992. By April of that year, seven small TV studios began work in the various district centers, primarily by people connected with the Teleradio Company as correspondents, or those who inserted local programming on cable nets.⁵⁵

These studios were often one or two person operations, and usually conducted on a non-professional level. The studios began providing video clips to the Anadyr TV center for news broadcasts, following moves by Chairman Tckachov to promote a new policy of encouraging private studio interaction with the Teleradio Company. This interaction was seen as a preliminary to the future development of two-way video exchanges with the district centers via satellite. Ultimately, Tckachov hoped that Moscow would provide the financial and material means to allow the Anadyr studios to transmit across the entire okrug using a recently developed Russian Ku-band satellite system called GALS. With such a distribution system, transmission of native programming from the Eskimo and Chukchi departments might bring a new dimension of broadcasting to the scattered settlements along the Bering Strait.⁵⁶

Looking in other directions, the Teleradio Company had the possibility to share programming with other parts of the Far East via the newly organized **Independent Far East TV Network** (TVK-TV) with headquarters based in Petropavlovsk, Kamchatka. Meanwhile, Anadyr maintained a commitment to provide occasional materials to Ostankino in Moscow, yet its lack of financing and limited budget hampered its ability to engage in serious program exchange at the regional, national, and international (ie. Alaska) levels.⁵⁷

With the state broadcaster hard pressed to implement increased broadcast services, it was no wonder that Eskimo media advocates working within government and private structures were perhaps even less prepared to instigate new broadcast ventures or simple production studios at this stage, due to deficiencies in securing a viable financial base as well as lack of personnel to carry out serious proposals.

Programming within the Teleradio Company

The talent, creativity, performance, and utility of a journalist's work became the sole domain of the individual, since supervisory oversight was now minimal at best. A consequence of this new status was, interestingly enough, the start of a decline in professionalism in the program output of the TV studio, and to a lesser extent at the radio studio. Journalists noted that during the Shmelova-era, professional criticism of work output was normative procedure, even though its reference point drew from standardized Soviet guidelines. Further, the staff in earlier years was made up of seasoned journalists who were often noted for their high degree of professionalism. The majority of these journalists, however, left during the latter half of the 1980s, and were supplanted by journalism students fresh out of college as recruited personally by Shmelova.⁵⁸

With a mix of new and older staff, combined with decreasing finances to cover equipment upgrades, salaries, and general production expenses, mediocrity in programming quickly became noticeable.

The majority of TV programs in Anadyr (after the reorganization) were "talking head" formats featuring guests well known to the city's residents. Political discussions featured heavily in the programming, as well as coverage of controversies emanating from the overall governmental and societal restructuring process taking place in the okrug. Often, the evening's prime features would be a short film or cartoon, followed by a newscast of city and regional news, ending with an interview program featuring the Governor of Chukotka--who appeared as often as four times per week."

For many viewers, the inability of the staff to produce high quality productions turned initially high hopes for true programming change into laments coined by some as "the lost hopes" (for both perestroika and the possibilities for journalism in Chukotka). Older journalists described the new output as *ni kaki* (nothing) programs; nothing interesting, nothing important, socially an absolute zero. This status was in contrast to exciting developments in content and higher production quality by the central channels. While this attitude (concerning Anadyr's output) was probably not shared by a majority of those working on the staff, nevertheless, there was little revolutionary change in the daily program schedule as old programs reappeared with new titles and slightly different themes."

To be fair, a number of new programs did appear which added variation to the weekly schedule. If anything new was apparent, however, it was in the degree of freedom of expression as displayed by those in charge of productions, as all topics were permissible

for discussion and representation. As to the reasons for the lack of notable change, a good case can be made for the perpetuation of the Soviet work ethic as a continued cause for little improvement, since workers received the same government salaries without regard for the quality of their work. It was possible under provisions of the new company structure to weed out non-performing workers, though carrying out this process was a difficult one.⁶¹

While Anadyr's program output was legally under the scrutiny of the All-Russian Radio and TV Company's affiliate department--since it provided Anadyr's funding and held the right to withhold appropriations if program standards were not met--Moscow showed little actual interest in monitoring Chukotka's programming or in seeking materials from Anadyr for national distribution over the second national channel (RTR).⁶²

This official display of apathy or disinterest in the operations of the Chukotka studios by Moscow was both a blessing and a curse for local programmers. It was good from the point of view that a total relaxation in content and production control by central authorities was relatively achieved, but bad from the fact that it made the Teleradio Company's task of lobbying Moscow for yearly funding even harder because of that disinterest. In addition, opportunities to showcase regional materials over the national airwaves were limited.⁶³ Interestingly enough, Anadyr continued its relationship with the Commonwealth-oriented First Channel (Ostankino), which did broadcast occasional reports sent in by the station.⁶⁴

The juxtaposition of financial and programming issues was more readily felt at the local level due to the symbiotic relationship established between the Teleradio Company and the Administration of Chukotka (Governor's Office). Because the Administration was one of the founding entities of the Teleradio Company and contributed to its budget, Chairman Tkachov and the editorial department heads were necessarily subservient to the wishes of Governor Nazarov, who actively involved himself in both programming and funding decisions. The Governor was more likely to impart influence over programming than Moscow, since he himself appeared regularly in broadcasts, and used Teleradio transmissions as a platform to communicate his policies. It is debateable whether his participation could be viewed as facilitating a subtle form of censorship, since programs continued to feature people who often expressed opposing views than those held by the Administration. For point of discussion, however, it can be asserted that Nazarov's impact on local TV programming operations (from a content perspective) were felt more heavily than any influence exercised by central broadcast authorities.⁶⁵

Russian Radio Services

While still more conservative than the TV operations, Chukotka Radio experienced improvements in programming, as well as the means of delivery. Guided by new Chief Editor Luba Rashko, radio became more progressive (taking advantage of experts from various fields of endeavor in their analytical programs), more professional

in its production methods, and for the first time, began regularly-scheduled live broadcasts. The editorial board was better prepared than the TV staff to provide comprehensive and up to date information on issues and events taking place throughout the okrug and nation, though both staffs were often dependent on the contributions of print journalists who generally had greater expertise in covering social, economic, and political issues unique to Chukotka.⁶⁶

While funding for information resources remained a problem, the studio maintained its network of correspondents across the okrug, and phoned reports essentially replaced the old practice of field visits by resident Anadyr journalists. Anadyr continued to insert roughly three hours of programming per day into the Radio Russia signal.⁶⁷

Native Television Efforts

Regardless of the current state of TV in 1992, the opportunities for native involvement increased as Tkachov actively promoted the Chukchi Department's interests, while opening up air time for Eskimo productions over the local Anadyr channel. The weekly airtime for Chukchi programming increased, including regular newscasts and cultural presentations. Eskimo language programs (which were done using Chukchi production personnel) were dependent on the time constraints of the Eskimo radio staff, resulting in roughly one or two short programs per month. Given the relatively short reach of the TV transmitters, Enmenkow and Verbitskaya concentrated their time on radio, with the result that Eskimo programming over the state TV system remained to be developed.⁶⁸

Eskimo Radio

Eskimo radio continued its regular mode of operation after the reorganization, concentrating on native news and cultural programming. Enmenkow and Verbitskaya (both past retirement age) were steadfast in maintaining the department, since the company had no funds to add personnel. Sveta Togiak, who had just left the staff to write Yupik language features for the native newspaper Murgen Nutenot (Our Land), continued to assist periodically, though the department was without prospective candidates to replace the other two. To assist them in information collection, the Teleradio Company did maintain the department's phone budget which allowed the staff to regularly communicate with correspondents situated in various native villages. The staff still obtained periodic reports from Ludmilla Aynana and Olga Karablova in Provideniya.⁶⁹

The weekly timeslot increased somewhat to 95 minutes per week but both journalists were hard pressed to expand beyond their normal schedule. At this point (mid-1992), the department had no restrictions in the range of discussions it offered for broadcast, and editorially there were no controls over its output as in former days. Regular program titles and themes remained in place, reflecting the personal approaches established by Enmenkow over the years, while previous requirements for translating Russian editorial department materials and political documents were abandoned.⁷⁰

The department focused much energy in describing the conditions of life as experienced by Eskimos with the hope of obtaining assistance by government authorities for solving problems occurring

throughout the Eskimo districts. Enmenkow related that while she could not discuss the main problem areas of life for Eskimos before 1988, she now sought to provide analyses on the main issues she felt confronted natives, ie., poor economic and living conditions in villages; loss of culture, language, traditions, and customs; restoration of old settlements; increase of ties with Alaskan Eskimos, etc.⁷¹

Despite the staff's freedom to describe life as they saw it, many in the native intelligentsia felt the department was not fully meeting expectations when it came to using the broadcasts to effectively assess their positions and problems. To sum up this attitude, Tatiana Ochirgina, the Eskimo journalist heading up the new Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma stated:

Concerning pure information, native journalists put out much information, but concerning commentary or analysis, this is the weak point of the Eskimo Department, and it does not satisfy the demands of the native intelligentsia. Sometimes even bigger programs are flat in their coverage; they don't penetrate deeply into the essence of the problems. Obviously, the native editorial departments need to educate their own personnel.⁷²

As with radio in general, each program had its supporters and detractors, but at least the staff had the opportunity to express their opinions as intelligently as they were able.

The two main weekly programs included "Keogiak" (Polar Star) featuring stories about Eskimos living across the circumpolar North; and "Radio Journal," which offered a mixture of Eskimo stories, interviews, news from the villages, and other pertinent information.⁷³

The primary audience for Yupik language broadcasting continued to be elderly Eskimos and those who actively studied the language in schools. With most Eskimos unable to converse fluently in Yupik, Russian language radio broadcasts continued to be the primary service for the bulk of the native population.

Private Developments in Eskimo Utilization of Video and Cable

With the increasing availability of low-cost video technology as well as outlets for disseminating programming, ie., local cable channels and studios in the district centers of Chukotka, interested individuals within the Eskimo community began to exploit the technology on a small scale in a variety of ways.

Tatiana Ochirgina noted in 1992, of the emergence of small "creative groups" interested in developing native language-based information networks and program exchanges between the small studios located in Provideniya, Iwultin, Bilibino, Cape Schmidt, and Egvikinot. Ochirgina's son was one of those who purchased a video camera and began producing features in the local dialects using plots and story lines based on cultural themes and current problems existing in the villages. These programs were then distributed to individuals who viewed them on VCRs as well as to various studios which broadcast them over local networks via cable, or transmitters operated by local communication bodies.⁷⁴

While many of these individuals hoped to develop such production efforts on a commercially sustainable basis, existing market conditions and the lack of feasible methods for distribution and

payment precluded such developments at that time. While it is true that many of the small video and cable centers (operated by non-natives) did make money via subscriptions, advertising, or local government support, none if any, of these individual Eskimo producers were able to establish permanent production companies.⁷⁵

Cable television, however, did provide prospects for realization if it could be implemented on a communal basis. In the Providenski District, Siriniki became the first Eskimo village to begin a small cable operation. A few years before, when John Waghiyi of Gambell donated a video camcorder, villagers began to sense the possibility of local production and soon a number of residents purchased VCRs. Though conducted on a small scale like other cable operations featuring Hollywood or Russian-made movies, Siriniki showed initiative in implementing an alternative broadcast service which at least provided possibilities for accommodating local production, whereas other villages had lacked the impetus to supplement central television service.⁷⁶

Siriniki mirrored other village developments where it was normal practice for an amateur cable operator to wire most flats within one or two apartment buildings, with another system serving other apartment blocks in a settlement. There was no standard pattern for cable distribution.

While cable remained in a genesis-stage regionally, the medium held out promise for developing local cablecasting, though on a scale commensurate with the financial capability of supporters at the village level. In 1992, the economics and programming log-

istics required seemed to put these developments off for the near future, though natives going to and from Provideniya could readily observe a model (Provideniya Cable) which proved the medium's viability. The Provideniya channel (operated by a three person staff) had a format featuring pirated movies, local news, commercial ads, and Alaskan television from RATNET.⁷⁷

Given the historic lack of viewer choice in programming, cable would continue to expand in the region even if it remained on a non-professional or illegal (from a copyright perspective) level. Ironically, as long as Russia remained without effective enforcement of legislation on international copyright protection, underground-pirate cable would continue to flourish in Chukotka until enforcement or legitimate programming arrangements with professional production services could be attained.

In protest against Russia's seeming ignorance of copyright protection at the national level, many Hollywood-based film distributors blacklisted the country from their latest releases. The primary supporters of copyright enforcement in the country were the two central channels, often making headlines in their multi-million dollar contracts with firms like the Walt Disney Company and Ted Turner.

VCRs

VCR ownership, while on the increase, perhaps could be viewed as a disincentive for the creation of local television services via cable or over the air transmission. Though statistics for 1992

were not available, VCR ownership continued to grow, even despite higher prices occurring after December 1991. Perhaps VCR levels reached as high as 5% of homes in Chukotka, but this cannot be confirmed. Ownership levels among native villages was varied, with a higher penetration rate among Chukchi villages in the Omalon region, and the lowest among Eskimos in the Providenski District.

One possible explanation for this disparity could be linked to a number of joint ventures by the Omalon Chukchi with Asian firms involved in the processing of reindeer horns, thus there was money available to the Chukchi for purchases of foreign televisions and VCRs. The Eskimo settlements generally did not have such ventures, and lacked the financial base existent in many Chukchi villages.⁷⁸

In an occurrence similar to that of western Alaska, the emergence of private video rental shops in Chukotkan villages created a new trend in television consumption, providing alternative viewing options to the established central TV channels. Primarily offering translated American movies, the video rental outlets gave many Eskimo viewers a first glimpse of the American society in which their Alaskan relatives lived, albeit, through a Hollywood lens. The role played by video cassettes in shaping Chukotkan Eskimos understanding of life in Alaska was negligible, since few Alaska-specific titles, if any, were available in the PAL/Secam standard at the time. With the continuing traffic between the border, however, multistandard VCRs were increasingly available in Chukotka after 1992, as the equipment was within the financial

means of many Russians visiting Alaska.

From another perspective, the VCR provided a cheap alternative to village cable services which normally required high start up costs, specialized equipment, and licensing. At the end of 1992, the VCR, as well as other factors, delayed the development of cable or terrestrial broadcast television for Eskimos.

Chukotkan calls for International Native Communication Links

Eskimo Radio Director Enmenkow and other native journalists quickly sought to expand contacts with international native media organizations, especially in Alaska, for the purpose of gaining regular access to information of interest to audiences in the Chukotski and Providenski districts. While not very successful in meeting this goal in the early part of 1992, the Eskimo staff was nevertheless committed to the idea of regular cooperation with native broadcasters across the circumpolar North.⁷⁹

For a short period, the Eskimo Department exchanged tapes containing storytelling, dance music, and discussions on Eskimo traditions with KOTZ in Kotzebue, primarily through the efforts of Natalie Novik, a non-native who came to the region to promote native ties. The materials were primarily in the Naukon dialect and though KOTZ had a desire to obtain regular programming from the Anadyr studios, no concrete moves were made by them to implement an ongoing exchange.⁸⁰

KOTZ, while engaged in production of Inupiaq-based programming, found it difficult enough to recruit sufficient volunteers

to maintain their own schedule (including a three hour air shift in the Kobuk River and coastal dialects), and its leadership at the time appeared unable to devote the time or resources necessary to make a Chukotka commitment possible. The reader should note that during this year the station management in Kotzebue was non-native, and it would be three more years before a native station manager would be hired."¹

Given the relative inability of the Anadyr staff to communicate with either Nome or Kotzebue due to uncertain transportation logistics and the high costs of telephone time (ie., a 30 minute call from Anadyr roughly equaled Enmenkow's monthly salary), progress in establishing solid media ties could not be expected.

In April, the TV station made attempts to initiate computer communications with Alaska, but met with little success due to the antiquated telephone system in Anadyr. Also, local journalists continued a sporadic relationship with the Bethel, Alaska-based native newspaper Tundra Drums, but there remained little contact overall with other Alaskan media."² Anchorage media, including press departments within the major native corporations, generally declined to invest energy into a potential broadcast link with Chukotka primarily because of time and financial considerations.

The first government-sponsored attempt to reconcile problems confronting the establishment of a native information link across the Bering Strait was made during the May 1992, "Four Regions Conference" held in Provideniya. Government and native leaders from Alaska and Russia met during this three day conference to discuss

a variety of issues affecting the implementation of normalized cross-border activities and relations.

Special meetings were held which concentrated on the themes of developing information links between native organizations, mass media operations, and the establishment of Eskimo-controlled radio in Chukotka. Representatives from Alaskan radio stations in Nome and Kotzebue met with Enmenkow, other correspondents from the Chukotka Teleradio Company, the heads of the state communications center, and the Provideniya Mayor's Office to discuss concrete measures at improving media ties and telecommunication links. This writer also made a proposal to develop an Eskimo radio station in Provideniya, utilizing resources then in place at the city's cultural center and government communications facility.

During the conference, special meetings were held between this writer, and the various Russian radio delegates on how to devise and implement independent radio broadcasting. Soon after, with the conference attendees in agreement with the radio proposal, and with the Provideniya Mayor offering his financial backing, the conference ended and renewed calls were issued for both sides to work on the logistic and funding problems confronting information networking and media cooperation across the strait.⁹³

The conference established a permanent forum between the two governments for concentrating on the needs of native people in Alaska and Chukotka, as well as the wider issues affecting the region, and soon afterward, the seeds sown during its proceedings would bear fruit for native communications later in the year.

Private Eskimo Radio Broadcasting in Chukotka Develops

On November 20, 1992, a new chapter in the history of Chukotka Eskimo media was made with the founding of "Radio Company Provideniya." Located in Provideniya, the company was organized jointly by the "AVAN Association of Native Peoples," the "Yupik Society of Chukotka," and the government administration of the Providenski District."

In its charter statement, the company was founded to preserve and develop the traditions, language, and culture of native people in the Providenski region. The languages slated for broadcast included Yupik, Chukchi, Russian and English. Further, its stated goals included the promotion of information exchange with Alaska, emphasizing the social, cultural, and business life of people in the four regions; advancing the causes of various native societies, companies, firms, and enterprises; and engaging in programming featuring music, literature, and entertainment features in its broadcasts."

The Radio Company, while not being totally independent from government subsidization (relying in this case on the Mayor), represented the first attempt to implement and maintain radio broadcasting from the vantage point of the native community rather than a government or non-native position. While its director (Olga Karablova) was a non-native who simultaneously served as the Chukotka State Teleradio Company's regional reporter, the success of the station's programming would be ultimately dependent upon the

efforts of its native correspondents and staff.

Ludmilla Aynana, the long time Eskimo radio correspondent and a leading Eskimo linguist and scholar, was appointed as chief correspondent for the new company. Anatoly Seleko and Sveta Togiak would join the staff later on, bringing together the original personnel who first created Eskimo radio programming for Chukotka."

Initial funds were allotted by the Providenski Administration and three studio rooms for the new company were made available in their building. Payments were made for telephone lines as well as for the leasing of radio lines owned by the regional state communications office. In the beginning, the studio planned to transmit its signal via wired radio lines to the city and to a few native villages (including Siriniki and New Chaplino), with the hope of eventual conversion to broadcast radio transmission which would cover the district as well as the western Alaska coastline. In the meantime, it began looking into the possibilities of securing a radio frequency from the Ministry of Communications, even though it had no funding for a transmitter."

Radio Company Provideniya's incorporation came at a time of serious budget difficulties for the district government and no monies were allocated for the purchase of production equipment or staff salaries. Non-professional studio equipment was donated and the Mayor pledged regular subsidies for maintenance and power costs of their facilities. Financing was the first problem before broadcasting could commence, so Karablova, Nadezhda Sudakova (director of "AVAN"), and Aynana began a concerted campaign to seek funding

from the Providenski District government, as well as numerous Alaskan native corporations, radio stations, businesses, and Christian organizations in the U.S. Karablova hoped the Americans would provide the transmitter.⁸⁸

As in keeping with the tight fiscal situation at the end of 1992, the Bering Strait Native Corporation declined to assist with funding, as did other native organizations, stating their need to prioritize on their own projects. Nevertheless, Radio Company Provideniya began the process of establishing its resources and personnel for the eventual implementation of broadcasting. Completion of licensing processes represented hurdles that had to be overcome, and there were no guarantees, since the bureaucracy in Moscow (Ministries of Press and Communications) were undergoing serious changes during this period.⁸⁹

On February 20, 1993, Radio Company Provideniya began its initial broadcast to the region, featuring news and cultural items in Chaplinski Yupik. Its programming was inserted into the Radio Russia wired network during its break for local broadcasts. Daily programs were produced in a one-hour time block, divided into three 20-minute segments, with each conducted in a different language (Russian, Chukchi, or Yupik). Programming consisted of news, cultural reports, native music and stories, and general information formatted and targeted to each specific audience.⁹⁰

The station's Eskimo Department would soon benefit from a newly formed movement called "We Speak Eskimo," which was organized to produce Eskimo language lessons for radio, as well as a contemp-

orary Russian-Eskimo dictionary.

Independent Eskimo broadcasting in Chukotka finally became a reality, and represented another step in a wider effort to promote and expand the calls for media empowerment by these people. The Eskimos now had a press outlet which was ready and waiting to join efforts with other native media organizations across the North.

**A Synopsis of Russian Mass Media Policy and Reorganization
and its Impact on Chukotka State and Independent
Broadcasting (1993-1995)**

To gain a better understanding of how mass media in Russia evolved during this period, the following section will sketch out an overview of events, trends, and guiding forces which shaped the process of transition to democratic principles of government and the press at the national level, as a preliminary to gauge the subsequent impact on the activities of state and private broadcast media in Chukotka. Such a synopsis will establish a background for understanding the variables affecting the notion of Eskimo media empowerment in Russia.

With the entire country in a state of upheaval in late 1992 and 1993, political and economic decisions in Moscow had repercussions in every sphere of activity across the nation, and Chukotka, though now autonomous from the authority of Magadan, maintained its dependence on federal governance and fiscal policy. As such, Chukotka state and private broadcasters were subject to the vagaries of change within the Ministry of Press and Information, as well as

the Ministry of Communications. Though the old Soviet broadcast structures were officially closed, the press policies, financial characteristics, and technical infrastructure of the new Russian federal organs overseeing mass media roughly paralleled that of its predecessors.

For example, the 1989 Soviet law on the press was left essentially intact within the rewrite of the 1991 Russian "Law on Press and Mass Information."⁹¹ While a major role in the new law was the facilitation of independent, non-government media, the bureaucratic machinery charged with implementing the law's directives and supervising mass media development (ie., registering media entities and issuing broadcast frequencies), remained essentially the same as that in Soviet times, namely, with the same personnel, departments, regulations, timelines, and ideology of weighty government control over the granting of broadcast rights. This was not unusual for a nation emerging from a 70-year past of authoritarian control over media, but given the new environment of political democratization in the country, it was a paradox for proponents of press freedom seeking to understand the Kremlin's continuing adherence to methods of media regulation based on policies from the communist era.

Mass media policies continued to be influenced by various laws and resolutions emanating from the holdover Congress of Peoples Deputies, made up of delegates whose terms of office dated from the Soviet era. A clear example of their attempt to legislate power over the media can be seen in the July 1993 amendments to the new law on mass media which called for the adoption of "observation

councils." These councils (appointed by the Congress) were to be given the right to review all central TV and radio programming prior to broadcast; a clear form of censorship.⁹² Immediately, representatives from local soviets throughout Russia sought to organize their own councils in order to dictate policies to their teleradio companies, but ultimately such efforts came to naught.⁹³

Another aspect of their strategy was the advocacy of the Congress' right to control the apparatus of central broadcasting, an entrenched tenet of the Soviet view on press and the state. Supporters of this line pointed out the need for control partially in response to Ostankino's chaotic restructuring process, characterized by the breakup of the central studios into private production facilities functioning outside the jurisdiction of Ostankino's (and the Congress') central administration. The experience of an "ugly" market approach to the commercialization happening at Ostankino and Russian TV (RTR), along with charges of corruption in assigning commercial time and program purchases on the two central channels, added fuel to the Congress' arguments.⁹⁴

What in fact was occurring, and what the Congress was opposed to, was a devolution in the existing model of central broadcasting. Despite the apparent absence of a new and clearly outlined state policy in the field of radio and television broadcasting, Ostankino's reorganization would ultimately separate the sources of program creation and funding from the telecaster and transmission system. This became clear as the former Ostankino studios now built relations with the heads of the Ostankino TV broadcast

center, based on contracts, as typical of western broadcast models. Whereas before, when all facets of central broadcasting were under one umbrella organization, now Ostankino would emerge as a state supported television network fed with programming primarily by private, independent producers.⁹⁵

Such a development would necessarily negate or severely restrict the Congress' desired oversight of central broadcasting, yet the new producer-telecaster scenario also had the potential to limit Yeltsin's ability to both promote and mold media policies. Ruslan Khasbulatov, a leader of this conservative legislature, personified the face of anti-reform in government media control, and served as the leading opposition figure to not only the democratization of broadcasting, but to the Yeltsin administration as well.⁹⁶

A parallel situation occurred at the okrug level in Chukotka, with a large communist faction within the regional congress (and the Teleradio Company) somewhat predisposed to the old conventions of broadcasting, in opposition to a democratic-leaning governor holding influence over the Anadyr studios via his cash subsidies.

Change Amidst the Threat of Anti-Reform

In describing facets of opposition to press restructuring within the government, this analysis does not imply that the change in Russian media during the first two years following the breakup of the Union was not radical, for in fact, the face of Russian journalism and broadcasting at the national level had changed tremendously, given the introduction of private radio and television

based on commercial enterprise and western models.⁹⁷

What is of concern in this instance is the continuing preservation by segments within the central government and its organs overseeing mass media of the ideology which claimed mass media (especially television) ultimately as a tool or instrument of government policy and necessarily subservient to the political order. Such issues would soon come to a contentious climax in 1993.

For state broadcasting in Chukotka, tied up as it was to the regulations and financial supervision of Moscow, and for proponents of native-controlled independent mass media, the policies and administrative control formulated and directed by federal government organs would serve to partially determine the extent to which state and private broadcasting might develop in the future. All laws and regulations coming from Moscow had to be carried out in the okrug.⁹⁸

The reader should note a general rule of thumb concerning Russian media, whereby the further away from Moscow, the less the level of attention paid by ruling authorities to specific press outlets. Noting that all media organizations were subject to mandatory conformance to existing laws and press regulations, remote areas of the country such as Chukotka often were given much less attention by Moscow-based press authorities, and it is this phenomenon which can partially explain why Eskimo broadcasting at the state and private level was often immune to events and policies instigated at the national level. However, in the task to begin new initiatives--which first required the issuance of radio or television frequencies and broadcast permissions--Chukotka media activ-

ists would be hamstrung by the bureaucracy responsible for overseeing the very rights of access to the frequency spectrum which independent broadcasting demanded.

Radio Company Provideniya, while having access to the wired radio network in town, still was without an independent frequency assignment, or the transmission equipment to broadcast over the air. Had an Alaskan entity provided a transmitter, the Company most likely would not have been able to pay the certification fees (imposed by the Ministry of Communications) for authorizing the transmitter's use on Russian soil."

With private media in the okrug still floundering, the Tele-radio Company fared no better in 1993. The general crisis within the central broadcast structure resulted in continued neglect of state teleradio committees across the country from a financial and program assistance standpoint, and the troubles faced by the Anadyr studios in obtaining minimum funds for personnel, equipment, and operations was a typical end result.

September-October 1993

In the midst of a state crisis between rebellious factions within the Congress of People's Deputies and the federal administration, President Yeltsin on September 21, announced the dissolution of the Congress. Within days, massed protests and eventual fighting broke out on the streets of Moscow. In response, Yeltsin declared a state of emergency in Moscow on October 4th.

As army tanks blockaded the Russian parliamentary building and its occupants, the government promptly issued a decree on press censorship. President Yeltsin ordered numerous communist-oriented newspapers closed and instructed other newspapers to practice self-censorship, threatening those printing potentially destabilizing information with seizure of facilities.¹⁰⁰

The order did not specifically direct censorship of private or state radio and television in Moscow. During part of the confrontation, the sole live nationwide television coverage of the White House blockade (where members of the dissolved Congress were meeting) was provided independently by the CNN Moscow bureau, and both Ostankino and Russian Television were dependent on the American footage for transmitting images of the event across the country.¹⁰¹ Chukotka television and radio carried the information as relayed by Moscow, but did not experience the impact of the censorship decree in its own reporting.

The new RSFSR Minister of Information, Vladimir Shumeiko, defended Yeltsin's policy of censorship as necessary and within the President's prerogative. Within two days of the decree's issuance, and amidst protests by Russian journalists and numerous western governments (particularly the United States), Yeltsin repealed the decree, while at the same time disbanding the Congress of People's Deputies and declaring invalid all the laws established by it. With this action, the status of the "Law on Press and Mass Information," was in question since it was a product of the now-defunct body. Clarification of the issue and the eventual course

of broadcast reform would soon be determined by presidential decree, since Yeltsin now ruled the country by this constitutionally-approved right.¹⁰²

The censorship decree set in motion a heightened sense of government control over press, and the Kremlin made it apparent that the ongoing state of emergency warranted stiff penalties for those media operations (the communist-dominated papers) seeking to incite anti-government actions. Most communist papers shut down permanently.

In essence, the Kremlin's assent to the call of self-censorship was in fact a form of censorship; one out of bounds for a nation seeking to incorporate freedom of opinion as a necessary component to the building of democratic rule. Communists were now demanding press freedoms that they only recently had denied to the nation: ironically, liberal press proponents seemingly demanded sterner measures from Yeltsin against the communist's press rights. Yeltsin and his followers seemed to be reverting back to authoritarianism as they maintained the closure of newspaper offices, and though the actions appeared anti-democratic, much of the liberal press justified the action. Their justifications were centered on two points; first, that if the Communists gained power again, press freedom would certainly be ended, and second, that at this stage of development, Russia's transition to democracy was at best incomplete, thus the tendency to revert to less than democratic measures was a compromise they were prepared to accept for the short-term.¹⁰³

With regard to broadcasting, Minister Shumeiko sustained the notion of greater Kremlin control over national TV (since it could be argued that stability in Russia depended more on television than any other mass media) and possessed the means to implement a policy of subtle intimidation via the Information Ministry's control over federal budgets for broadcasting. In addition, a Soviet-era law over journalists was maintained, which could impose a two year jail term for those charged with "insulting top officials."¹⁰⁴

There were various reactions to this state of affairs. Soon after the October events, journalists who accused the government of censoring TV broadcasts fought back by launching the nation's first private news channel, *Nesivisima Televideniye* (Independent Television). Over 80 central television reporters defected to the new service, which was financed by three private banks and shown over the widely distributed St. Petersburg network.¹⁰⁵

Given the tighter leash of Kremlin control over Moscow-based media, the strong reaction of the Moscow press community was to be expected, however, a much more timid reaction was often displayed by teleradio companies in regions further away from the capital.

The Chukotka Teleradio Company's leadership was keenly aware of the situation (the potential for lowered subsidies allotted by the Ministry if agitated) and maintained a quiet tone while pressing for continued maintenance of its already dwindling funding support from Moscow. Communist-leaning newspapers across the okrug had come to the point of bankruptcy or were already dissolved, due to lack of financing from the Ministry of Information, whose head

declared that if the Communists wanted their press services, they could pay for it themselves. This was a complete reversal for a CPSU press which historically had total access to federal funds.¹⁰⁶

Presidential Control of Broadcasting and Government Restructuring

On December 22, 1993, Boris Yeltsin signed a presidential decree outlining a realignment and restructuring of mass media, while stating that he would finance all government broadcasting. Information Minister Shumeiko announced that the decree would restructure the existing Ministry of Press and Information, splitting its functions between two new agencies; The Committee for Press, and the Federal Service for Television and Radio. Both organs were to be under the administration of the Office of the President.¹⁰⁷

These two offices, in tandem with the Ministry of Communications (which maintained control over the state broadcast transmission network) were charged with regulating all broadcast activities. Their supervisory roles included the registration of new press entities; issuance of broadcast frequencies; enforcement of laws and technical standards pertaining to state and private media operations; oversight of Ostankino and Russian Television (and the numerous teleradio companies across the country); and enforcement of regulations affecting independent broadcasters.¹⁰⁸

What the new arrangement facilitated was both greater oversight of the direction broadcast media reform would take, while further opening up the possibilities for the corporatization and commercialization of state and private TV and radio. In the mean-

time, the new agencies found themselves with the onerous burden of guiding a system unable to wrest itself from state subsidization.¹⁰⁹

From the perspective of the Chukotka Teleradio Company, the restructuring would do little to solve their problems. They, like other regional companies, were forced to reduce their bloated staff levels, while working harder to develop alternative funding sources. Relying primarily on both the federal budget and the Chukotka regional budget for its survival, the Anadyr studios showed little success in developing the commercial attitude then existing at the central broadcast outlets.

The slow state of commercial development and the overall decrease in federal funds to the okrug at large were partial reasons for the poor state of affairs in Anadyr and Provideniya. Russia's high monetary inflation further eroded the company's ability to stay on top of the deteriorating situation in terms of physical plant, costs of transmission facilities, salaries, production expenses, etc. Comparatively speaking, however, Anadyr's staff of 100 (including support personnel) in 1994, produced only 3 hours of radio programming per day; contrasted to an Alaskan station like KICY which broadcast 18 hours per day with a staff of 5. Teleradio heads knew it was hard to justify such a large staff which produced so little output.¹¹⁰

For the Eskimo Department, this meant no money to hire new workers to replace the current staff (who desired to retire), for staff travel to villages, for long distance phone calls, new tape recorders, or media activities associated with Alaska. Despite its

shoestring budget, and with practically no contact with Alaskan press during this year, the Eskimo staff managed to produce 80 minutes weekly of news, reports on culture and arts, the life of native peoples from across the circumpolar North, and traditional music. Fortunately for the staff, numerous visitors from Alaska and Canada found their way to the Anadyr studios, providing first-hand information to the department.¹¹¹

Crisis in Federal Funding

Soon after 1994 commenced, the new State Duma (which replaced the Congress) was charged with the financing of state broadcasting, and immediately a crisis over the delay of payments to workers employed throughout the system emerged. On February 9th, closure of TV centers around the country was announced because of lack of payments, and the following day, Ostankino's satellite signal was not transmitted by workers who noted the government's 80 billion rubles owed to them.¹¹²

The problem of salary payments was an interagency one. Debts between the Ministry of Communications and the various production agencies within the state system could be settled solely through the ability of the federal budget to provide cash infusions to every sector. Ostankino and RTR were in the best position to cover salaries through advertising revenues, with regional teleradio and Ministry employees in the worst position--due to reliance on payments from the two central channels, the various state users of the transmission system, and the federal budget.

In September, 26 television centers were told to reorganize, including the Chukotka studios. The Duma also announced legislative proposals to privatize all state TV, including turning Ostan-kino into a joint stock organization.¹¹³ Little actual reorganization took place in Anadyr, if any, and the only change appeared in the number of employees who left the Teleradio Company. The staff often went months at a time without receiving salaries--a situation which proved a recurring problem for all employees in the state system.

In Provideniya, the Radio Company would face similar pressures in financing its operation as it remained unsuccessful in generating commercial revenues, and had to depend on the small stipend provided by the Mayor. The radio group was not able to secure funding from federal sources, and remained ineligible for subsidies normally available from the okrug administration in Anadyr. In 1994, it was successful in obtaining a U.S. government grant from the "EuroAsia Fund" for the purchase of studio equipment. The funds were directed to KSKA Radio in Anchorage, which then bought and transported the equipment to Provideniya.¹¹⁴

The Provideniya staff began the process of applying for a television frequency in the city, as they saw the possibility of developing Eskimo programs in conjunction with the existing cable company which operated in the same building. Programming would be produced by the radio staff and volunteers if both the frequency and studio equipment could be obtained, though actual realization of these efforts would not occur until two years later. In the

interim, the company concentrated on its radio broadcasts targeted to the region's native population, producing 60 minutes daily.¹¹⁵

1995

Changes continued in the corporatization of central broadcasting, highlighted by Yeltsin's decree on March 1, for the restructuring of Ostankino. The decree created a new company named Russian Public Television (ORT) to operate the first national channel, and changed Ostankino's ownership structure into a commercial joint venture, with the government owning a 51 percent stake, and 49 percent owned by a consortium of banks, production companies, and other national firms.¹¹⁶

Shortly after the decree was signed, the newly appointed General Director of ORT, popular television host Vladislav Listyev, was assassinated. Media analysts were quick to point to his threatened support of a ban on commercial advertising over the channel as the primary reason for his death. Listyev's position against advertising was based partially in response to charges of corruption within Gosteleradio divisions concerning the method advertising revenues were collected. With billions of rubles at stake, corruption within the organization was one of the first signs of Russian television's awkward transition to commercialization.¹¹⁷

While the assassination shocked the nation, the reorganization and the triumph of commercial interests at Ostankino confirmed the direction Russia's broadcast system had been heading

toward through the past three years of change. State broadcasting could no longer depend on 100 percent funding from the federal budget, and the only option capable of generating revenues was commercial advertising.

Ostankino at one time had 15,000 employees, and now, thousands would be laid off in a move which spelled out the new model of state-commercial broadcasting, with private production companies becoming the primary supplier of programming over Russia's central television transmission system. The Vice President of ORT, unhappy with the move, stated:

I'm not very happy with how the restructuring was done. There isn't a well thought out process, but this is Russia, where everything is unpredictable.¹¹⁸

The official position of the new channel's information philosophy and political concept was stated by its new president as "stability, growth, and Russia." While some media analysts feared that Yeltsin's choice of ORT financial partners would guarantee political control of news and information, the channel's Vice President dispelled the notion by claiming that with so many sources of news, it would be impossible for the nation to return to the practices of the past. Such boasting, however, could not preclude the possibility that Russia's financial and political elite (often one and the same), could effect editorial control over the national airwaves in support of their personal interests.¹¹⁹

The face of Russian television (and radio) in its organization and production output had undergone a complete transformation, with central broadcasting now striving to mirror the imagery

and operational trends of its American and European counterparts.

End Results of Russian Media Transformation

The transformation of Russian broadcasting opened up new avenues of media application for advocates of both state and independent media in Chukotka. With the old Soviet broadcast models clearly dispelled and the dual state-commercial modes of media ripe for exploitation, the challenge for Eskimo broadcasting in both its state and private forms, was in the expansion of their operations.

The year of 1995, was a milestone in the history of broadcast media in the Bering Strait, where Eskimos on both sides now faced similar press environments featuring competing private and public sector models of broadcasting. Each side witnessed existing state services struggling for survival, yet doors opened for private media opportunities and utilization of new technologies offering vast possibilities for exploitation. Eskimos could no longer assume continued public sector support of the services they traditionally took for granted, and now faced a concomitant responsibility for ensuring the maintenance of those services they deemed vital.

There was never a better time for native media empowerment activists in Chukotka and Alaska to collectively employ strategies to strengthen their command over broadcasting. With it, Eskimos could facilitate their sociocultural relations, their political power, and their economic prosperity. All they needed was the motivation, the application, and the sources of funding.

TABLE #5 COMPARATIVE ALASKA-CHUKOTKA COMMUNICATIONS TIMELINE

ALASKA COMMUNICATIONS TIMELINE

1865-67--WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH EXTENSION PROJECT

1900--1st telegraph system established in Nome

1903--Wireless Radio Link (Safety-St. Michael) marked completion of 1st integrated telecom network along the Bering Strait

1905--"Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System

1922--1st Alaskan radio broadcast station (WLAY-Fairbanks)

1935--Alaska Communication System (military network)

1939--Electronic Television introduced in U.S.

1941--U.S. Army post and radio complex built in Nome

(facilitated American Lend Lease program with USSR)

--1st broadcast radio transmitter installed at Nome

(Armed Forces Radio station WXLN)

--Eskimos first reception of radio in Western Alaska

1945--Pirate radio broadcast station in Kotzebue by Paul Sell

Post WORLD WAR II

--WXLN-Nome, changed to AFRS-Nome: broadcasts AFRN programming to Western Alaska and Chukotka via 1000 watt transmitter

1953--Television begins in Alaska: KFIA/KTVA Anchorage

1st cable TV operation: Ketchikan

1955--Construction of U.S. Military's WHITE ALICE system

1956--KNOM TV. 1st cable television system in Western Alaska

--US Military builds small TV operations at bases in Alaska

1960--KICY Radio-Nome, initiates private broadcasting in Western Alaska. Transmissions reach Chukotka

--AFRS-Nome decommissioned by Army.

1960s--KUAC-Fairbanks, 1st Alaska public radio station

1962--AFRTS TV site built on St. Lawrence Island

1967--COMSAT conducts satellite distribution studies in Alaska

1969--1st satellite TV broadcast to Alaska (Moonlanding)

--Educational Broadcasting Commission established

1970--Commercial Satellite TV service begins via Bartlett station

--NASA ATS-1 satellite initiates 1st of numerous TV experiments

--KUAC-College, uplinks 1st Alaskan satellite radio broadcast

--KICY begins regular broadcasting in Russian to Chukotka

1971--KNOM Nome initiates radio broadcasts

--KYUK Bethel (1st public radio station in western Alaska)

--COMSAT satellite TV demonstration projects in Eskimo villages

1972--KYUK TV Bethel, initiates 1st Eskimo oriented TV service

--1st MINI-TV sites established at Fort Yukon and Angoon

1973--KOTZ Kotzebue initiates radio broadcasts

--"PROJECT WALES" study on TV exposure in Eskimo villages

1974--"Alaska Communications Plan" announced by Alascom, Inc, paving the way for expansion of satellite TV in rural Alaska

--"Educational Satellite Communications Demonstration" project via ATS-6 satellite for delivery of social services

1975--KBRW Barrow initiates radio broadcasts

--Alaska Legislature funds construction of satellite downlinks in native villages across Alaska

1976--Legislature funds satellite TV project for 24 villages
 1977--"Alaska Satellite Demonstration Project" begins.
 1st scheduled satellite TV broadcasts to the Bering Strait
 late 1970's--VCRs and TVRO satellite systems appear in rural Alaska
 1978--Alaska Legislature funds comprehensive satellite TV coverage
 --"Rural Alaska Television Network" (RATNET) initiated
 1980--Legislature funds LEARNAlaska educational satellite TV
 1980's--expansion of cable television service in Eskimo villages
 --KCHS-Unalakleet (student radio service) operates sporadically
 --KNSA Unalakleet (APRN retranslator) begins operations.
 1986--State budget crisis starts decline in state-sponsored
 broadcasting: LEARNAlaska closed, reductions to ABPC
 1988--1st satellite TV broadcasts transmitted to Alaska from
 Chukotka (USSR)
 --Beginning of Soviet-Alaskan broadcast media relations
 1989--1st direct radiotelephone link between Alaska and Chukotka
 1990--1st Alaska satellite TV broadcasts received in USSR
 1995--Realignment of state broadcast services: RATNET becomes
 "Alaska Rural Communications System"; APRN radio stations
 grouped into regional associations; Alaska Public TV stations
 grouped into "Alaska One" network; State of Alaska begins
 phase-out of support for public broadcasting

SOVIET-RUSSIAN COMMUNICATIONS TIMELINE

1865--Western Union Telegraph Extension Project
 1895--Russia claims Popov's discovery of Radio
 1900--Alaskan traders construct telegraph stations in Chukotka
 1910--1st national radio broadcast company started
 1914--Large radiotelegraph system constructed in Anadyr
 1917--Bolsheviks take over national radio infrastructure
 1919--Soviets establish radio laboratory at Nizhni Novgorod
 1922--Soviets operate world's most powerful radio transmitter
 1924--Soviets complete conquest of Chukotka, take over radio sites
 --USSR issues "Freedom of Broadcasting" decree to implement
 radio development nationwide
 --Last American-operated telegraph station in Chukotka closed
 1931--All-Union Committee for Radio, takes control of Soviet radio
 --Dalstroy constructs radio center in Magadan
 --Reception of national radio broadcasts at some sites in
 Magadan Oblast/Chukotka
 --1st Soviet experiments with television (mechanical scanning)
 1935--Upgrade of Magadan radio center allows communication to
 Moscow and across the oblast
 --Radio facilities constructed in Provideniya and Anadyr
 1937--Broadcasts from "The Voice of Moscow" available in Chukotka
 via diffusion loudspeakers
 --RADIO BROADCASTS FROM ANADYR begin on sporadic basis
 1938--Magadan communication authorities begin regular radio
 broadcasts to oblast and Chukotka
 1939--Electronic Television introduced in USSR

WORLD WAR II ERA

- Soviet construct radio "POLAR STATIONS" in ESKIMO VILLAGES and expand general communications infrastructure in Chukotka
- 50 percent of Soviet broadcast plants destroyed by warfare
- 1945--Soviet TV resumes broadcasting following war
- 1948--Eskimos in Chaplino receive wired radio sets
- 1950--Broadcast RADIO RECEPTION available in most ESKIMO VILLAGES
- 1951--Central Television studios constructed in Moscow
- 1956--Chukotka Radio Service begins shortwave broadcasts to okrug
 - ESKIMO LANGUAGE PROGRAMS begin on sporadic basis from Anadyr
- 1957--Introduction of Television in Magadan Oblast (Magadan)
- 1960--CPSU directive prioritizing television over radio
 - "First Program" national TV channel reaches 5% of Soviet pop.
 - Magadan city TV studio incorporated into the Magadan Regional Committee for Broadcasting
- 1962--1st Soviet satellite TV transmissions (Vostok 3)
- 1963--Chukotka CPSU administration and Chukotka State Radio Committee petition Moscow for right to establish television
- 1965--1st satellite TV transmission to Soviet Far East (Molniya)
- 1967--Ostankino Television Center built in Moscow
 - Construction of first Orbita satellite station in Magadan
 - 1st reception of Soviet central television in Magadan
 - 1st local television experiments in Chukotka (Anadyr)
- 1968--1st attempts to formalize Eskimo language broadcasts
- 1969--Formation of Eskimo Radio Department, within Chukotka State Radio Service in Anadyr. Commencement of regularly scheduled Eskimo programming
 - Anadyr amateur TV studio turned into professional operation: Formation of "Anadyrski Studio of Television," within the Chukotka Area Radio and Television Broadcasting Committee.
- 1970--Construction of first Orbita station in Chukotka (Bilibino)
 - State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting formed
- 1972--1st Central Television broadcast reception in Anadyr via new Orbita station (Winter Olympic Games from Sapporo, Japan)
 - 2nd reorganization of state broadcasting in Chukotka into; Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee
- 1975--1st Central Television reception in Providenski District
- 1976--1st reception of Central TV broadcasts in Eskimo villages
- Late 70's-early 1980's
 - General expansion of television service to Eskimo villages in Chukotski and Providenski districts for reception of TV
- 1985--Soviet campaigns of Glasnost and Perestroika initiate process of broadcast media and press reforms in the USSR
 - Production of first Soviet VCRs begins
- 1986--Eskimo Broadcasts over Provideniya diffusion radio system
- 1988--US border opening with Alaska impacts Chukotka broadcast operations, and initiates media relations with Alaska
 - 1st U.S. television and radio broadcasts from Chukotka via American satellite during the "Friendship Flight"
- 1989--Soviet "Law on the Press"--ends state's monopoly over press
 - emergence of small cable TV systems in Chukotka
- 1990--Construction of satellite stations in Magadan and Anadyr

allow reception of 1st American television broadcasts in the Soviet Far East. (RATNET)

- USSR Presidential decree, "On Democratization and Development of TV and Radio Broadcasting" ends CPSU control of national broadcast system.

1991--Alaskan satellite television reception begins in Provideniya

- Struggle for national control of broadcast infrastructure between USSR Central bodies and RSFSR
- August Coup ends CPSU authority. RSFSR Presidential decree places all broadcasting under RSFSR authority (Ministry of Information and Press).
- Local Party control over Magadan/Chukotka broadcasting ended
- Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee liquidated: Chukotka State Teleradio Company created in its place
- Eskimo Broadcasting freed from state editorial control
- Soviet Union dissolved. Russian Federation emerges

1992--Founding of Radio Company Provideniya for Eskimo radio

- Crisis of federal funding support for Chukotka state broadcasting
- National broadcasting commences in both state-supported and private modes: commercial TV and radio stations begin.
- Establishment of small video production companies in Chukotka

1993--October revolt in Moscow: Yeltsin dissolves Congress, enacts censorship on remaining CPSU press outlets

- Presidential Decree outlines realignment and restructuring of national broadcast media and press: creation of "Committee for Press," and "Federal Service for Television and Radio"

1995--National TV channel "Ostankino" changes to joint-stock organization, 51% government/49% private ownership

1996--Eskimo broadcasting on state radio in doubt, due to financing, lack of personnel.

- Private Eskimo radio broadcasting unable to expand, obtain radio frequencies, or transmission equipment

1997--Media relations between Alaska and Chukotka in a suspended state

TABLE #6

COMPARISONS OF ESKIMO USE OF BROADCAST MEDIA
1997

CHUKOTKA		WESTERN ALASKA
1-3 (Central/local)	Available Free Dispersion TV channels	1-2 (ARCS/KYUK)
1 or none	Cable TV Channels	40+
multiple	Free Dispersion Radio	multiple
1-2	Cable Radio	6+
5+	Direct to Home Satellite TV Channels	40+
10% +	VCR Penetration rate (in residences)	85% +
2	Eskimo-oriented Radio stations	2

NOTES

1. Richard Taylor, "Conference Proceedings," In Communications and Alaska Natives: Proceeding of The Chugach Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, October 5-6, 1990, by The Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1990), 13; LEARNAlaska's funding was cancelled in 1986.
2. Alaska State Legislature, House State Affairs Committee, Rural Alaska Television Network: A Report to the Legislature, report prepared by Representative H. A. "Red" Boucher and Representative Eileen MacLean, February 1990, p. 3.
3. Congress, Senate, Senator Stevens speaking on the need to develop Alaska's communication system, 91st Congress., 1st sess., Congressional Record (1 July 1970), vol 116, 22399-40.
4. Red Boucher, "What can we do at the end of the 1980s that will help Alaska in 1990s?" In Discussing The Future of Communication in Alaska: Proceedings of The Chugach Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, August 18-19, 1989, by The Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1989), 29.
5. For an excellent summary of the State of Alaska broadcast situation in 1989, see, Larry L. Pearson, The Future of State-Supported Broadcasting in Alaska, Final recommendations to the House Special Committee on Telecommunications, 1989.
6. Mike Davis, former Alaska State legislator (House), interview by author, 2 March 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.
7. Daniel Johnson, "A Survey of Television Awareness in the Bering Strait." Survey conducted on behalf of Kawerak Inc., Nome, Alaska, and utilized in preparation of a master's degree thesis completed by Daniel Johnson, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. 1987.
8. Norma Forbes, et al., "Social and Cognitive Effects of the Introduction of Television on Rural Alaskan Native Children," Center for Cross Cultural Studies, University of Alaska Fairbanks, March 1994, 59.
9. D'Anne Hamilton, "Conference Proceedings," In Communications and Alaska Natives: The proceedings of The Chugach Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, October 5-6, 1990, by The Chugach Conference (Anchorage, Alaska: The Chugach Conference, 1990), 6.
10. Mike Davis, interview by author.
11. Pearson, 5.

12. Boucher and MacLean, 3. RATNET carried a total of 4 subcarrier audio circuits, one of which was for the ARIES audio service for the blind and handicap, as well as a computer data service for the University of Alaska which utilized video line 21.

13. The Legislature adopted legislation proposed by Red Boucher to create the Governor's Telecommunications Information Council, a cabinet-level body charged with making telecommunication policy.

14. Infomatrix, Inc., "An Assessment: Audio and Video Telecommunications in Alaska," In Satellite Interconnection and Distance Delivery in Alaska: Toward the 21st Century (Juneau, Alaska: Satellite Interconnection Project, 1995), 16.

15. Douglas Samimi-Moore and Lois Stiegemeier, Satellite Interconnection Project, Satellite Interconnection and Distance Delivery in Alaska: Toward the 21st Century (Juneau: Satellite Interconnection Project, 1995), 7.

16. Boucher and MacLean, 8; In 1989, The Alaska State Legislature appropriated \$2.8 million to replace the 146 TVRO earth stations owned by Alascom in the villages served by RATNET.

17. Jeannie Greene, producer, HEARTBEAT ALASKA, interview by author, 15 July 1993, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording; Melanie Hoblet, "Behind the Scenes of Northern Lives," (1992 Alaska Native High School Media Conference Newsletter), APRN Native Broadcast Center Newsletter, (Vol. 1, No. 3), August 1992, 3.

18. Jeannie Greene, interview by author.

19. Ibid.

20. Sharon McConnel, Blueberry Productions, interview by author, 5 August 1995, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.

21. Jeannie Greene, interview by author.

22. John McDonald, General Manager, KYUK TV, interview by author, 7 November 1995, Bethel, Alaska.

23. Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, PUBLIC BROADCASTING IN ALASKA: A LONG RANGE PLAN, 1989 Edition (Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, 1989), 78; Pearson, "The Future of State-Supported Broadcasting in Alaska," 10.

24. Pearson, 9.

25. Pearson, 5-8.

26. Infomatrix, Inc., 7.

27. Susan Erlich, manager, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 1 December 1995, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording.

28. Richard Emanuel, "Gary Fife's Radio Program Brings Native Oral Tradition Full Circle," Alaska Airlines Magazine, September 1992, 75.

29. Erlich, interview by author.

30. Jim Paulin, "Noatak Plugs into the Global Community," Anchorage Daily News, August 24, 1995, B7; As of August 1995, only one village in the NANA region, Kobuk, was without cable television service.

31. Rick Schmidt, Program Director, KNOM Radio, interview by author, 1 December 1995, Nome, Alaska, tape recording.

32. Information from this writer, who is a member of the Arctic Broadcasting Association board of directors--the parent organization of KICY.

33. Observations concerning KICY and KNOM are from this writer's experience with both stations over a 12 year period extending through 1996.

34. The State of Alaska's budget for Alaska Public broadcasting decreased consistently every year from 1991 to 1995, with one estimate being roughly a 30 per cent decline in funding during these years.

35. Lynn Anderson, Manager, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 1 April 1995, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording.

36. Ibid.

37. Ralph Fondell, Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, interview by author, 30 April 1996, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.

38. Fondell, interview by author.

39. Ralph Fondell, Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, interview by author, 8 August 1995, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.

40. Susan Erlich, manager, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 19 February 1996, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording.

41. Lana Creer-Harris, "RATNET movers to Bethel," The Nome Nugget, 1 June 1995, 13.

42. John McDonald, General Manager, KYUK Television, interview by author, 4 August 1995, Bethel, Alaska, tape recording.

43. Ibid.

44. Dwight Clift, Chief Engineer, State of Alaska Division of Telecommunication Operations, interview by author, 1 October 1995, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.

45. John McDonald, interview by author, 7 November 1995.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. McDonald, interview by author, 4 August 1995.

49. Ralph Fondell, interview by author, 30 April 1996. To clarify the ARCS/Alaska One relationship, it should be noted that ARCS was not directly associated with Alaska One and the other public broadcasting stations. ARCS was a separate service operated by KYUK, which accessed programming from the Alaska One program stream from KUAC, allowed for occasional insertion of local KYUK productions, and rebroadcast programs from other Alaska public stations, independent producers, and Anchorage commercial stations during the evenings (like the old RATNET system). The stations involved with Alaska One transmitted the program stream from the KUAC uplink, while inserting local materials as scheduled to their primary geographic areas of service. KYUK did not transmit ARCS within their region, they just served as the coordination/uplink point for the system while their viewers watched the KUAC stream.

50. ARCS was not strictly a public broadcasting service, although it still is supported in part by the State of Alaska. The small amount it does receive from the state does not greatly assist KYUK in their effort to raise federal matching grant levels from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Though KYUK took on the responsibility of supervising two separate programs streams, their funding base, given the decreasing support by the Republican-dominated State Legislature for public broadcasting, was precarious, with staff members stating that they were living "hand to mouth." With predictions that the Legislature could totally cut out funding for public broadcasting in 1997, the future of ARCS remains an open question; see, Mike Martz, KYUK Television, interview by author, 3 December 1996, Bethel, Alaska, tape recording.

51. Sovietskaya Chukotka Editorial Staff, "Something about Radio and TV in Chukotka," Sovietskaya Chukotka, 5 October 1991, 4.

52. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Director, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 9 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

53. Enmenkow, interview by author; Sergey Sadetov, Magadan State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 7 June 1992, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

54. Enmenkow, interview by author; Antonina Verbitskaya, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 5 February 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

55. Chukotka State Teleradio TV News Department, "NOVOSTI", Television news report broadcast on 20 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia.

56. Vladimir Tckachov, Chairman, Chukotka State Television and Radio Committee, interview by author, 5 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording; Yuri Fyodorov, Chief Engineer, Chukotka Teleradio Company, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

57. V. Efimov, General Editor, TVK-TV Company, "An open letter to Colleagues in the Far East," TVK-TV company, Petropovlovsk Kamchatka, Russia, 18 May 1992. From an international perspective, the Chukotka State committee could not pursue developments in satellite utilization from Alaska (which was the most likely media for exploiting their relations) first, because it could not obtain copyright permissions to rebroadcast RATNET, and second, because it could not afford uplinking fees from Anadyr to send programming back to Alaska as part of an active press exchange between the countries.

58. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 25 May 1995, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording.

59. Personal observation by this writer while living in Anadyr, as well as from discussions with various journalists and production workers at the Chukotka Teleradio Company, Spring 1992.

60. Ljubosh, interview by author, 5 April 1994.

61. Personal observation from periodic visits to the Anadyr studios in 1992; Ljubosh, interview by author, 6 May 1992.

62. Victor Luktivunov, Chief Engineer, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 30 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

63. Teleradio Company chairman Vladimir Tckachov made repeated trips to Moscow in 1992 to seek funding from the All Russia company, but achieved little more than obtaining funds to provide for the barest operations at the Anadyr studios. Observation of writer.

64. Andre Neskov, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 4 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

65. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 7 October 1995, St. Petersburg, Russia, tape recording. Despite the Governor's use of the station as his personal platform, there was one content issue everyone at the station had to remember; people would no longer stand for overt propaganda from public officials, so great efforts were made to present balanced information.

66. Ljubosh, interview by author, 5 April 1994; Valeri Ivanov, Editor, Sovietskaya Chukotka, interview by author, 10 March 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

67. Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

68. Observation by this writer while viewing Chukchi and Eskimo TV programs transmitted by the Anadyr studio, as well as from interviews with staff members during Spring 1992.

69. Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994; Sveta Togiak, Murgen Nutenot, interview by author, 27 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

70. Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

71. Ibid.

72. Tatiana Ochirgina, Association of Native Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma, interview by author, 4 May 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

73. Sveta Togiak, interview by author.

74. Ochirgina, interview by author, 7 April 1992.

75. Observation by this author after discussions with native journalists in Anadyr and Provideniya.

76. Personal observation after numerous discussions with cable enthusiasts and state communications personnel during this writers visits to Provideniya in 1991 and 1992.

77. Personal observations by this writer while travelling throughout the Providenski District and visiting the Provideniya cable facility during the spring of 1992.

78. Evgeny Kuchin, Chukchi TV Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 7 April 1992, Anadyr, Russia, tape recording.

79. Enmenkow, interview by author, 9 May 1992.

80. Natalie Novik, interview by author, 5 December 1992, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording.

81. Lynn Anderson, Station Manager, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 2 February 1994, Kotzebue, Alaska, interview by author, tape recording.

82. Ivanov, interview by author.

83. This writer was in attendance at the Four Regions Conference and played a leading role in the discussions of establishing independent native media in Chukotka.

84. Olga Karablova, Provideniya, Russia, to Daniel Johnson, Jamestown, New York, 22 February 1993, letter.

85. Radio Company Provideniya, "The Proposals of the 'AVAN' Association, Radio Company 'Provideniya,' and 'Yupik' Society," 16 November 1992, special collections, Kawerak, Inc., Nome, Alaska.

86. Ibid.

87. Olga Karablova, Director, Radio Company Provideniya, interview by author, 10 April 1994, Provideniya, Russia.

88. Olga Karablova, to Daniel Johnson; Olga Karablova, interview by author, 11 November 1996, Provideniya, Russia.

89. In a letter to this writer, Loretta Bullard, head of the Kawerak subsidiary of the Bering Strait Native Corporation, Nome, Alaska, stated that they were supportive of Eskimo radio and information networking with Chukotka, but could not provide any funds to assist its startup (February, 1993).

90. Olga Karablova to Daniel Johnson.

91. Max Tckachenko, Senior Producer, CNN New Bureau-Moscow, interview by author, 20 August 1992, Moscow, Russia, tape recording.

92. Yelena Dmitriyeva, "An attempt of censorship," Moscow News, 23 July 1993, 2.

93. Max Tkachenko, Senior Producer, CNN News Bureau-Moscow, interview by author, 1 November 1993, Moscow, Russia, tape recording.

94. Linda Jensen, Russian American Press Center, interview by author, 7 July 1992, Moscow, Russia, tape recording; Marina Podzorova, "We Would Like to Inform You..." Moscow News, 18-24 November 1994, 6.

95. Yelena Chekalova, "How to Save State TV," Moscow News, 1-7 April 1994, 15.

96. Jensen, interview by author; Marina Sergeyeva, "Commercial freedom of speech will be protected," Moscow News, 24 September 1993, 8.

97. In 1992, six commercial radio stations operated in Moscow: Radio 101, Open Radio, Radio Maximum (a Russian-American joint venture), Europa Plus, Radio Mayak, and Radio Nostalgie (Russian-French joint venture. Information by author while conducting research in Moscow during this year.

98. Alexander Ljubosh, interview by author, 5 April 1994, Anadyr, Russia.

99. Olga Karablova, interview by author, 10 April 1994; Certification charges by the Ministry of Communications for a 100 watt transmitter of foreign manufacture were over \$6,000 U.S., (this was the amount paid by this writer in getting certification completed for a radio station in Magadan, Russia).

100. The Moscow Tribune Editorial staff, "Free Press?", The Moscow Tribune, 12 October 1993, 8; The Moscow Times Editorial Staff, "Censorship: Why Liberals May Back It," The Moscow Times, 7 October 1993, 8.

101. This writer viewed the crisis in Moscow on Russian television as it occurred in October 1993; Tkachenko, interview by author, 1 November 1993.

102. The Moscow Tribune Editorial Staff, "Free Press?", 8.

103. The Moscow Times Editorial Staff, "Censorship: Why Liberals May Back It," 8.

104. Tkachenko, interview by author, 1 November 1993; Sergei Muratov, "TV and politicians: who will win?", Moscow News, 23 July 1993, 15; Candice Hughes, The Associated Press, "Puppet show producer in big trouble," Anchorage Daily News, 20 August 1995, A10.

105. Moscow Tribune Staff report, "Russia's First Private News Channel on Air," Moscow Tribune, 12 October 1993, 5.

106. The first head of the Russian Ministry of Information, Mikhail Polteranin, quickly started the policy of withdrawing funds from the hundreds of small Communist party papers scattered across the country, of which, the six or seven regional party papers in Chukotka were included. Polteranin funded many new papers which helped initiate the democratic-leaning press. Observation by this writer, who served as English edition editor for VOSTOK ROSSI (East of Russia), an independent newspaper in Magadan, Russia, with distribution across the Russian Far East (1991-1992); Ljubosh, interview by author, 5 April 1994.

107. **Vesti**, Russian Television News Service, Moscow, Russia, telecast, 22 December 1993; Alexander Rushev, General Director, Magadan State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 29 October 1994, Magadan, Russia, tape recording.

108. Information from personal experience while this writer worked with all three agencies (from 1993-1996) in the effort to obtain mass media registration and radio frequencies for establishing a private radio station in Magadan, Russia.

109. Yelena Chekalova, "How to save state TV?", Moscow News, 1-7 April 1994, 15.

110. Yuri Fyodorov, interview by author.

111. Enmenkow, interview by author, 21 September 1994.

112. **Vesti**, Russian Television News Service, Moscow, Russia, telecast, 9 February 1994, and 10 February 1994; Yuri Bodomolov, "TV Workers threaten strike," Moscow News, 18-24 February 1994, 3.

113. Sergey Medvedev, **Novosti Plus**, Ostankino Television News Service, Moscow, Russia, telecast, 10 September 1994.

114. Olga Karablova, interview by author, 11 November 1996, Provideniya, Russia, tape recording.

115. Ibid.

116. **Vesti**, Russian Television News Service, Moscow, Russia, telecast, 1 March 1995; Hugh Edwards, British Broadcasting Corporation (Radio), London, England, Radio news broadcast on 4 April 1995. The 49% stake was taken by Itar-Tass, Aeroflot International Airlines, Menatep Bank, Stolichny Bank, Inkombank, and Roscredit.

117. Steven Erlanger, "Russian Journalist Is Slain; Profits May Be The Motive," New York Times, 2 March 1995, A7; Margaret Shapiro, The Washington Post, "Russians outraged at slaying of corruption-fighting TV director," Anchorage Daily News, 2 March 1995, 1, A8. The General Director's opposition to commercials was opposed by those who argued that funding for the service should not come entirely from the federal budget, and that commercial advertising would have to make up the difference of withdrawal of federal funds. Charges of corruption centered on the recent move to create an in house Advertising agency, which increased revenues 700% over the old system, and the heads of this new division were said to be skimming huge personal profits from these sums.

118. Hugh Edwards, British Broadcasting Corporation, newscast.

119. Ibid.

CHAPTER 10

A STRATEGY OF BROADCAST AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION FOR PROMOTING ESKIMO MEDIA EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS ACROSS THE BERING STRAIT

In providing an exhaustive survey of the development, foundation, utilization, and participation of Eskimos with broadcast media in Chukotka and western Alaska, one must come to a point of conclusion regarding what role broadcast media and telecommunications will play in the lives of the people featured in this study. Questions concerning the impact media has or may not have had on the Eskimo certainly needs continuing assessment in the quest to forge new assumptions and directions leading to the attainment of native media empowerment.

While the literature is rife with analyses on media systems in the circumpolar North (not including Chukotka)--often assessing the failures and successes aboriginal broadcasters have had, and providing reasons for such--still the problem remains: there is little to no regular media activity between Eskimos of the Bering Strait; use of broadcast and telecom technology on the Chukotka side is very undeveloped; and telecom access is somewhat restricted. The Bering Strait has been open for nearly eight years (as of 1996), and one would expect a greater degree of interaction than exists at present. One would further expect that Chukotka native broadcasting would have developed more than it has given its nearly thirty-year history. Clearly, a practical strategy for improving these conditions are called for.

This writer is under no illusion that some sections of this outline have not already been called for and discussed. There are no new comprehensive theories available which can solve all the problems affecting native communications in the modern world. This planning strategy can better be understood as simply an attempt to identify and collate a number of specific variables which when combined, can provide a road map for Eskimo media supporters to seize upon the opportunities afforded by the new political, technological, economic, and sociocultural realities existing along the open border of the Bering Strait. In constructing this strategy, reference to stated goals of the circumpolar Inuit community will be made, in addition to the ideas and experiences of the author.

Keeping things in perspective, however, such constructs are being made by a non-native, using assumptions and models developed from a non-native worldview, and based on technology not derived from the Eskimo. Even after living among Eskimos for nearly ten years (as this writer has) a white man can only scratch the surface of what it means to be Eskimo--if even this is possible--and may hardly understand how an Eskimo perceives what media is and what his or her interaction with it might be. Further, do the Eskimo people even need access to such media tools and strategies developed and formatted from a non-native perspective?

What are the implications of such strategies for a people who historically possess entirely different norms of communication and attitudes on how to live life, especially when for many Eskimos, the potlatch, village visiting, or oral tradition can be construed

as the highest form of "Eskimo communication?" Nevertheless, such an attempt will be made knowing that it is important to the native leadership on both sides of the strait, and to the ICC, which has shared a vision for establishing a comprehensive mass communications policy and infrastructure across the circumpolar North.¹

Reasons for Access and Manipulation

This communication "paradigm" seeks strategies of media empowerment given the following limited list of assumptions. First, and foremost, is the ability of Eskimos to access and manipulate the means of broadcast and information technology for their own purposes in whatever fashion, as determined on an individual or collective basis.

Second, media empowerment serves as an insurance of the ability to meaningfully participate in decision making affecting the Bering Strait throughout all forums of jurisdiction at local, regional, state, federal, or international levels, by having access to information as well as the ability to deliver Eskimo viewpoints via telecom capabilities.

Third, media empowerment also provides new opportunities to preserve, propagate, and perpetuate the Eskimo language and culture in its myriad forms through utilization of communications media. It also serves to facilitate information exchange on diverse socio-cultural issues of vital concern, ie., health, education, social services, environmental protection, and economic development.

Fourth, telecommunications is a natural means to bridge dis-

tances and oceans, and is a logical medium for connecting the physically separated Eskimo communities along the strait and across the greater circumpolar world. The key lies in its utilization, expansion, and affordability. Media empowerment presupposes command of telecommunications, and such command can assist in the maintenance of a perpetually open border by providing the means to entwine all levels of activity among peoples and governments through constant communication, thereby lessening the chances for miscommunication which was a primary cause for the closing of the region in 1948.

Fifth, without funding sources, inspired leadership, and a motivated citizenry informed and participating with the media, little can be expected in making media a vital force in the lives of the Eskimo community. No theoretical design can guarantee this, but it can be of some assistance if heeded.

Given these limited assumptions, a comparative view from the international Eskimo (Inuit) perspective can be defined, based on principles elucidated by ICC resolutions. In reference to the first assumption, and of primary significance, is the right to freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and other mediums of communication.²

To the second assumption, is the Eskimos entitlement to varied and comprehensive broadcast-telecom services in facilitating the flow and exchange of information. Such services and corresponding networks would be encouraged "to interpret local, regional, national and international issues and developments to Inuit in the spirit of their own understanding."³ Indeed, these services are a

prerequisite to effective participation in society, noting the ICC's *Principles and Elements for a Comprehensive Arctic Policy*, which proclaims that "the problems of the Arctic transcend the jurisdictional boundaries of states and can only be effectively dealt with through international cooperation, between and among peoples and governments."⁴

With the third assumption is the Eskimo's right to the maintenance and protection of culture, as a means of safeguarding Eskimo identity, language, and fundamental rights. The ICC has put forward the need to establish information networks to assist efforts promoting language usage, native-oriented education, traditional music and arts, health and social services, marine mammal rights and protection (ie. higher whale quotas, promotion of fur industries, preservation of bear, seal, walrus and fish populations), environmental protection, and other issues directly concerned with maintaining the overall spiritual, physical, and social health of the society.⁵

The fourth assumption relates to the role of broadcasting and telecommunications in bringing the Chukotkans closer to their relatives in Alaska and their brethren across the circumpolar nations. Given the logistical problems of transportation, with limited air routes, impassable ocean waters during the winter months (limiting open sea travel to a few months each year) and high costs, the quickest, though not cheapest, means to ensure a degree of communication access is through radio, TV, and telecom linkage. The ICC, in establishing Chukotka as an integral part of their

organization, requires regular and reliable communication links to keep the Chukotkans informed of vital issues, while receiving information in return. Unfortunately, the types of links just mentioned have been the subject of perpetual discussion since the early 1980s, and are still being sought. The problems confronting interconnectivity with Russia can be overcome, but the ICC and the wider native community has to date been lacking in their efforts to successfully surmount the obstacles.⁶

Concerning the last assumption, one must ask, "what causes motivation, creative thinking, and the will to succeed in making and sustaining native control of media possible?" Or one may ask, "why don't native corporations in western Alaska give greater financial support to existing media which serve their own people; and why are there so few native journalists in both western Alaska and Chukotka even when there have been job opportunities available?" After almost 15 years of thinking about it, this writer (as well as others consulted) has yet to come up with a satisfactory answer.

The remaining thoughts of this dissertation now center on the logistics of promoting native media empowerment through the creation or enhancement of Eskimo media and information services, the use of new technologies, and the expansion of telecom ties along the Bering Strait. The strategy will concentrate on the communities of the Providenski and Chukotski districts as well as those located on the Seward Peninsula, Norton Sound, and Kotzebue Sound, with later mention of the role of Eskimo-related operations in other sites outside of the target area.

Current Status of Broadcasting December 1996

In the attempt to find a starting point, one must first ask what already exists within the current infrastructure and how it can be enhanced. A comparative assessment for each side will be made. On the Chukotkan side, we can point out the two existing Eskimo radio broadcast entities: Radio Company Provideniya, and the Eskimo Department of the Chukotka State Teleradio Company.

Radio Company Provideniya

As this summary is being written (December 1996), Radio Company Provideniya (RCP) finds itself in a battle for survival, from both an economic and programming perspective. The company continues to access a one hour timeslot, five days per week over the Radio Russia signal which is distributed to Provideniya and various Eskimo settlements in the Providenski region. A twenty-minute Yupik language program is included in this timeslot. The staff is down to three people, including one Eskimo and one Chukchi journalist, as well as the director, who also serves as the Provideniya correspondent for the Teleradio Company in Anadyr.'

The radio service derives its sole source of funding from the Providenski District government, and does not have financial assistance from the regional government, charitable foundations, nor native associations. It has no radio frequency license, nor radio transmitters, though it desires such. RCP has no assistance from the local Ministry of Communications office in Provideniya (for subsidizing telecom expenses), nor is there money from the local

administration to upgrade facilities or hire new personnel.⁶

The Radio Company began limited television broadcasting in March 1996, via a local TV studio, producing roughly ninety minutes of programming, with occasional broadcasts in the Yupik and Chukchi languages. However, their broadcasts were essentially illegal, as they (and the local studio operators) were without official licenses from the various government ministries connected with broadcasting. RCP has spent the past year working on the licensing process with no completion date in sight. RCP Director Olga Karablova noted the problematic nature of obtaining frequencies from the central government. As of December 1996, TV production is at a standstill, due primarily to the lack of a license, as well as financing and staff. The company's director has noted the need for professional equipment, and has lamented the poor prospects of finding the funding for such. Once Moscow grants the license and frequency, limited Eskimo-oriented broadcasting can begin in Provideniya.'

Internal problems

With the tremendous economic problems faced by the Chukotka region (and Russia in general), there is little prospect for the Radio Company to develop into the organization it seeks to be, or to meet the communication goals it has set for itself. The support it does receive from the Provideniya mayor barely covers utility costs and minimal salaries. Ironically, the Radio Company has never received financial support from the AVAN native association, nor from other Chukotka-based native associations. The reasons for

such a state of affairs is not clear to this writer, though it may due to the personalities involved.¹⁰

The importance of the Radio Company-native association relationship cannot be overstated, since these organization's goals and actions overlap and compliment each other in numerous ways. The primary areas which the associations can assist RCP is in their ability to coordinate social, cultural, educational, and political support efforts on behalf of native broadcasting. They also remain primary legal entities which can negotiate with the government for economic assistance for native broadcasting, due to the numerous federal laws which outline special support programs for native peoples in the Far North. As stated, the first requirement in strengthening RCP from the Chukotka side is in the establishment of a strong interrelationship between the company and all existing Chukotka native cultural and political organizations.¹¹

The Radio Company at present has no working relations with Alaskan media, nor has the money to communicate with Alaska or other countries via phone or fax. This is an especially sad state of affairs for the staff, which desires increased interaction with journalists across the strait, and understands the important role they need to play in facilitating information networking between the countries.

Despite their logistical problems, RCP continues to produce daily radio programming with journalists accessing information from volunteer correspondents in the many settlements, intellectuals, cultural workers, and village visitors who travel to Provideniya.

On occasion, the resident Eskimo journalist provides material to the Anadyr Eskimo Radio Department upon request, in an effort to sustain information links between Anadyr and Provideniya.¹²

Radio Company Provideniya, if properly funded, could serve as a central media point for the entire Bering Strait region in both radio and television operations. With their proximity to native settlements, access to Eskimo speakers, experience in documenting native culture, traditions, and viewpoints--while being located nearest to the Alaskan coastline with air and port facilities--Radio Company Provideniya should be construed as the primary focal point for efforts to assist media empowerment on the Chukotka side. If neglected (given its current precarious funding status), native broadcasting from Provideniya could vanish.

Teleradio Company: Eskimo Radio Department

The status of state-sponsored support of Eskimo radio broadcasting in Anadyr can be best described as a crisis situation of funding and personnel as of December 1996. Dependent on the federal budget for its financing, the Chukotka State Teleradio Company operates on a day to day basis, with non-payment of salaries and lack of funds for operation and transmission facilities the norm. Numerous personnel have left the company, and both television and radio stations are severely limited in their production capability.¹³

The Eskimo Radio Department has managed to survive as with the Teleradio Company's other divisions, but the department is on

the verge of folding if the radio administration fails to find replacements for the current staff as well as monies to cover production expenses. Nina Enmenkow and Antonina Verbitskaya have been with the station for nearly 25 years and desire to retire, yet they continue producing roughly 79 minutes of programming weekly because of little prospect for new workers from among the native constituency.

Enmenkow related that during this difficult period, the staff has no money for travel to Eskimo villages (as in the past), nor a telephone budget for calling volunteer correspondents in the Providenski and Chukotski districts. Information is often obtained from Eskimos visiting Anadyr, or from those sources in settlements who have the means to phone into the studio. Given the high costs of domestic telephone tariffs, phone reports are rare as the economic situation in the settlements deteriorates.¹⁴

The Eskimo Department has not been able to solicit financial assistance from non-state sources, and as a consequence, is unable to obtain needed monies for staff or the procurement of updated production equipment or computers. The idea of developing a separate radio station with independent radio frequencies and transmitters large enough to cover the Chukotka region is still a dream for the journalists, but given the logistical hurdles of licensing and finance, no movement in this direction will happen unless other parties intervene on their behalf.

The staff has no current communication with radio stations in Alaska, Canada, or Greenland, although they desire such contact

very much. Enmenkow and Verbitskaya do have occasional access to materials provided by the ICC, courtesy of the ICC Vice President who is the delegate from Chukotka, and have periodically prepared special reports on the activities of the ICC.¹⁵

The survival of Eskimo language programming, which is currently directed to the elderly people in the districts, as well as to students learning Yupik at schools scattered throughout Chukotka, is--like Radio Company Provideniya--in doubt. In the words of Director Enmenkow, "It is a very difficult time now to think about the future; now it is a question, will we exist or will we not exist?" Given this state of affairs, the issue of media empowerment from the Chukotka side of the strait may become a moot point without intervention.¹⁶

Alaskan Radio: KOTZ-Kotzebue

KOTZ, like the other public radio stations in Alaska, finds itself in a precarious financial position, and its future status, as defined by legislative support for the APBC, is uncertain. The station continues to actively produce a native-oriented program schedule, using a combination of APRN, and locally-produced materials. KOTZ originates approximately seven hours of special Inupiaq language programming each week, and conducts daily air shifts in coastal and upriver dialects, featuring news, message services to villages, elder's stories, religious items, and general cultural fare. The station continues to air daily programming specifically tailored to natives, ie., "National Native News," "Alaska Voices

Live" (in conjunction with KBRW and KYUK), and "Native American Calling" (a nationwide program produced by Native American Public Telecommunications, and aired over the American Indian Radio on Satellite [AIROS] network).¹⁷

KOTZ begs for native language volunteers in Inupiaq to produce materials for radio, but with little success, according to management. Three issues can partially account for this: first, listeners historically have argued about featuring upriver or coastal dialects on the air, with the result that few offer to work in one if the other dialect has the priority during air time; second, those natives in Kotzebue who are well educated and can speak Inupiaq (being the best programming prospects), often have high paying jobs in the city and are not attracted to radio employment; third, with such a small operational budget, volunteers who could potentially come on staff at a later time face little prospect of employment because of the lack of funds for new personnel.

If APBC funds for supporting KOTZ as a full service evaporated (most likely turning the station into a translator site), volunteers in Kotzebue would have to forcefully step in if Eskimo listeners wanted to hear anything in their language as well as local information.¹⁸

KOTZ currently has a program exchange relationship with KBRW in Barrow, periodically sending programs to the station. KBRW only has a few Inupiaq speakers on their staff, limiting their ability to send materials to KOTZ. KOTZ, on the other hand, has hundreds of hours of recorded stories in Inupiaq which could be accessed for

exchange. KOTZ contributes occasionally to APRN, and coordinates program activities for APRN in representing northwestern Alaska.

While in the past KOTZ has sent personal messages over the air to Chukotka (ie., listeners in Lavrentia), and has conducted live interviews with Eskimos who have visited from Chukotka, this activity has been somewhat absent during 1996. Station management currently has no personal contacts with staff at RCP or the Eskimo Department in Anadyr, and has not invested energy into making the relationship credible. Concerns for their own operations and lack of resources are the most likely explanations for this state of affairs, though the latent desire for such contact seems evident.

The Crisis in Funding Support

The crisis in state funding will determine whether KOTZ continues in a full service mode or simply as a translator site for APRN. Depending on APBC funding to qualify for Corporation for Public Broadcasting matching grants, KOTZ currently sees little hope for any expansion of services, much less support for existing operations. With the current attitude of the U.S. Congress which favors private commercial forces against support for public broadcasting, KOTZ cannot have much hope of maintaining existing funds from the CPB; which itself has been subject to drastic reductions in congressional appropriations.

In 1996, the APBC provided roughly \$1,380,900 to the Associated Alaska Public Broadcasting Stations (AAPBS) network, with the sum of \$180,000 directed to KOTZ. APBC board members forecast that

the totals would be even less the following year, if there at all.¹⁹ With the next Alaska legislative session approaching (January 1997) the Republican-led majority has placed high up on its agenda, bills which could result in a total cut in APBC funding.²⁰

With such prospects, KOTZ will have to develop extremely effective public support campaigns directed to a variety of potential contributors. KOTZ has traditionally received little financial support from the NANA Corporation, the primary native organization for the region (at around 1 percent of KOTZ's yearly budget). Fortunately for management, NANA is now raising their contributions in light of the station's financial crisis.

One explanation for their prior low levels of funding concerns the attitude of native shareholders holding NANA stock, who demand increased profits from the operations of the corporation rather than spending higher percentages of yearly profits on social, educational, and broadcast support programs. Given the prosperous financial benefits from NANA's royalties on the Red Dog Zinc Mine, it is hard to understand their inability to increase subsidies to KOTZ to a higher degree, particularly at a time when state and federal funds are drying up.²¹

KOTZ, like other APRN stations, has not always been successful in implementing strategies which effectively convince their constituents and logical corporate supporters of the absolute necessity of their services, and of the primary role the community should play in raising the needed yearly funds to keep native-oriented radio feasible.

The 1995 scandal at KOTZ (where the accountant embezzled station funds, and the manager resigned), was a public relations disaster which has not aided the station in fund raising efforts. A recent change in leadership (with an Eskimo serving as general manager), appears to have regenerated goodwill between KOTZ and the community. The station made format changes, and embarked on an ambitious community response effort, soliciting listener opinions on the air concerning what types of programming they preferred to hear, while emphasizing the aspiration of KOTZ to excel in its community-oriented mandate. ²²

KOTZ must establish in the minds of its listeners the absolute importance of the station in serving native interests, since it is the only station in the region specifically-operated on behalf of Eskimos featuring the language on a daily basis. To be convincing, KOTZ may require a concomitant improvement in native affairs and cultural programming, prior to achieving funding successes, which the staff at present, is hard-pressed to deliver. One factor hindering this effort is clearly the availability of cable broadcasting in Kotzebue (40 TV and 8 radio channels) and the other villages in its service area. For many, the prospects of losing KOTZ would not be catastrophic, since other radio sources can fill the void if the station was closed.

KNSA-Unalakleet

Though essentially a retranslator site, KNSA represents an underutilized broadcast vehicle which if funded properly and given

much higher levels of listener participation and volunteer support, could play an important role in serving Eskimo information needs in the Norton Sound region (while serving within a greater Bering Strait native media network). Currently a one man operation in re-translating APRN signals, KNSA has local origination capabilities, and on occasion has aired program fare such as high school basketball and wrestling matches from Unalakleet (a service KICY used to provide).

From its inception as a retranslator site, KNSA has never been provided normal production funding from the APBC. In 1996, KNSA was awarded \$38,800 to maintain its operation through the fiscal year.²³ While providing Eskimos in the region with APRN, it has not been able to in any sense establish operations which could effectively be used by diverse native organizations and entities in the region.

Given its location in Unalakleet, where the Bering Strait School District (BSSD) headquarters is located, and possessing a very motivated and informed native leadership within the village, KNSA, as a tool of media empowerment in the region, has strangely lacked recognition by those best able to implement services through its facilities. With the BSSD's well-funded audio-visual center and trained educational media staff, and noting their traditionally close relationship with native leaders in the many village corporations within the district, it is hard to understand why KNSA remains in the state it is.

Like KOTZ, any further APBC budget cuts, or the prospect of

total abandonment of APRN support by the State Legislature could doom KNSA to closure. Unalakleet has long been able to secure funding from diverse sources for various social and education programs, and it is this experience (whether through the efforts of the Bering Strait Native Corporation, the Unalakleet Native Corporation, the IRA Council, the Unalakleet city administration, or the BSSD), which could allow the city to totally remake KNSA into a full-service radio station. Why this has not happened in the past is a question for this writer, but it is primarily due to the absence of motivated individuals in the village who could effectively convince the larger community and nearby village populations of its efficacy. What will happen to KNSA, like KOTZ, Radio Company Provideniya, and The Chukotka Eskimo Radio Department, is a matter for conjecture in this highly unstable state-funding environment.

Private Radio in Nome (KNOM-KICY)

Unlike the other two radio outlets along the Bering Strait, KNOM and KICY remain on the perimeter of native media developments, primarily because of their foundational purpose in serving as media vehicles for Christian activity in the region.

KNOM continues to actively produce programming of native orientation in a few of its timeslots, ie., news in Siberian Yupik, Eskimo stories and legends, native dance music, the "Radio Bridge to Chukotka, and public affairs programs directed toward natives as produced by APRN (ie., "Alaska Voices Live"). Its annual cov-

erage of native meetings (ie., Bering Strait Elders Conference) and general cooperation with native corporations proves KNOM's commitment to provide coverage of interest to Eskimos, but it will never assume that mandate as the primary reason for its existence. This fact does not prevent it from even greater involvement as a disseminator of native programming, however, if funding and personnel support were upgraded.

KNOM does not currently have established media relations with Radio Company Provideniya or Anadyr, though it did provide Provideniya with a radio console two years ago upon the initiative of station manager Tom Busch. There has never been a program exchange with either Chukotkan station, though they have been open to the idea if the logistics and funding variables could be worked out.

KICY, while dedicated to serving its Eskimo audience in the region, maintains a Christian mission emphasis as its purpose for existence. It does not possess the degree of native orientation in programming like KNOM, and has recently increased the percentage of Christian content in its daily schedule. In providing entertainment, news, and general coverage of important events affecting the region, KICY continues to serve as a useful media outlet for its Eskimo audience and clientele, but it will not reconfigure its programming solely to facilitate the cultural and political goals of the native constituency it serves.

The station continues to seek motivated volunteers within the Eskimo community who can produce native language features of both a secular and religious nature, but their efforts have not been

successful. Reasons for this may partially be due to KICY's traditionally caucasian staff, hence precluding the idea within the region that it is an "Eskimo" station. KICY has not had a full-time Eskimo staff member since 1987, and does not have funding to establish regular native language features.

The station currently does not have a programming relationship with Provideniya or Chukotka, though not for lack of trying. In 1993 and 1994, KICY's managers met with RCP Director Karablova to discuss a possible relationship, but no contracts were signed. Two reasons account for this: the Provideniya station could not provide funding to cover phone expenses involved in sending news from the Providenski District to Nome, nor could it pay for transport of program materials sent over via the Bering Air flight service. RCP expected to sell their news to KICY for cash, a proposal the Nome station could not accept, since they had no funds for this, nor were there any sponsors from Nome-based commercial firms or native organizations to fund the news exchange.

The second reason for KICY's inability to establish ties with Provideniya resulted from the Chukotkan's refusal to accept Christian programming, which was the first reason for KICY's desire to get involved with RCP. KICY, in conjunction with "Chukotka Native Ministries" (a Christian missions group in Alaska) produced thirty programs in Siberian Yupik specifically for Provideniya and Anadyr, but upon receiving the tapes, both stations refused to air them. Director Karablova noted that the Russian government had enacted policies designed to "safeguard" native religions in Chukotka,

deeming American evangelistic efforts as the "spreading of propaganda," to which the natives would be shielded from."

Interestingly enough, Provideniya is currently rebroadcasting "Focus on the Family," a Christian counseling program featuring Dr. James Dobson, as received initially from KICY, and at present from the Salvation Army outpost in Nome. Because of the Russian government's stand on the prohibition of missionary activities in Chukotka, it is unlikely that KICY will ever be involved with RCP, even though it is in a position to facilitate press involvement with the region.²⁴

Both KNOM and KICY face a dilemma in developing a more active participation by Eskimos with their stations, one which has been present since the beginning of their operations. The dilemma partially rests from inertia in the Eskimo communities they serve, where individual volunteers have been far and few between, and from the fact that funding for full-time employment is not available. The various native corporations and cultural organizations shoulder some of the blame for this lack of Eskimo involvement, by not encouraging more active participation with the stations, or in providing funds which could make possible paid Eskimo staff positions at each of the stations. This may have been from a perception problem by the native entities, since some native leaders claim that KICY or KNOM have not been coming to them asking for this funding assistance.²⁵

Being the beneficiary of KICY and KNOM's broadcasts for over 35 years, it is hard to understand the native community's lack of

participant cooperation. The end result remains an underdeveloped state of Eskimo programming on the very stations best able to survive in the changing conditions of the Alaskan economy, unlike the APRN stations.

Existing Television Services: Chukotka

Television formatted on behalf of Eskimos in Chukotka is at present nil, both on state and regional television broadcasts, and currently on the district level in Provideniya. Chukotka's Eskimos are served exclusively by central television broadcasts from Moscow, though many settlements currently have only one channel, normally ORT Channel 1.

Native viewers have been somewhat assured this past year about the survival of the Moscow channel (unlike their neighbors in western Alaska who worry about ARCS), since it is a priority of the Russian government to ensure its continuity. Success in ORT's commercial advertising operations will be mandatory for the Kremlin to maintain this confidence of support. This is also true for Russian Television (RTR) Channel 2 for those Eskimo villages viewing the signal. Receiving these channels does not imply the opportunity for private access to them, unless special agreements can be reached between the Provideniya branch of the Ministry of Communications, the Federal Service for Television and Radio, and the central channels.

It is a situation similar to the ARCS channel, which is currently not configured to allow for independent program inserts

placed into the program stream by local users. Private access to the national channels has not occurred, and is unlikely since Moscow pays the Provideniya Communications affiliate for each hour of broadcast time transmitted throughout the district. Should service be interrupted, local native media operatives would have to provide funds to make up these lost revenues, and given the general financial crisis in the settlements, this option appears remote.²⁶

One problem facing Eskimo reception of Moscow broadcasts relates to the satellite which delivers the program stream. The Gorizont 140 satellite which beams national TV and radio to Magadan Oblast and Chukotka is currently unstable, and there are no quick prospects of replacement--a reflection of the crisis in the satellite operations sector of the Ministry of Communications. The TV centers in Provideniya, Anadyr, and Magadan have all noted the instability of the signal, and are awaiting the launch of another satellite so broadcasts can go uninterrupted, should Gorizont 140 fail. How fast the government's space division can provide new satellite alternatives is still a major question.²⁷

Television from Anadyr

At present, Eskimos in the Providenski and Chukotski districts cannot receive television programming from Anadyr. The Chukotka Teleradio Company's dream of uplinking its program stream to the rest of the okrug has not happened because of the lack of financing. Chukchi language broadcasts are being made over the service, but the signal is limited to the Anadyr region. The Eskimo

staff has not reported making programs over the channel this year.

Given the decrease of funding for the Chukotka Teleradio Company, and the lack of satellite uplink opportunities, Eskimo access to television capable of transmitting cultural and village-specific information apparently may occur only through private efforts or alternative transmission methods independent of the state infrastructure, though it seems unlikely for uplinking, given the expenditures necessary for transponder leasing.

It is possible that a general improvement in the Chukotka government's financial outlook might impact the Teleradio Company's budget in a way which could include the provision of services across Chukotka by satellite, but it is speculation at this stage.²⁸ The idea of state support for the old network of teleradio companies across the country is being fought by supporters of private broadcasting, and by those who feel government subsidization of television at the local and regional level is a holdover of the Soviet press state which should be abandoned, especially in light of Russia's current economic chaos. Radio programming from Anadyr can better withstand arguments against state support than the Teleradio Company's television division, because of its coverage range, and because the infrastructure of private radio broadcasting is not well developed in the okrug.²⁹

The television division will have to find new ways of justifying their existence, and can do so by diversifying operations and seeking out partnerships with private TV and video entities in the Far East (or with Moscow), on a commercial and non-profit basis.

Anadyr continues to access Alaskan television via the ARCS system, and rebroadcasts the signal throughout the town using a low power transmitter at the television center. Its hopes of developing a media connection with Alaska via satellite or even by tape exchange have never come to fruition, again due to financing, and apparent disinterest on the part of Alaskan commercial broadcasters, though the ARCS consortium remains open to the idea.

In the meantime, satellite exchange between Alaska and Chukotka (in Anadyr, Provideniya, Lavrentia, and other possible sites) will continue in a one way direction until the Chukotkan's can overcome the many barriers to a working partnership.

TV in Western Alaska: ARCS

As of December 1996, the Alaska Rural Communication System was delivering a diverse program stream to rural Alaskan viewers despite tremendous fiscal pressures caused by increasing cutbacks in APBC and CPB funding. KYUK is managing the burden of two separate television program services in what could be called very unique circumstances for a public broadcaster.

ARCS continues to receive PBS programming from the "Alaska One" consortium as uplinked by KUAC, occasionally inserting local material during the day, and then switching back in the evening hours to a variety of Anchorage stations.³⁹

Concerning native-oriented programming, ARCS airs a daily 30 minute news show at noon titled "Mid Day Alaska," geared to rural Alaskan and native issues. The program is produced by KYUK with

contributions from Blueberry Productions (Anchorage) and others. "Heartbeat Alaska," with Jeanie Greene, remains a well-supported program airing on Sunday nights. KYUK recently finished airing their "Tundra Vision" series and dropped "North Country News," which stopped production in April. ARCS occasionally airs programs from native producers and organizations (ie., AFN and ICC conventions) when available, but has no other regular native programming in its schedule grid.³¹

In November 1996, KYUK converted to a digital television signal system for its ARCS uplink, joining the "Alaska One" digital stream over the Alascom Aurora 2 satellite. The conversion to digital was the end result of many years of discussion by the state in trying to economize distribution of television to rural Alaska over a single transponder. The digital conversion will allow for four simultaneous TV channels as well as 18 audio channels. The State of Alaska purchased digital satellite decoders and distributed them to volunteers in 221 villages (who were provided training via instructional video tape) for installation. At this writing, roughly 90 percent of villages receive ARCS in the digital format.³²

More than a year and half after the establishment of ARCS, the ARCS Executive Council has yet to conduct its first meeting. The group has planned their first conference for December 1996, but it is not clear how they will fulfill the task of effecting constituent control over the system. KYUK management noted that the council will most likely take on an advisory role in program decision making, unlike the RATNET Council which voted on every

program appearing over the channel. Their role may end up in suggesting the types of programs most beneficial for rural viewers, but few at KYUK seek reinstatement of the type of RATNET Council-style involvement which many perceived as an extremely cumbersome program selection process that made it difficult to air new programs or to make schedule changes in a timely fashion.³³

KYUK and the ARCS system remain in a precarious financial position as continued cutbacks in APBC and CPB funding occurs. KYUK management noted that their funding has dropped 30% in the last five years and projects that the Legislature will further erode their support, if not cancel the service entirely, as they did with RATNET earlier. Its 1996 APBC appropriation for coordinating ARCS was \$130,000.³⁴ Like KOTZ Radio, its ability to receive federal matching grants is hampered as state allocations and private fund raising efforts fail to make up the difference of budgets from previous years. KYUK continues to seek financing via fundraising memberships, various grant programs, and other PBS sources. They have not been successful in generating viable corporate funding support from the statewide native organizations, but hope to improve this.

If sufficient funding to operate both services is not obtained, KYUK may be forced to resign its responsibility for coordinating ARCS, but such a move could make it even more difficult to obtain funding for their own regional broadcasts, given the wider audience support made possible by the ARCS distribution system. KYUK currently has 12 native staff members, and given its tenuous

financial picture, western Alaska's premier native broadcast operation could lose the means to maintain an environment conducive to training and supporting Eskimo media personnel.³⁵

KYUK does not presently have a media relationship with Provideniya or Anadyr, even though Bethel is the sister city of Anadyr, and has had prior press contact in earlier years via The Tundra Drums and Sovietskaya Chukotka. Further, KYUK and ARCS have no program agreements with broadcasters in Canada or Greenland, though they are anxious to receive programs from Northern Canada, and have expressed their willingness to air materials from Chukotka.³⁶

With their prime time native offering, "Heartbeat Alaska," being distributed independently by producer Jeanie Greene to Television Northern Canada and other circumpolar broadcasters, KYUK has a clear example for how program exchanges can be successfully implemented on a continual basis. Once again, the issue of finance may be the final determinant of how far cooperative program relationships will go.³⁷

As noted, the future of KYUK and the ARCS system will be determined by the current attitude of the Legislature to public broadcasting. The Legislature, however, will have to take into account the broadbased community interest that the system generates, especially in its capacity to deliver not only PBS and ARCS, but coverage of legislative proceedings as well. State planners are also hedging their bets on the startup of a distance-delivered instructional program channel which is now being organized by the University of Alaska. It is a major decision to dismember such an

important statewide system, and how it will be made remains the subject of speculation across the state.³⁸

Should the Legislature pull the plug, however, it will be up to the native people to assess whether they do or don't need a statewide Alaska-oriented television service. Eskimo proponents of ARCS do not have the same assurances that their Chukotkan relatives (currently) have for state maintenance of national programming via satellite, but do have more flexibility in program access via cable.

What their communal response to a shutdown of ARCS or KYUK would be is unknown, but the loss of these services cannot be beneficial to their quest for further native media empowerment.

A New Development in Alaska Native Radio

Regardless of the problems faced by existing native-oriented stations across the state, a new chapter in native broadcasting was opened with the establishment in October 1996, of KNBA Radio in Anchorage--the nation's first urban, native-owned radio station. Referred to as *KOWANUK*, the station initiated broadcasts during the Alaska Federation of Natives annual convention and provided gavel to gavel coverage of the proceedings. A subsidiary of the Cook Inlet Region Native Corporation (CIRI), *KOWANUK* has become a symbol of the new movement by native Americans to create independent information networks, and can assume a major role in promoting the expansion of native media across the state and the Bering Strait.³⁹

Operating via a 100,000 watt FM transmitter and utilizing a format featuring news, commentary programs, native music, and adult alternative rock music, KOWANUK also complements its local programming by assisting the production and dissemination of other native-targeted radio programs aired across the U.S. via the American Indian Radio On Satellite system. Of special note is "Native American Calling," produced four days each week out of New Mexico, with the Friday edition produced in Anchorage by Sharon McConnell, using KNBA's facilities. The show is transmitted to 150 stations nationwide and to Europe.¹⁰

KOWANUK is currently producing in English only, and it is not known to what extent it may engage in native language broadcasting in the future. It maintains relations with APRN (with its studios housed in the same building), has affiliate status with National Public Radio, and provides a training environment for native students via the KOWANUK Broadcast Training Center.

KNBA has been able to decline state support because of the financial position of its parent organization, CIRI, which has a very diversified and profitable corporate structure. The CIRI-KNBA affiliation hopefully will serve to remind the rest of the state's native corporations that active financial patronage of native-oriented radio is a requirement for sustaining long term operations.

Because KOWANUK is only in the beginning stage of operation, it is hard to determine what role they will assume in leading native media efforts in Alaska and internationally. Developing cooperative relations with the western Alaskan station is paramount.

Status of Telecommunication Interconnection
within and between Chukotka and Alaska

Chukotka

As of December 1996, the status of Chukotka's telecommunication infrastructure is relatively unchanged in relation to current operations and technical improvements. The internal structure of local and long distance lines are still based on outdated telephone technology, using analog mechanical switching in all cities and villages, and still reliant on tropospheric scatter, microwave, cable, and satellite relays manned by the regional communications departments. There are no digital switches in operation, and tone dialing (with all the possibilities it provides for unique services) does not exist.

The telephone system remains a government monopoly, though the Chukotka division of the Ministry of Communications has a joint venture with Alascom, which provides direct routing of 8 telephone channels between Provideniya and Gambell (St. Lawrence) via microwave. The quality of these circuits is sufficient to provide voice and low bandwidth data services (fax and email) to Provideniya, but not enough to properly support the wide bandwidth and speed standards of other types of telecom services, (ie, Internet, audio or video conferencing, etc.).

Telephone exchanges in Eskimo villages remain antiquated due to lack of upgrade funding, and most settlements have line quality so poor that it is impossible to use fax or email. Despite the inferior telephone system, costs for utilizing long distance service

are among the highest in the world, a paradox for a people having inordinately low income levels. Long distance connection charges to Alaska are so high (currently around \$6 per minute) that telephone communication between Chukotka and Alaska remains primarily the domain of private businessmen and government leaders. There are no cellular, paging, or other specialized telecom services in the okrug, due to the inability of the technical system to support it, as well as a lack in market demand.

Without a general improvement in the region's economy, Chukotka's government telecommunications authorities will not be able to come up with the necessary funding to completely rebuild the okrug's telecom system, which it desperately needs to do. There is little incentive for further Western investment in the region, and Alascom has kept their financial outlays at a bare minimum. An earth station providing direct connection between Provideniya and Alaska, and the installation of digital switching equipment, are the first improvements which must take place if reliable telecom services are to be made accessible to the Eskimo population.

Western Alaska

Across the strait in western Alaska, a completely different situation exists. The explosion in digital telecommunication services via satellite and fiber optic interconnections has provided unparalleled opportunities for Eskimos to fully engage the possibilities afforded by these links. The typical village has a cable service, which offers radio and television (and soon, telephone

service), and a telephone system capable of providing wide bandwidth circuits which makes Internet access, and other advanced services possible.⁴¹

Unlike Chukotka's government telecom monopoly, the telecom environment in Alaska is benefitting from the innovation and expansion of services as generated by the competing major long distance companies (AT&T-Alascom, MCI, Sprint, and GCI), and their local affiliates. Services improve, while costs go down (the opposite of Chukotka where service deteriorates and costs rise).⁴²

The recently-passed Telecommunications Act of 1996, which advocates the concept of single point service access (with customers able to receive all telecom services from a single provider) has accelerated the environment of competition which Alaska is now thriving on. Eskimos in the study region currently have the possibility to turn on a computer in their living room, speak with people around the world, view videos on web sites, or conduct joint Internet conference meetings simultaneously with multiple users.⁴³

While western Alaska may not be wired into the fiber optic interconnection network directly (primarily due to lack of direct lines and sufficient customer traffic), current connection via the satellite-fiber optic switching centers in Anchorage will enable Eskimo users to participate fully with the advancing state of technology and telecom services.

The leading advocates of these services in the village setting are primarily the public schools and government agencies, yet many individuals across the region are extremely sophisticated in

computers and telecom access. An Internet server in Nome, called **NOME.NET** has the possibility to link all villages in the study region with a variety of services, though some villages are better equipped than others when the issue of line capability comes up.⁴⁵ A project by the Alaska National Guard is seeking to install high speed Internet links in 35 rural villages, with the idea of providing access to civilian users.⁴⁵

Concerning access to the technological capabilities offered by Alaska's current telecom infrastructure, Eskimo media activists have the system in place for improving their own information networks, and await the time when their Chukotkan partners can find the means to tap into the Alaskan system. The challenge for both is how to accomplish this.

**Strategic Planning for New Media Efforts
in Chukotka and Alaska
"The Chulaska Eskimo Information System"**

This study will conclude with an overview of proposals which can create the infrastructure necessary for implementing and sustaining native media efforts between the Bering Strait, and which seek the fulfillment of the ICC's Principles on Communications.⁴⁶ The CEIS proposal will be based on the following 13 points:

Chukotka

- 1) Creation of a **Chukotka Native Media Support Council** (CNMSC) with responsibilities in media support coordination and fundraising.
- 2) Creation of a **Native Communications Center** (NCC) at Provideniya, in conjunction with Radio Company Provideniya.
- 3) Establishment of local origination radio and television

operations in native villages in the Providenski and Chukotski Districts.

- 4) Establishment of a **Native Media Distribution Center** (NMDC) for radio and television in conjunction with the Chukotka State Teleradio Company in Anadyr.
- 5) Establishment of media training centers and journalism institutes in Provideniya and Anadyr in conjunction with Radio Company Provideniya, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, and the Anadyr State Pedagogical Institute. Provision of curriculum support with schools in general media studies, and instructional audio-visual support for Eskimo language and culture course development.
- 6) Encouragement of adaptation to modern telecommunication networking technologies, computerization, and promotion of improved access opportunities throughout the okrug and in connection with Alaska.

Western Alaska

- 7) Establishment of an **Alaska Native Media Support Council** (ANMSC) charged with the responsibility to support and coordinate media and training activities at the local and regional level, and promoting information networking and media integration with statewide and international native-based press agencies.
- 8) Establishment of **Native Communications Centers** (NCC) in Nome and Kotzebue, through a consortium involving native organizations, and interested native media promoters.
- 9) Encouragement of local television origination via cable
- 10) Encouragement of village media cooperation with existing broadcast outlets in Nome, Kotzebue, and Bethel.
- 11) Establishment of native journalism studies/training/internship programs for youth in Nome, Kotzebue, Anchorage, and Fairbanks in conjunction with existing broadcast media outlets, and academic entities.
- 12) Establishment of **The Eskimo Internet Radio Network** (TEIRN): creating alternative radio/information services to villages via Internet, ARCS, and cable nets.
- 13) Creation of the **Alaska-Chukotka Media Council** (ACMC) for assisting the implementation and continuity of the Inuit Press Agency

Each point will be described in detail, noting how the proposal

interconnects with the overall goals of the CEIS system.

POINT 1: CREATION OF THE CHUKOTKA NATIVE MEDIA SUPPORT COUNCIL

The primary idea of creating such a council rests in the need to concentrate all representative native organizations across the political, cultural, economic, social, and education spectrums into a collective body which first identifies and confirms the absolute necessity of native access and control of mass media in Chukotka.

Second, the concept of information power as a means for formulating and achieving native societal goals must be understood and agreed upon by Chukotka's diverse native community. Founding the CNMSC is a first step toward obtaining the media power to make the native voice heard throughout the region, country, and internationally.

Third, the CNMSC must take upon itself the overall responsibility (as a legally constituted body recognized by the federal government) to assist media development efforts by incorporating itself as a licensed media organization which serves as an umbrella and lobbying entity for media efforts at the local level. While the emphasis of this study has been specifically directed toward Eskimos, it is vital to the success of this council that it equally include the Chukchi people, who have the same aspirations as their Eskimo cousins. The Chukchi's larger population base and vitality can only be a benefit as all native peoples in Chukotka strive together in reaching their common and individual goals.

The CNMSC should be made up of representatives from the following organizations: The Anadyr-based Association of Northern Peoples of Chukotka and Kolyma; The AVAN Native Association; the Yupik Society of Chukotka, Radio Company Provideniya, native organizations in the Chukotski and Providenski districts, and native cultural societies.

In addition, the council should either include as members or as consultants, representatives from the Eskimo and Chukchi Radio and TV Departments of Chukotka State Teleradio Company and its administration; the heads of the Provideniya and Lavrentia divisions of the Ministry of Communications; native education specialists at the Provideniya State Education Department; the Provideniya City Administration; The Governor's Office and Native Affairs Department of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug Administration; the Director's Office and Native Language Center at the Anadyr State Pedagogical Institute; native cultural leaders from various entities (ie., native dance groups, artistic cooperatives); as well as selected individuals of the native intelligentsia and interested native media advocates.

This is not construed to be an exclusive list, but represents a cross-section of people and organizations who can best isolate problems and develop solutions in organization and funding variables as a prelude to implementing strategies for developing this native-based information infrastructure.

With a diversity of organizations, the CNMSC will be able to draw on various resources (private, government, cultural, business,

educational, media, etc.) as they guide such developments. While government entities have been suggested as consultants, the council should be ultimately controlled by a consortium of representatives from the specific native associations who are accorded voting power.

The next step for the council, after determining its membership, should be in registering itself as a legal association in conformance to law. Once this is done, the CNMSC should register as a mass media organization, under the current regulations of the Ministry of Press. Once possessing recognition by the Ministry, the council will then be able to engage in media activities, according to the federal "Law on Press and Mass Information," and have the right to apply for broadcast frequencies and engage in media efforts across the okrug and nationally.

Empowered with government recognition, the council can then begin the task of establishing the parameters of the information network in order to commence work on it. Further, it can serve as the representative media body in Chukotka charged with liaison services to native media agencies in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland.

**POINT 2: CREATION OF A NATIVE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
AT PROVIDENIYA IN CONJUNCTION WITH
RADIO COMPANY PROVIDENIYA.**

As this study has previously stated, Provideniya has been identified as the primary coordination point for Eskimo media developments, due to its location, the current operation of Radio Company Provideniya (RCP), access to telecommunication connection

with Alaska, proximity to various government and sociocultural institutions, availability of direct air and post service to Alaska, and the benefits of access to various facilities situated in this regional administrative center.

By necessity, a communications network requires a central point from which to coordinate activities, and given the established base of operations by RCP within the Provideniya administration building, a preliminary task of the CNMSC should be in creating a center or facility equipped with an information services division and a broadcast media division.

Much like Alaskan native corporations which have profit and non-profit divisions working separately but situated in the same building, the center could be configured similarly, with the council-controlled agency working together and sharing facilities with RCP.

The NCC would be charged with the task of providing press services, producing information for distribution, collecting information from sources on a local to international basis, and serving as a clearinghouse for native media operations in the okrug. The center should be properly equipped with necessary radio and television production equipment and computer systems, which would allow it to actively contribute to RCP's daily program schedule, while independently providing an environment for a diversity of native producers and others who have need of production facilities and information network access.

A state of the art studio is not called for, but considering

the advances of technology which can be applied equally and interactively between radio, TV, and computer operations, a fairly low cost, yet technically advanced physical plant is envisioned.⁴⁷

The NCC should also house equipment which can allow it to receive satellite television and radio broadcasts from Alaska and Canada (over the Aurora and new Anik-F satellites) for reception of ARCS and Television Northern Canada, as well as native radio stations (ie., KBRW) which are currently, or scheduled to be on those transponders. With such a capability, the center would have daily access to information and media materials which can then be distributed throughout the okrug.

The center might assist RCP obtain radio broadcast frequencies which could lead to a truly independent native radio service capable of reaching both Chukotkan and Alaskan Eskimo communities. In the interim, RCP's daily broadcasts over the Radio Russia channel can be strengthened by the efforts of the center, as well as the Provideniya television studio, once the broadcast frequency is obtained. The rationale for assisting the local TV operation is based on the ability to collect video materials from its program schedule, collate them, and distribute programming to other sites. Establishment of an audio-video archive should also be a function of the center, for preserving a record of the Eskimo culture, and for furthering its dissemination across the circumpolar regions.⁴⁸

A minimum of three or four paid personnel would constitute the NCC staff, serving to coordinate daily operations of the information and broadcast divisions, while providing organizational

assistance to volunteers and native media operators in other locations. It is assumed that RCP will be responsible for maintaining its own staff, though it would be expected that they work closely with the NCC and CNMSC administrations in fundraising efforts. Specifics concerning funding will be discussed after point #13.

**POINT 3 ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL ORIGINATION RADIO AND
TELEVISION IN ESKIMO SETTLEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE
PROVIDENSKI AND CHUKOTSKI DISTRICTS**

If native-oriented media is to become a tangible force in the lives of Eskimos, then active participation with it at the local setting is a necessary. The clearest route to making this happen is by developing small studio facilities in villages which are equipped with basic audio and video production equipment. With such tools, the next step involves the dissemination of Eskimo-produced materials over the existing okrug-wide wired radio networks and cable or low power television systems.

Each native village in these districts has the legal possibility to insert locally produced materials into the Radio Russia wired radio program stream during scheduled breaks from the Moscow studios. Currently, Moscow broadcasts 15 hours per day over the network, with periodic breaks throughout the day. Chukotka Tele-radio then inserts 3 hours into this program stream, leaving six hours per day which can be used for local inserts. Since Moscow does not pay the local communication committees for unused hours per day, relatively low charges might be assessed by local communication affiliates supervising the wired radio net at each

village.

While it is possible for villages to apply for radio frequencies in establishing both low power radio and television broadcasting, the licensing process is extremely complicated, time consuming, and expensive, though it remains an option for villages who could work with the Native Media Support Council to obtain them. An option would be for the Support Council to apply for multiple licenses in all interested villages, and maintain the frequencies, similar to the current practice in Alaska where the State of Alaska holds village frequencies in trust. With one organization coordinating the licensing process, greater efficiency in man hours and finances could be achieved, rather than each village engaging in the task separately.

To get the wired radio insert approach started, interested villages should get in contact with the CNMSC, which would have necessary preliminary information available. A local media committee would then have to be formed composed of native association representatives, and others interested in promoting media. Once assembled, the committee would need to obtain legal recognition as an association or other suitable entity recognized by the okrug and federal government. Upon receiving this designation, the committee then needs to apply to the Federal Ministry of Press for registering as a mass media organization.

Once the village committee has mass media organization status, it can then enter into agreements with the local communication authorities in charge of the wired radio nets within the community

for access to the unused Radio Russia time slots. Upon successful negotiation for the time, the local committee will then have to establish the parameters of the operation, the personnel, and then obtain a basic radio production package.

At least one paid staff position would be required in coordinating programming inserts, volunteer cooperation, and local production. This could be a cultural worker, a city administration employee, or other individual who could receive either full or part-time funding from an established village entity endowed with sufficient finances for the position.

Eskimo students studying the Yupik language would be prime candidates as volunteers. Encouragement of young people to participate will be necessary for long-term success. The local committee would have to endeavor to add personnel as the range of the operations increases, though it will be up to each village to determine it: some settlements will be more active than others.

The local studio package could be composed of a mixer, three microphones, two studio cassette decks (either analog or digital), multitrack recorder (tape or computer-based), portable cassette recorder, sound monitors and an amplifier, and tape supplies. Costs can range from \$2,000-3,000 (though a simple package could be as low as \$700). Such studios have been used by Eskimo students in Alaska since the early 1980s and are easy to operate."

If funding permits, a satellite system could also be installed as part of the package for reception of Aurora and Anik-F programming, and following permissions for rebroadcast, numerous Esk-

imo language programs from these satellites could be broadcast during the local time slot. A single 10' satellite antenna package, equipped with a receiver/decoder with MCPC audio capability, would cost roughly \$1,700--\$2,000, noting that both satellites transmit digital subcarrier audio signals.

The studio facilities could be located at each village's communications-post office (where the wired radio systems are housed) or at the local House of Culture or other suitable community facility with available space. The easiest variant is to have the studio in a separate location, and have the staff take tapes to the insert point which would be connected via cassette player.

As operations commence, local programming can be sent via cassette to the NCC, which in turn can provide materials back to villages in a functioning program exchange system. If programming were limited to one or two hours per day, it would still provide a valuable information service formatted to local tastes.

The ultimate goal for villages, however, would be in obtaining rights to engage in full-time broadcasting, independent of the constraints imposed by the wired radio option, though this would imply increased funds for equipment, energy, and maintenance. The CNMSC should be employed to assist this process, which in some cases can take up to three years before final approval by the Ministry of Communications and the Federal Service for Television and Radio.

Such efforts would require greater financial sums to pay for repeated travel to Moscow (where all actions are conducted), for

various application and certification fees from different organizations connected with the licensing process, and for purchase, installation, and operation of a 1-50 watt FM transmitter and antenna package. Costs for transmitters qualifying for Ministry of Communications certification could run anywhere from \$1,000 to \$7,000 US, though villages could avoid this cost if a specific model passing certification tests was used by all sites.

Putting things into perspective, the equipment to create a radio studio and transmitter operation might cost the village less than the price of one new Russian-built jeep.

Television Options

The local committee should determine if there are existing cable or low power TV facilities currently operating in the village (legally), and if so, configure a system featuring a small production capacity which can insert programs into the existing village net. If no facilities exist (most villages have no such networks) the quickest and easiest option for starting lays in setting up special television viewing rooms in local Houses of Culture or other facilities. A scenario arises where people can come and view programs in similar fashion to Alaskan Eskimos who go to a local library, ask for a tape, and view it on a monitor.

The next option for local origination would be in developing a small cable operation. Given the challenges and costs of free dispersion television, the cable route is the faster option to pursue. The local media committee should coordinate efforts in

obtaining existing video materials from various sources in the region, while setting up a small studio equipped with two or three consumer-grade Hi8 mm or S-VHS video camcorders, a video switcher, two video recorders with assemble and insert editing features, two television monitors, and if possible, a computer with non-linear digital video editing capability. First and foremost is the purchase of a camcorder and monitor for the viewing facility. A small start is the best step.

Once the cable option is adopted, the next step involves the purchase of cable transmission equipment and coaxial cable (which should be purchased in conjunction with Alaskan native partners because of the lower costs of these items in the U.S.). An effective cable service might include three channels, including a local service, one of the central TV services from Moscow, an international channel retransmitting either ARCS or TVNC (or both), and one or two FM radio channels including the local audio/radio studio. A three channel TV service with radio would cost roughly \$650 per channel (modulator, channel amplifier, channel signal combiner, bandpass filter), plus cabling to designated cable drops, in addition to line amplifiers and splitters at these drops.

While the purchase of the equipment is straightforward and easily done (given the funding), the main problem is in purchasing and transporting the length of coax cable needed. Given Provideniya's port facility, transportation of cable to the region could be initiated from Seattle, where cable costs and shipping are reasonable.

Since most villages have fairly dense housing areas, cabling could first be done to seven or eight main apartment blocks, with connection into individual apartments being the responsibility of individuals to pay for. A community viewing room should also be wired in. As funding permits, added extensions to the rest of the settlement can be accomplished.

While the purchase of a single low power television transmitter would eliminate these cabling problems, it still only provides for one channel, though such a channel could be a combination of local origination materials and satellite programs from Alaska and Canada. Costs for an American-built 10 watt TV transmitter package are roughly \$7,500, though a less expensive Russian-built model (with lower quality, power efficiency, and more frequent servicing) can suffice.

Purchasing a high quality transmitter may be preferable, since the investment may be much less than initial coaxial cable costs, while guaranteeing total viewer access. The cost to benefit and servicing variables need to be assessed by each village committee in determining which distribution system is best.

The primary emphasis of the local video center, however, rests on the production of materials for village use and for distribution to other sites. The capacity for disseminating video materials for use in Alaska and Canada is an important rationale for this. It is even possible for Chukotkan villages to watch their own productions over the ARCS satellite in timeslots designated specifically by KYUK, but the programming must happen to make it

possible.

Personnel makeup might include one or two paid staff positions with volunteers. In the past, volunteer support has traditionally been low due to either a lack of incentive (primarily financial) or lack of a system to even be involved with. Unfortunately, volunteerism in Russia as a phenomenon has surprisingly been undeveloped. The local committee must determine how to solve this dilemma if native media efforts are to get off the ground.

**POINT 4: ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEDIA DISTRIBUTION CENTER FOR
NATIVE RADIO AND TELEVISION IN ANADYR IN CONJUNC-
TION WITH THE CHUKOTKA STATE TELERADIO COMPANY**

Chukotka has been the beneficiary of a regional broadcasting service equipped with native radio and television departments which possess the infrastructure and personnel for coordination with, and encouragement of private native media. Unfortunately, the crisis in federal broadcast support has left these departments with little means to conduct their primary missions or in expanding services to reach a wider audience. It is time for Eskimos and Chukchis to propose new roles for a state teleradio company seeking to justify its existence to the ruling authorities in Moscow.

The first logical step in supporting the Teleradio Company and its native broadcast divisions is for the establishment of a media distribution center (NMDC), which facilitates the dissemination of programming (in various formats) to all native-based media outlets across the region. This would involve an active partnership between the Association of Northern Peoples of Chukotka and

Kolyma, the CNMSC, and the individual Eskimo and Chukchi departments within the Teleradio Company. The consortium would have responsibility for meeting operational expenses.

The NMDC could coordinate distribution of previously-produced Teleradio Company materials; provide studio access at the Anadyr TV and radio building for interested producers seeking to create independent productions; and generally assist Teleradio departments in their efforts.

Since the Teleradio Company already has production and satellite television equipment in place, the center should concentrate its work on production of materials. Audio productions can enhance Eskimo broadcasts going out over the regional wired radio network, and provide additional materials to local origination services, while video materials can be delivered by tape to village media and cable centers. The center can be a vital distribution point for materials to ARCS, Nome, Kotzebue, and Bethel-based radio, and to Canadian and Greenlandic native media outlets. The Teleradio Company's large (and fairly new) office and studio building can easily provide working space for the NMDC and is the most logical meeting point for interested native media supporters.

The Teleradio Company can only gain by such activities, since a center implies additional logistical support (and possibly funding) for their current native staffs, which they seem unable to find from federal budget sources. With an active relationship between the NCC in Provideniya, and the NMDC in Anadyr, the infrastructure for information and program exchanges in the okrug can

be greatly strengthened.

POINT 5: ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDIA TRAINING CENTERS AND A JOURNALISM INSTITUTE IN PROVIDENIYA AND ANADYR

Some of the primary problems identified by Chukotka's native press community are best summed up by Nina Enmenkow, Director of the Eskimo Radio Department who noted; "we have no one to replace us who are journalists and who know our language; talented people do not want to move to Anadyr, and parents of brilliant Eskimo students cannot afford to send their children far away to get professional training."⁵⁰

Taking this statement as a true characterization of the crisis facing native journalism in Chukotka, the future of any subsequent development in the region is dependent on the availability of a corp of trained and knowledgeable people who in essence, represent the bone and sinew of this communication infrastructure. The challenge to preparing the native journalists of the future is to find ways of training them from a young age.

With this goal in mind, the logical next step is the creation of media training centers and formal broadcast institutes for secondary and university age students, as well as assisting with curriculum and audio visual instructional support in every native school in Chukotka.

These media training centers should be placed at the NCC and NMDC. In addition, creation of a broadcast journalism department at the Anadyr State Pedagogical Institute is a needed step, given the Institute's history of preparing native students, and its easy

access to a visiting faculty composed of professional television and radio specialists at the Teleradio Company.

These centers could work with the local school districts in funding audio-visual and computer equipment purchases for elementary and secondary schools across the Anadyrski, Providenski and Chukotski districts. They could also provide teacher training in media, and coursework for students designed to encourage the mastery of various media tools. Native students have long been denied these opportunities which Alaskan students take for granted.

The Provideniya NCC could establish training sessions under a variety of configurations, offering students short two week classes, summer-long internships, semester studies in various disciplines within the expertise of local staff, as well as offering regular weekday or weekend workshops in radio and video production for the population at large. The main justification for the NCC and RCP to be involved with this effort lies in their ability to promote constituent participation with their organizations, encourage the training of potential journalists and media specialists, while increasing productive contributions of individuals to their station programming.

Their activities could also forge closer ties with native language teachers, general education specialists, and the Education Department of the Provideniya District Administration. By basing the media training and curriculum support as "educational" projects, the NCC can solicit necessary funding from various government education and cultural agencies, in addition to their normal

funding sources.

With such a system of continuously available training, cadres of equipped native people would be found in villages across Chukotka. It is this group who might well form a strong base of support for the local origination radio and video operations, while possibly becoming active contributors to information exchange networks with Alaska.

The NMDC would be the best prepared to develop highly effective media training programs given their access to professionals at the Teleradio Company. Many of these specialists could offer production courses or teach journalism and press theory, as well as general courses to interested citizens in Anadyr. There is no better place for people to learn the tools of the trade than at a professional broadcast studio, and this should be a primary focus of the NMDC.

Establishment of a four year liberal arts-based broadcast journalism program at the Anadyr State Pedagogical Institute is the crown of this academic support plan, and one which has all the factors in place for a fairly quick realization. The Institute was originally founded specifically for training native students, but currently has a small percentage of natives among its student population. The majority of students are studying to be teachers in schools throughout Chukotka.

A faculty composed of two or three professors, in addition to academic support personnel, could serve as the nucleus of this department (noting that a minimal budget must be established).

Students would be expected to study and engage in internships at the Teleradio Company studios.

With a core curriculum of liberal arts courses normally offered by the Pedagogical Institute, combined with journalism coursework, media production training, and native language courses, the Institute can offer a realistic academic experience for those motivated native university-age students who can best flourish in an academic environment fairly close to home.

Given the proximity to Alaska and potential assistance from the University of Alaska Fairbanks Journalism and Broadcasting Department (providing consulting services), the Anadyr Institute could eventually develop student exchanges with UAF (which actively seeks out native students interested in studying journalism).

With this combination of training experiences offered at different levels and in different locations, the corp of trained people needed to strengthen Chukotka native press efforts and native empowerment can be effectively developed.

**POINT 6: ENCOURAGEMENT OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE CHUKOTKA
TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE BY GOVERNMENT AND
PRIVATE COMMERCIAL SOURCES, AND SUPPORT FOR ESKIMO
PARTICIPATION WITH TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY.**

It is a clear fact that Eskimos in Chukotka are denied proper access to telecommunications technology and the opportunities to interact through these technologies on a local to international basis. This is due partially to the variables of poor technical infrastructures; low penetration of computers, fax machines, and other devices into homes and offices; and high costs.

As noted earlier, Chukotka Eskimos must pay the highest rates for the poorest service, which results in inhibiting utilization of these basic telecom systems, and creates a situation where the Eskimo people as a community of users cannot afford to communicate with Alaskan relatives simply because they cannot pay the local rate. Without adequate access to telephones, overall coordination of relations and general activities with Alaskans or Canadians is very difficult. Without an improvement in the situation, Chukotkans could stay isolated from the telecom-connected world, and remain weak in their ability to express their collective voice with all forums and institutions which impact their lives.

As a first step, Eskimos, in conjunction with the native associations, must lobby the Governor of Chukotka and the Russian Ministry of Communications to reduce the current telephone rates charged by the Provideniya Communications Committee for access to the direct Alascom link to Gambell. While rate setting is normally the domain of the Ministry of Communications, the Governor's Office is apparently responsible for the setting of long distance rates in Provideniya, where a 10 minute phone call to Alaska equals the monthly wage of many Eskimos.

Second, native leaders must lobby the government for finances to upgrade the okrug telephone network. Considering the vast quantities of gold, precious metals, and coal which is taken from Chukotka and given to Moscow, a major lobbying effort must take place to obtain federal funds to rebuild local systems in villages, while improving long distance relays (which still depend on the antiqua-

ted tropo systems).

Full satellite interconnection for Chukotka with digital switching and upgraded local lines are necessary components to more effective communication access. Further, computer facilities need to be installed in every village for both intercity communication and for training Eskimos in its utilization. None of the native broadcast departments in Anadyr or Provideniya have computers, and are consequently bereft of the technology which could greatly support information exchange.

Without efficient telecom systems, business development is stifled, and poor overall communication between all entities in the region will impede the building up of Chukotka. In this respect, Eskimo telecom users must deal with the same problems as their Russian neighbors, and until financing and technological upgrades are achieved, Eskimos will be limited in their ability to properly develop their information network systems internally and externally.

In a project to bypass government incalcitrance, native leaders should appeal to the native Alaskan social and corporate community for installation of a small capacity satellite telephone uplink in Provideniya, which can be housed at the NCC. While costs for such a system are in the range of \$2-10,000, it would allow for access to high bandwidth circuits, and at a minimum, 28/56 kbs circuits would vastly improve voice, fax, and data services, as well as provide the possibility to deliver information and even regular radio programming to various points in Alaska via Internet Radio, the broadcasting mode of the future.

Given new developments in the U.S. to create global-based personal communications services (PCS) via low orbiting satellites (which allow individuals access to satellite communications via wireless telephone), Chukotka's native peoples may be able to bypass their own government telecom system in communicating with countries in the circumpolar North. Such a capability could greatly enhance their information power--as long as they can pay the phone rates. Only a general improvement in the Eskimo's economic conditions will make this a reality."

Financial Strategies for Points 1-6

The immediate issues confronting Chukotka media development are roughly the same as those faced by Alaska-based native media. This analysis will now dwell on the peculiarities of the Chukotka situation with discussion to be stated later concerning the intertwining factors which can be applied to both sides.

The Chukotka Native Media Support Council would have the challenge of engaging in full-time fundraising efforts to support the NCC and NMDC and its various activities of media training, village media coordination, and mass media registration and licensing activities.

Another aspect which the council should address relates to funding assistance for existing native media studios at RCP and the Teleradio Company. Like the proposed information centers, funding usually comes from local and regional sources, so a first topic of discussion should be identifying the means to supplement existing

funding outlets. Since both studios are dependent on either the Provideniya Administration budget, or the federal budget, the council must realize that funding will not increase from either source until the general financial picture of Russia improves.

With the current status of Chukotka's economy in extreme crisis, and the native settlements facing the worst living conditions in the last 30 years, public financial support for broadcasting and information centers will be controversial when so many other socioeconomic issues important for basic survival top the priority list of Chukotka's government. The center must figure out how to address this problem in its lobbying campaigns.

To begin with, there must be unanimity among the council on the need to improve communication and internal cooperation within the Eskimo community, the Chukotka-based native associations, the nationwide native associations, and their representatives within government social and political forums. Unfortunately, the native associations in the Provideniya and Chukotski districts have been guilty in the past of poor cooperation with each other and lacking in their lobbying efforts for broadcast support at Anadyr and Provideniya.⁵²

If the Eskimos and other native peoples of Chukotka can develop consensus on the need for promoting native broadcasting and engage their personnel at various entities to work on such a task, then a viable movement capable of lobbying Russian government and private industry support can commence.

The next move would be in establishing lobbying and publicity

campaigns directed at Russian federal agencies charged with northern affairs, the Russian Federal Duma, and the Chukotka Autonomous Republic Duma. On the national level, the existing Goscomsever Agency in Moscow is charged by the 1991 law ("On Government Program for Economic and Cultural Assistance #145") to provide federal funds to assist Eskimos in various cultural and economic activities, of which broadcasting and educational training projects could be included. A 1992 presidential decree further provided federal guarantees for assistance to northern natives.⁵³

The council should have an extensive lobby set up with Goscomsever which has separate departments to support native education, culture, economic development, social programs, etc. The Chukotka region native association should work with other national native groups to fund permanent lobbyists in Moscow to maintain contact with these offices and provide information on the various projects to the individual departments.

Support of native media can be a powerful stimulus to these government agencies since all areas of their programs can be impacted by information services. With lobbyists in Moscow, Anadyr (to lobby the Duma) and Provideniya, the council can react quickly to funding opportunities arising at the various levels via the information provided by the lobbyists. For example, support of the Pedagogical Institute journalism program can be facilitated by close rapport with government education departments, and with the network of academic institutes throughout the country which currently educate native students.

The major paradox in all of these funding questions pertains to Chukotka itself, with the richest land in the nation not having a share in its own resources. The Chukotkan Eskimos have not been successful, like their Alaskan brethren, in legally defending the notion of just compensation for resources taken from their territory, as best typified by the North Slope Borough's right to royalties from the Prudhoe Bay oil fields. Interestingly, Eskimo broadcasting in Alaska is best supported in Barrow, simply because the Borough has funds at its disposal to support native language broadcast facilities and personnel.

This task is not an easy challenge, as it requires the implementation of national legislation and a basic reunderstanding of the government's prior monopoly right to all claims on precious metals in Russia, especially gold, which is in abundance throughout the Chukotka region. With the possibility of oil development in the Chukchi Sea, another prime natural resource capable of financing general Eskimo economic and communication development lies in wait, and the native people must work to successfully claim compensation once these resources are extracted.

With this in mind, CNMSC should join forces with other advocates of Chukotka's rights to percentages of royalties on natural resources in its region, in what will surely become a major political battle. In the interim, the council should work with government agencies at the district and okrug levels which interact with private commercial and industrial firms engaged in mineral resource extraction and other activities which operate on traditional native

lands in Chukotka. It is odd, that rather than provide Eskimo villages with developmental assistance, the Bering Strait Native Corporation invested (and lost) over one million dollars on a private mining venture in Chukotka.

Focusing on more self-sufficient endeavors, the council can encourage Eskimo communities in the two districts to focus on immediate opportunities of funding media by commercial activity. Traditional occupations, such as fur farming, ivory harvesting, reindeer herding and horn sales, hunting and fishing enterprises, tourism, cultural art sales, and other economic activities can be harnessed and further developed at the village and district level with the idea of setting aside a certain percentage of profits from communal enterprises for support of Eskimo personnel and operations at village studios.

The Provideniya studio is engaged in commercial advertising, but must further develop this in order to properly meet its budgetary goals. Unfortunately, the Provideniya region economy is such that advertising possibilities remain limited, but this should not stop native studios from seeking every possibility of commercial exploitation. Eskimo leaders can work closer with the Governor's Office in economic development projects along the strait and in the interior regions which could provide residual funds for support of broadcasting.

So far, these strategies have been targeted within the region and the country and not upon international interests. A primary problem facing the overall issue of funding centers on the notion

of economic dependence, either on the government (as the central planning policies of Soviet socialism clearly dictated and was accepted in the minds of Chukotkans), or from outside-international sources. In essence, a welfare mentality exists and must end if natives are to become responsible for the quality of their own lives. With the USSR disbanded and the Russian Federation economy as it is, the Eskimos have no choice but to abandon this prior philosophy of total dependence.

For this reason, Eskimo media activists should first and foremost work to develop their own resources within state and private structures before asking for assistance from non-Russian sources (which will be identified in this analysis at a later point). This notion is clear in the minds of the native intelligentsia, and those Chukotkan Eskimos who have travelled to Alaska were first and foremost impressed with the energy, drive, and capability possessed by Alaskan Eskimos to be their own masters, whether it be in culture, business, politics, or other spheres of life. They knew that their own people did not generally possess these characteristics. Again, a lack of media empowerment to communicate to and participate with government decision making is a factor in this, as well as their small population base.

Chukotkans, when informed of native Alaskan successes in the economic-political realms, ie, the passing of ANSCA, ownership of native lands, powers of government and taxation, rights to mineral resources, powerful representation in the Alaska State government, possession of modern social services and educational facilities,

etc., understood that native access to media and information played a vital role in these successes, and that the potential for achieving similar aims in Chukotka could be realized, if properly coordinated.

The bottom line is that without funding, building this information infrastructure is difficult, and the Native Media Support Council will be painfully aware of this. At this point in the discussion, we will now turn to the proposals pertaining to native groups in Alaska.

WESTERN ALASKA

POINT 7: CREATION OF THE ALASKA NATIVE MEDIA SUPPORT COUNCIL

The necessity for creating this council, termed "ANMSC" lays in the need to bring together a representative cross-section of native Alaskan organizations for the purpose of promoting information networking and broadcast media access among the Eskimo population.

While the Alaskans have a multitude of media options within their reach, and utilize information technology to a much higher degree than their Chukotkan relatives, there is still a marginal level in western Alaska (outside of KOTZ or KYUK) of native-controlled radio or television, and a relative absence of media interconnection with Chukotka, Canada, and Greenland. One rationale for the creation of the council will be in allowing this eclectic group to ask the simple question, "why does this deficiency in control exist, and what can be done about it."

The council's necessity and representative makeup should be recognized by the wider Eskimo community in the region, and by the ICC and AFN. It would have a mandate to lobby on behalf of and support for local broadcast media efforts and training activities at the local, regional, and state level. It should also take on responsibility for promoting information networking and media coordination with international native-based press agencies, and the promotion of media studies in school districts throughout the Bering Strait region.

The ANMSC should be registered as a non-profit agency with members appointed from the Bering Strait Native Corporation and its subsidiary Kawerak Inc., NANA Corporation, local village corporations in the region, the ICC, AFN, and Alaska Association of Village Council Presidents. In addition, non-voting representatives or consultants from the following organizations could be included: Northwest and Chukchi campuses of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Rural College, The Bering Strait School District, The Northwest Arctic Borough School District, KOTZ, KNSA, KNOM, KICY, as well as cultural organizations, native dance and arts groups, and others interested in promoting Eskimo media.

ANMSC could be a liaison with existing western Alaskan broadcast and press outlets; serve to guide and aid village media proponents and their activities; advocate media training and journalism studies within the native community; promote programs improving native utilization of telecommunications; provide consultation on various legal, economic, social, political, and technical issues

affecting broadcast media and telecommunications interconnectivity; and should promote networks which facilitate the regular flow of information between natives on a local to international basis.

The council would have a mandate to do what it can to encourage the western Alaskan native press outlet's participation in the implementation and on-going work of an Inuit Press Agency, which has been the subject of much talk but little action.

The ANMSC would be required to engage in fundraising to support its activities, and hopefully would be funded in part by BSNC and NANA, while soliciting grant programs from a variety of government and private sources. This body can decide to what extent it will go beyond its consultative status and into the sphere of actual information operations.

**POINT 8: ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIVE COMMUNICATION
CENTERS IN NOME AND KOTZEBUE**

A needed step in coordinating media and press services to the region, state, and internationally, involves the establishment of a native communications center in the cities of Nome and Kotzebue. The centers could be organized by a consortium including the ANMSC, BSNC, NANA, and other native agencies. The choice of creating only one facility in either city would be up to the ANMSC.

Each center should be equipped with computer workstations and interconnection-server equipment, audio and video production facilities, and space and office equipment for press activities (ie., a press office where journalists can access information or hold press conferences). The center can be a place where village media

producers can come to liaison with fellow media enthusiasts, obtain information, exchange programming, and connect with native communication agencies in other locations.

This writer suggests that the centers can be located within the facilities of BSNC or NANA as an integral part of their overall operations. There is an alternative in setting up the center, and this involves establishing agreements with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Rural College, which in essence, would allow the ANMSC to operate in conjunction with Northwest Campus in Nome and Chukchi Campus in Kotzebue.

With major cutbacks in the University's budget, the current Northwest Media Center is unfunded, and contains studio space and production equipment which could house the center's audio or TV production facilities. While computer facilities and press rooms could be located in the BSNC or NANA corporate buildings, use of UAF production facilities and spaces, and access to their teleconferencing facilities and computer network could make the implementation of the center cost effective and quickly realizable. As a benefit to the Rural College, each campus could provide training to Eskimo students in computers and production, thus increasing student enrollment--which is a reason why the colleges might agree to cooperation with the centers.

Each center has the opportunity to generate a regionwide computer information network, and can install computer server systems which would allow it to distribute information to every Eskimo village. Such a system would encourage native users in accessing

and developing unique native-oriented services over the Internet.

An example of the merging of computer technology and Eskimo culture is the Northwest Arctic School District's creation of interactive CD-Rom databases containing the faces and voices of elders speaking about the Eskimo life, as well as programs describing plants, animals, and subsistence activities in the region. The databases can be accessed by Eskimo students at their computer terminals in elementary and high school classrooms. Eskimo images and perspectives on CD-Rom can easily be sent over data lines worldwide (excepting Chukotka at present).

With such technology in place and awaiting new applications, the center can become a place integrating all media technologies in an environment designed to encourage media developments.

**POINT 9: ENCOURAGEMENT OF LOCAL TELEVISION
 ORIGINATION IN VILLAGES VIA CABLE**

An elusive goal of villages in the study region concerns the development of local origination broadcasting. There are a number of reasons for this state of affairs (lack of media production knowledge, lack of facilities, lack of frequencies, lack of financing, lack of initiative, etc.), but the status quo of inactivity remains.

Village viewers with access to cable (all sites in this study area), receive television programming formatted entirely from a non-native perspective, with the exception of service from ARCS.

With the demise of LEARNAlaska in 1986, and the subsequent availability of its low power TV transmitter and frequency in every

village making local origination possible--Eskimos have for the last ten years been unable to develop local broadcasting using this equipment, and with the close of 1996, the majority of these unused transmitters have been withdrawn from the villages.⁵⁴

For the moment, the option of establishing free dispersion local origination television has evaporated, as the State of Alaska holds on to the frequencies in anticipation of future developments in educational broadcasting. In the meantime, the need for local programming reflective of Eskimo values and formatted to local tastes remains.

The quickest and easiest way to encourage local production efforts is by setting up small scale production studios and connecting them to available cable channels set aside for local origination by cable companies operating the village service.

Though not a new idea, it is still relatively undeveloped in the majority of villages. Why this situation continues is a matter for conjecture, but the technical means for exploiting this opportunity is presently available. Most cable service operators provide access to an open channel free of charge, thus the only issues hindering its utilization rests in the areas of initiative and production funding.⁵⁵

Arguments have been made that because of Eskimo viewer's sophisticated attitudes toward programming and expectations for high production quality (being conditioned by national network standards), they tend to show disinterest in amateur programs featuring camcorders with low resolution, jittery images, and unpol-

ished presentations--and for these reasons, efforts to develop local production usually fail. While this point of view has some merit, it has been clearly demonstrated by the success of "Heart-beat Alaska," and other programs on ARCS which feature amateur video portrayals of life in the villages by Eskimos themselves, that the people of western Alaska desire to see more of this program fare, and are prepared to engage in local production to maintain it.⁵⁶

With the availability of high quality non-professional video camcorders, video switchers and effects units, and computers with editing capabilities, small-scale village video efforts from a variety of producers (students, video enthusiasts, native arts supporters, native corporation staffs, etc.,) are more easily accomplished than ever before.

It should be the role of the ANMSC Council to develop campaigns to promote such use of existing cable channels and use of available video equipment by Eskimos for making local origination work on a regular, sustained basis. Most viewers of ARCS who send their videos to Jeanie Greene, know that Eskimos in northern Canada and other regions (including Provideniya and Anadyr) can watch their work via satellite and share in their lives. This is a powerful stimulus to promote individual application to the video technology which is ubiquitous in the majority of Eskimo homes.

The process of inserting video into the cable net is as simple as plugging a video cable from a camcorder into the cable channel video modulator. Given the low cost of a VHS production system

and ease of mastery, a basic video studio can be obtained and quickly taught to interested individuals.

A package cost for the studio would range from \$1,500 to \$2,500 depending on models and functions. Municipal governments would most likely be the agency to purchase a basic package and provide studio space: villages have numerous resource people in schools and other organizations who can volunteer consultation services for those in need of training.

Concerning the ease of startup, and its possibilities for amassing a sizeable body of program material which can be distributed, Eskimo leaders and the ANMSC delegates should endeavor to promote local origination as the most efficient and cost-effective means to get people involved and knowledgeable of media and information systems.

**POINT 10: ENCOURAGEMENT OF VILLAGE MEDIA COOPERATION WITH
EXISTING BROADCAST OUTLETS IN NOME, KOTZEBUE,
AND BETHEL**

While Eskimos have generally appreciated the regional broadcast services provided to them by KICY, KNOM, KOTZ, and ARCS-KYUK, there has been an extreme lack of active participation by natives on a volunteer basis with these stations. This is especially tragic as broadcasters--who cannot fund full-time native programming positions--often go begging for assistance from volunteers in preparing native-oriented programs, and get little, if any response. The lack of native language programming over these stations can partially be attributed to this fact. This situation has gone on

for years, with a good case study provided by KICY and their lack of a native program coordinator for the last ten years.

The result is local stations cannot attain the degree of true native community orientation or language sensitivity that management often strives for, because of the shortage of active participants. While there is no standard formula for the promotion of successful volunteerism, the issue of finance tends to be cited most often.

The ANMSC, in conjunction with BSNC, NANA, and other native entities should actively promote volunteerism with existing stations in the region, and should put it on their agenda to raise funds for Eskimo program coordinators at KICY, KNOM, and KOTZ. By aiding these stations with volunteer support for the production of programming by natives for natives, Eskimo media empowerment can be strengthened in the region without cost while making radio along the Bering Strait more in tune with "the Eskimo way."

**POINT 11: ENCOURAGEMENT OF JOURNALISM STUDIES/TRAINING/
 AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS FOR NATIVE YOUTH**

Eskimo participation with radio and television has normally been in a passive-consumer mode, and the ranks of Eskimo journalists involved in television is extremely small. When questioned on why this state of affairs exists, Eskimo media producers often give answers ranging from "fear of technology or misunderstanding the medium; disinterest; inability to meet the demands, responsibilities, and stress typical of the journalistic profession; or simply lack of employment opportunities which negates interest in

studying journalism.⁵⁷

While these answers each have a kernel of truth in them, the dilemma remains: how to encourage native youth to become involved in radio and television production? Like any avocation, interest to a particular field is usually a long complex process which begins early in life. Early exposure to media in the public schools and study concerning its nature and role in peoples lives can assist developing the next generation of Eskimo media specialists.

To this end, the ANMSC board, in conjunction with regional school districts, existing broadcast media in Alaska, and the University of Alaska, should encourage on-going media training in public schools; broadcast training courses at existing native-targeted study centers (such as the Indigenous Broadcast Center and KOWANUK Broadcast Training Center in Anchorage); and internships at radio stations in Nome, Kotzebue, and Bethel. Kawerak Inc. in Nome has enacted support programs for student summer internships in a variety of fields, and broadcast internships could become a regular focus of this initiative.⁵⁸

Motivated university students should be directed toward the University of Alaska-Fairbanks broadcasting program which shows special sensitivity in understanding the needs of natives, and prepares them to excel in either native or non-native-oriented broadcast environments.

There have been successes and failures in existing programs seeking to train young people in media, and it is of interest why this has occurred. Cutbacks in public broadcasting (the tradi-

tional hiring outlets for native journalists) and competition at existing rural and urban broadcast centers have discouraged young people who otherwise might be interested in studying for a career in journalism. Often, high school students who do attend two week summer journalism courses in Anchorage do not exhibit interest in media at all, and attend simply due to the need to gain course credits. It is not known how good a job the training centers do in tracking students or encouraging them over longer periods of time.

Native broadcasters must find effective ways to encourage youth to persevere and continue on in their studies, while laboring to effect better job placement opportunities for those who best qualify. Still, early exposure to media in the villages will most likely result in a corp of future press leaders who will be operating in a very complex world, and mastery of the tools of communication will be vital to maintain the continuity of the Eskimo's collective voice in the state.

**POINT 12: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ESKIMO INTERNET RADIO NETWORK:
ALTERNATIVE RADIO/INFORMATION SERVICES IN VILLAGES
VIA INTERNET, ARCS, CABLE, AND FM RETRASLATORS**

Given the advancing state of broadcast distribution via data channels, a new form of truly independent broadcasting capable of manipulation beyond those of traditional transmission methods, now makes it possible for a new phase of Eskimo-oriented information and broadcast service: **The Eskimo Internet Radio Network (TEIRN)**.

Available for exploitation by Eskimo media promoters from numerous locations in the region, the telecommunications infrastructure has made it possible to conduct broadcasting through 56 kbs telephone data lines which are now being installed in many Eskimo villages. Utilizing bandwidth compression and multiple-line combining technologies, the 56 or even 128 kbs lines can deliver a full-frequency FM quality sound to any download site in the state.

What this study proposes is that the ANMSC, in conjunction with other interested native media supporters, initiate a strategy for creating an Internet radio service from Nome or Kotzebue, (or a combination of sites) which could be disseminated in the following ways: to individual user sites at multiple locations; to single point sites in Eskimo villages possessing dedicated 56+ kbs data lines with subsequent connection to low power FM transmitters for distribution within single villages; or to KYUK for connection into the ARCS digital satellite stream for statewide distribution via MCPC satellite audio subcarriers to individual TVRO sites, low power FM transmitters, or local cable system reception points.

From Nome, organizers of TEIRN could establish the system by inputting an audio signal into the current **NOME.NET** computer server (located at the office of The Nome Nugget), or at other Internet Service Provider sites in the state. The signal would be connected into the Internet system with the ability to be downloaded simultaneously by multiple user sites. TEIRN could employ its own dedicated Internet server for maximum flexibility, with hardware costs ranging from \$7000-15,000 (plus maintenance and line costs). We

will now elaborate on the main distribution modes for statewide access.

The easiest way to implement wide scale reception of TEIRN broadcasts is for interested villages to arrange the installation of a dedicated 56 kbs data line(s) directly to the local cable service facility. A standard PC computer with a modem equipped with a digital audio sound card and software (ie. "Audio Active Internet Radio" or "Real Audio") would operate inside the cable facility and convert the compressed data signal into an analog audio signal. The audio is then wired into a cable modulator which would join the lineup of existing FM radio services.

The main cost to villagers would be the monthly line charge for the 56 kbs dedicated circuits (which could easily be shared) though this cost might be paid by the cable operator, who then either adds an additional subscription fee or provides the channel for free as a public service. Variations can be worked out on a village by village basis.

A second variant would be in downloading the Internet signal to a dedicated line in the village, and after decoding by PC computer, connecting it to a 1-50 watt FM transmitter for over the air reception. This option is more complicated and expensive, primarily due to the need to obtain FCC frequency licenses for the transmitter, as well as the cost of the transmitter itself (\$600-6,500), and the associated energy, space, and maintenance costs. This option would require much more time to achieve than the immediate cable distribution option.

Finally, distribution of TEIRN by the ARCS satellite system would also allow cable systems to decode the service through the use of MCPC decoders attached to the digital satellite receiver used to receive the ARCS TV signal.

Though a more expensive option, it holds even greater possibilities for reception by those who cannot tie in directly to Internet links. This distribution mode would require origination fees from the server site; dedicated 56 kbs line charges to the KYUK uplink site from the Bethel telephone utility; uplink charges on the digital subcarrier audio circuits (State of Alaska rates will not be ready for publication until summer 1997); costs of the MCPC decoder at the cable headend; and subscription charges made by cable service providers, though it should be given free since the operator does not pay ARCS for it.

Though a network of APRN stations does exist in Alaska, there is no single statewide "native" radio channel currently configured which allows native-based APRN to equally input programming on a daily basis, while providing opportunities for other native agencies or individuals to join the program stream. The Internet connection could make this type of service feasible.

This variant of TEIRN could see a native radio consortium devised independently of APRN confines, featuring KYUK, KOTZ, KBRW, KOWANUK (and possibly KNOM or KICY) delivering daily time slots over ARCS, with each sending in a portion of their broadcast day over Internet lines. In a different configuration, a system of interconnecting multiple user sites (involving diverse native

groups and local origination studios in villages) could establish daily program streams, in a timeshare arrangement allowing short segments of programming over the Internet and injected into an additional satellite audio subcarrier channel on the State of Alaska's transponder, making two Internet radio services possible. An audio switching network would need to be employed at the uplink site to receive and select the various Internet audio feeds coming in.

Such an arrangement would constitute a true form of developmental broadcasting operating on a statewide network basis. In addition to providing a combined, representative channel available to all villages, the Internet-only or Internet-ARCS distribution modes would allow audio programming to be easily routed to TVNC, or to the American Indian Radio on Satellite network for circulation among other native radio sites in the lower 48 states.

Concerning finances for interconnection, the KOTZ, KBRW, KYUK, KOWANUK consortium approach might achieve success in fundraising to pay for the digital subcarrier audio service over ARCS because of each station's ability to tap into existing funding sources. The rates for one audio channel are far less than paying for a video channel because of its small bandwidth requirements. The State of Alaska currently pays \$1,500,000 per year for the transponder, and as the number of system users for subcarrier audio services rises, the lower the overall cost charged to individual channel purchasers--such as the proposed consortium.⁵⁹

A network system composed of individual program providers at

the village level using a separate subcarrier can also be successful in raising yearly funds for the circuit, especially when people across the state can access its output and be motivated to support the idea of local Internet radio to a statewide audience.

Regardless of which approach is used, this mode of transmission can radically reshape the notion of how statewide radio can be made accessible to a wide range of producers and users (both professional and amateur) for creation of native-oriented programming available and of benefit to native audiences.

Of special significance, is the ability of the radio signal to go around the world, easily providing for connection to Eskimo media sites in Canada and Greenland. In time, the signal could be downloaded in Chukotka via phone line, though it can be immediately received and transmitted in villages throughout the Chukotski and Providenski Districts which have satellite connection to ARCS as well as the audio subcarrier decoders to deliver the channel.

This author feels that **The Eskimo Internet Radio Network** can become the definitive way for the Eskimo people of western Alaska to distribute native-oriented information and radio services to their brethren in diverse locations across the circumpolar North and through all transmission modes of telephone line, satellite, cable, and free dispersion. With technological advances, the Internet will soon provide greater capabilities for delivering high resolution video and audio services to native villages on narrow bandwidth data lines. Eskimo adaptation to these possibilities can go hand in hand with the opportunities provided by such tech-

nical improvements, and the ability for individuals and groups to engage in low cost, professional quality broadcasting is a present reality.

Computer-based broadcasting is the latest and most cost-effective mode of communication technology which can be harnessed by Eskimos on both sides of the Bering Strait for building the information systems needed to make media empowerment a reality.

**POINT 13: CREATION OF THE ALASKA-CHUKOTKA MEDIA COUNCIL (ACMC)
FOR ASSISTING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTINUITY OF
THE INUIT PRESS AGENCY**

The final point in this dissertation seeks the establishment of an effective media-information coordination body bringing together leaders of native-based media from Chukotka and Alaska in the effort to implement, sustain, and strengthen information exchange between the regions and to assist the realization of the long called for Inuit Press Agency.

Composed of designated members from The Chukotka Native Media Support Council and the Alaska Native Media Support Council, this combined council would work to ensure proper interconnectivity between this eclectic collection of media operations and services on each side.

The ACMC would oversee the implementation of strategies which devise efficient means for collecting, collating, and distributing (from and to all designated sites and forums) information of importance to the circumpolar Eskimo community. The body also would work to see a regular press network connecting all native media

operations across the North, as well as radio and television program exchanges and establishment of media archives which can be accessed by a variety of users.

The ACMC must understand the necessity to penetrate all regional and international media, whether public or private, native-controlled or independent, while cooperating effectively with them on a mutually beneficial basis in the effort to keep lines of communication open and the Eskimo position inputted into the mainstream press.⁶⁰

With its motivation derived from the dedication to ensuring that Eskimo people of Chukotka and Alaska have the information and communication services necessary to further their political and economic power, while preserving and strengthening their unique sociocultural identity, the **Chulaska Eskimo Information System** can set the stage for new efforts in enhancing Eskimo media empowerment.

NOTES

1. This writer served as a consultant to the ICC Communications Committee review process on Draft Principles on Communications, meeting in Montreal, Canada in the spring of 1988.

2. Inuit Circumpolar Conference, ICC Communications Committee, "Draft Principles on Communications," 1988.

3. Ibid.

4. Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Inuit Circumpolar Conference General Assembly Resolutions, "Notes and Recommendations for Arctic Council Resolution," July 24-28, 1995, Nome, Alaska. Nome, Alaska: Inuit Circumpolar Conference, 1995.

5. Ibid.

6. The ICC, in its last General Assembly meeting held in Kotzebue (1992) and in Nome, Alaska (1995), once again called upon establishing recommendations put forth by the ICC Communications Commission in 1983 and 1986, asking that they be implemented as quickly as possible. See; Inuit Circumpolar Conference General Assembly (1992), Resolution 92-22f; Inuit Circumpolar Conference General Assembly (1995), "Recommendations of the Panel on Environmental Contaminants, Thursday, July 27, 1995," point #4.

7. Olga Karablova, Director, Radio Company Provideniya, interview by author, 11 November 1996, Provideniya, Russia.

8. Ibid.

9. Karablova, interview by author. Unofficial unauthorized) broadcasting has been in operation in Provideniya since 1990 using a low power transmitter, but the developments concerning TV as discussed now, pertain to legal (authorized) attempts to start a TV channel by Radio Company Provideniya.

10. Ibid.

11. Karablova, interview by author; Dmitri Koravie, Magadan Oblast Administration for Native Affairs, interview by author, 6 November 1996, Magadan, Russia.

12. Ibid.

13. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 11 November 1996, Anadyr, Russia.

14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Al Sanders, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 11 November 1996, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording; Sharon McConnell, Blueberry Productions, interview by author, 20 November 1996, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.
18. Lynn Anderson, KOTZ Radio, interview by author, 24 March 1995, Kotzebue, Alaska, tape recording.
19. Ralph Fondell, interview by author, 30 April 1996, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording. Total APBC funding for radio in 1997 was \$2,810,000.
20. Mike Martz, KYUK Television, interview by author, 3 December 1996, Bethel, Alaska, tape recording; Fondell, interview by author. Fondell, (a member of the APBC board) noted that total APBC funding for the 96-97 budget was \$4,153,000, including all TV and radio.
21. Lynn Anderson, interview by author.
22. Ralph Fondell, interview by author, 30 April 1996; The KOTZ scandal caused Lynn Anderson, then station manager, to resign, and Susan Erlich, an Eskimo (and niece of Fred Savok, the first Eskimo radio announcer at KICY), was named manager.
23. Ibid.
24. Karablova, interview by author, 11 November 1996. This information was confirmed by this writer, who is a board member of the Arctic Broadcasting Association, operator of KICY.
25. Loretta Bullard, Kawerak Inc., interview by author, 5 December 1996, Nome, Alaska, tape recording.
26. Victor Soloviev, Magadansvazinform, interview by author, 3 December 1996, Magadan, Russia.
27. The next satellite scheduled for service to Chukotka is Gorizont 145 with a launch date sometime in 1997.
28. For final reference (after submission of this dissertation), The Russian Ministry of Space and Informatics successfully launched Gorizont 145, and as of February 1998, the Chukotka State Teleradio Company has been given uplink access on a weekly basis for transmission of Anadyr-produced programming to the okrug, though this

writer is unable to confirm whether any Eskimo materials are included.

29. The Teleradio Company's radio signal is still retransmitted from a 100,000 watt transmitter on 5940 khz and 9600 khz for the benefit of people not living in settlements which have wired radio connection via telephone/tropo links.

30. Mike Martz, KYUK Television, interview by author, 3 December 1996, Bethel, Alaska, tape recording. ARCS utilizes the Alaska One stream, and shifts evening slots equally between the national network affiliates in Anchorage (CBS, NBC, ABC, Fox), KAKM (the Anchorage PBS station), and an independent station, KYES.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid. The Alaska One satellite feed from KUAC-Fairbanks went on line in the summer of 1996, making it the first state TV signal to be converted to digital. With the two digital services already operating, the next scheduled service will be KTOO's gavel to gavel coverage of the Alaska State Legislature (this service being designated as "Alaska Two"). While 221 sites are listed as recipients of the ARCS service, a few are not on line, with one village having a fire at its transmitter site (burning up the ARCS satellite receiver and transmitter), and other villages experiencing different problems.

33. Sharon McConnell, Blueberry Productions, interview by author, 20 November 1996, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording; Mike Martz, interview by author.

34. Ralph Fondell, interview by author, 30 April 1996.

35. Mike Martz, interview by author.

36. Ibid.

37. Jeanie Greene, producer, HEARTBEAT Alaska, interview by author, 15 July 1993, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording.

38. The State of Alaska's satellite transponder will have four digital television services: channel 1, "Alaska One" PBS uplink from KUAC; channel 2, ARCS; channel 3, "Alaska Three" the proposed University of Alaska educational channel; and channel four, "Alaska Two" the KTOO coverage of the state legislature. As of December 1996, two TV channels are operating, as well as two radio services, KUAC-Radio and KTOO-Radio. The State's Satellite Interconnection Project (SIP), which is coordinating the transponder's users, will not be prepared to offer additional radio services until Summer of 1997. The transponder costs \$1,500,000 per year and its costs are evenly shared by each organization uplinking channels. The State of Alaska is not the major provider

of money to support the transponder, since PBS and other funds support it. Information from Doug Moore, SIP director, interview by author, 5 December 1996, Anchorage, Alaska.

39. Sharon McConnell, interview by author, 20 November 1996, Anchorage, Alaska.

40. Sharon McConnell, interview by author, 20 November 1996; Lynn Anderson, interview by author, 5 December 1996, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording; KOWANUK's 24 hour schedule features the morning show "Morning Live" hosted by Nellie Moore (producer of National Native News) and Lynn Anderson (producer of Native American Calling's "Wellness Edition of NAC"), which is family and community-oriented, with news and music throughout the mid day hours, and evening slots primarily featuring native-specific programs of various types.

41. Edmund X. Dejesus, "How the Internet will replace broadcasting," BYTE, February 1996, 51-55. Most villages have 28 kbs data lines, and could bring in ISDN or T-1 circuits if desired. T-1 refers to a bandwidth of 1544 kilobytes per second; ISDN refers to Integrated Services Digital Network, which is an international telecommunications standard for transmitting voice, video, and data over digital lines.

42. The cost of a telephone call from Nome to Provideniya is roughly \$2.00 per minute as opposed to \$10 per minute from Provideniya. Alaskans generally pay lower long distance rates when calling out of the state, as opposed to instate. Internet access rates are comparable with the rest of the country.

43. Brian Rogers, University of Alaska, interview by author, 2 December 1996, Magadan, Russia.

44. John McBride, KICY Radio, computer interview by author, 5 December 1996, Nome, Alaska. Recording on hard drive.

45. Jerome Komisar, President, University of Alaska, interview by author, 2 December 1996, Magadan, Russia.

46. The ICC Principles on Communications have historically been based on six premises: 1) Necessity of a Comprehensive Arctic Policy on Communications; 2) Inuit Rights to Freedom of Expression; 3) Maintenance, Enhancement and Protection of Inuit Culture; 4) Official use of Inuit Language; 5) Inuit Entitlement to Broadcast Services; 6) Creation of a Network of Inuit Broadcasting Organizations.

47. Funding for radio production equipment would be roughly \$15,000; with a 5000 watt transmitter/antenna package (if the free dispersion broadcast route is chosen) at roughly \$50,000 plus

operational costs in energy, maintenance, and other fees, which can't be determined with precision due to inflation). Basic computer facilities with networking and audio/video capabilities for a 5 workstation office would be roughly \$35,000 though this is on the low side.

48. The equipment should have a standards converter or a VCR so equipped for dubbing video materials into the NTSC standard for its Alaskan and Canadian users.

49. A typical package would include a Mackie 1202 mixer for \$375, three Shure SM 58 microphones (\$300), Tascam 102 studio cassette recorders (\$350 each) or a Sony DAT recorder (\$700), Tascam 4 channel cassette portastudio (\$450), Marantz PMD 101 portable cassette recorder (\$250), JBL Pro performer studio monitors (\$100 pair), Tascam 25 watt power amplifier (\$200), and tape supplies (\$300-400). This writer used a similar package for KCHS-AM 590 Unalakleet, a station operated by students at Covenant High School.

50. Nina Sergeyevna Enmenkow, Director, Eskimo Radio Department, Chukotka State Teleradio Company, interview by author, 21 September 1994, Anadyr, Russia.

51. Komisar, interview; PCS systems will arrive within the next year. Bill Gates of Microsoft and other telecom firms have plans to launch hundreds of small satellites which will allow an individual anywhere in the world to call or send data directly via satellite and not through a local telecom system. This service will be available in Chukotka.

52. Olga Karablova, interview by author, 8 March 1996, Provideniya, Russia.

53. President, Russian Federation, "*Ukaz Prezidenta OT 22.04.92 'O Heotlozhnih...Narodov Severa.'*"

54. The LEARNAlaska transmitters were available for local use in an informal way (with the state still holding the licenses). Transmitters and frequencies were not turned over to local entities, but State authorities were not opposed to local use of them. In the end, these transmitters stood idle for years, with some being withdrawn for parts to service RATNET transmitters, or to completely replace broken transmitters housed in villages. Very few villages have two transmitters at present.

55. According to one view expressed by Schement and Singleton (1981), which can be applied to the lack of local origination in western Alaska as owned and produced by Eskimos, is that "the unarticulated expectation is that superior performance is required of minority owners (operators of local TV) and that the validity of minority ownership policy rests heavily upon this

superior performance." Because local Eskimo video enthusiasts cannot consistently replicate the production output and superior technical standards of the networks, some have seen this as a disincentive for even attempting to start a local TV effort of any degree. See, Jorge Reina Schement and Loy A. Singleton, "The Onus of Minority Ownership: FCC Policy and Spanish-Language Radio," Journal of Communication (Spring 1981): 78-83.

56. Sharon McConnell, Blueberry Productions, interview by author, 5 August 1995, Anchorage, Alaska, tape recording. McConnell notes that individuals throughout Western Alaska send in self-produced videos about village life, making it easier for Anchorage-based native programmers to develop and sustain shows geared to native Alaskans.

57. The observation is made by this writer after numerous conversations with native journalists over the years concerning the low rate of young people entering the profession.

58. Loretta Bullard, Kawerak Inc., interview by author, 4 December 1996, Nome, Alaska.

59. Subcarrier audio costs over state-subsidized satellite channels in Canada can go as low as \$15,000 per year.

60. Why the ICC has not been able to get a Press Agency established among the broadcasters and press outlets in the North is a continuing question. Print communication appears better developed among agencies than broadcast exchange. Some say the issue is money, other say journalists have no time from their jobs to contribute. There needs to be a group, like the old ICC Communications Committee, which digs even deeper into the problems while finding the money and personnel to make it a reality. This study attempts to help solve the problem, but has left out details on specific funding agencies who can help.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSIONS

In seeking to prove the original contention of this study, concerning the relationship of Soviet and American broadcast media with the Eskimo people, and their past and potential involvement with it, this study has labored to present a reliable, systematic, and thorough overview of the diverse concepts, issues, and facts which contribute to building a framework for understanding the general problem facing an Eskimo population seeking media empowerment and unhindered communication access across the Bering Strait.

Armed with clear guidelines outlining the scope of the problem addressed, and with the framework for its potential resolution constructed, the final ultimate objective of a communications model for strategic utilization of broadcast and information technology has been met. Further discussion of this will be provided in the final section of this summary.

We will now present a review of those elements addressing the study's three proximate objectives and general findings relating to each.

In setting out a historical reconstruction of the broadcast media and telecommunications environment in each nation, the study focused equally on Chukotka and Alaska, detailing basic foundations, characteristics, operational parameters, and the participatory role of Eskimos within them.

Concerning press foundations, the study provided a detailed review of Soviet press and broadcast philosophies, describing and analyzing the theories of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, and how their approaches guided the implementation of Soviet broadcasting under a communist/state/totalitarian model. From this model, subsequent administration over all mass media and telecom developments would be referenced back to the general goals and tendencies of CPSU political activity, and this study has clearly laid out how this methodology of control impacted developments in Magadan Oblast/Chukotka, and upon Eskimo broadcasting.

With regard to Soviet press foundations and CPSU authority, this study reached two general conclusions. First, that Leninist/Stalinist press theory in conjunction with CPSU tenets and practices, *precluded* the notion or possibility of individual, corporate (ie., the Eskimo community), or non-state control over radio, television, and information systems in Chukotka. Second, that communist press theory defined a limited scope of ethnic participation within existing Soviet broadcast media, *which could not* allow for adequate expression, dissemination, or attainment of ethnic/nationality-based social, cultural, or political goals, since this was opposed to a CPSU philosophy engaging media in the task of psychologically molding a supranational Soviet mentality among the diverse ethnic peoples making up the USSR.

Concerning Alaska, the study described and contrasted the primary American press model--with its democratic/libertarian/social responsibility underpinnings--to its Soviet counterpart, as

a background to describing the nature of broadcast development in Western Alaska.

Two general findings resulted from this analysis. First, Eskimos had inherent political rights to enact broadcasting in Alaska through private and corporate enterprise, or in conjunction with public/government-subsidized initiatives, and possessed the freedom to adapt broadcasting to meet societal needs and goals, unlike their Chukotka relatives--thus proving the Soviet model as inferior to the American model as a guarantor of press freedom and broadcast rights.

Second, Alaska and Chukotka exhibited similar levels of government involvement in broadcasting directed to Eskimos, from the perspectives of financing and infrastructure supervision, but not programming--which in Chukotka was under strict state content control, and in Alaska, under private or corporate content control.

Concerning broadcast developments and operational parameters, the study established comprehensive timelines and organizational outlines defining national broadcasting and telecom developments in the USSR, followed by regional developments in Magadan Oblast and Alaska. The study explored basic communications infrastructures in both nations, including early cable and wireless telegraphy networks, proceeding to radio and television broadcasting, as well as telecom distribution via tropospheric scatter, cable, microwave, and satellite systems.

It outlined the early phase of radio in the USSR, describing the rise of Soviet-style program and administrative control, as

well as technical and network developments leading to the establishment of services in Chukotka. A treatment on television development and penetration to the Bering Strait Eskimo communities was given, followed by analyses which described the administration of CPSU and state broadcast committee control bodies over every facet of radio and television operations.

A systematic look into the creation of Eskimo radio services, and the administration, personnel, and program characteristics of this operation has been provided. General descriptions of Eskimo use of various media has been included in order to characterize their historic and current participation with mass media under a Soviet and Russian context.

The study reached a number of findings in defining the Soviet and Eskimo experience with broadcasting in Chukotka:

1. From its inception, radio was defined as an instrument of state, for the attainment of CPSU goals, and its national development was overseen by an intricate formula of political, economic, social, and technical factors, which was determined and acted upon by political consensus within the CPSU's coordinated administrative organs at the federal, regional, and local levels.

2. Magadan and Chukotka state broadcasting developed in blueprint fashion, according to strict government broadcast standards applied throughout the USSR, with Chukotka being among the very last regions in the country to be served by broadcast and information services. In turn, Eskimo broadcasting emerged comparatively late among those Soviet ethnic minorities which were provided

access to program production over state systems.

3. Eskimo broadcasting in Chukotka had to confront a complex scenario of interacting forces generated by the policies, administrative bureaucracy, and information control parameters (censorship, propaganda, information suppression) imposed by the CPSU and its subordinate state broadcast committee, with repression of Eskimo aspirations for greater program autonomy effected by elaborate Party/KGB supervisory practices.

4. Adherence to nationality policies and the avoidance of CPSU and government criticism in socioeconomic and political affairs represent additional factors for explaining why Eskimo programming could not accurately portray the true condition of Chukotkan Eskimos, nor provide factual coverage of important domestic and external issues impacting these people, nor disseminate relevant information regarding Eskimos in Alaska and the circumpolar North.

5. The control environment surrounding Eskimo broadcasting's status clearly impeded radio's ability to serve as an instrument for effecting societal change within Chukotka's native communities, or to facilitate dialogue leading to a long sought reestablishment of relations with Alaskan Eskimos.

6. While having access to state radio and central television, Eskimos were prevented from starting radio in local communities, or engaging in TV programming--and coupled with the population's inability to obtain or utilize other media technology (ie., audio/video production equipment, computers, fax machines), the Chukotkans have been severely hampered in their ability to adapt and

strategically use diverse media tools for the purpose of creating their own media-information services and networks.

Western Alaska

Three general conclusions were reached concerning the Western Alaska perspective.

1. The initiation of radio broadcasting in Western Alaska resulted from the efforts of government (military) and religious organizations--both of whose foundation, orientation, and control structure could not adequately accommodate Eskimo aspirations in controlling or programming such services.

2. Eskimos in Western Alaska could be characterized primarily as passive recipients of radio and TV broadcasting, as initiated and controlled by non-natives, yet have the benefit of receiving the diversity of broadcast and telecom services available to a majority of Americans.

3. With the development of state-subsidized public radio and television in Western Alaska, Eskimo were provided with opportunities to effect programming and financial control over broadcast services, however, the Eskimo population have been unable to maintain such services autonomously, or to expand programming resources to an appropriate degree (as desired by the native leadership).

The reestablishment of Eskimo relations and the role of broadcasting

The study has provided a comprehensive synopsis of the state of U.S.-Soviet state and Eskimo relations along the Bering Strait,

in the primary effort to document the reestablishment of communication access and reunification of the formerly separated Eskimo people. The reconstruction of this relationship was done partially to reveal the extent to which both governments exercised control in maintaining a closed border; how broadcasting was generally employed to reinforce status quo perceptions of Eskimos concerning life on the opposite side; and how broadcast services eventually played a pivotal role in instigating the reopening of the border. These analyses provide a viable context for understanding the current problem facing the Eskimo leadership in each country--namely, of determining the role of broadcast media in facilitating further reintegration of Chukotkan and Alaskan native peoples.

The following conclusions were reached, pertaining to this phase of study:

1. U.S.-Soviet relations in the Bering Strait were determined by domestic and international policy concerns, which were relatively non-cognizant of Eskimo societal concerns, thus depriving the people of any meaningful input into the administration of the border area, or of working toward reintegration of Eskimo relations for a forty year period.

2. Broadcasting and information services in each nation were effectively manipulated (to a greater degree in the USSR than in Alaska) in the past to reinforce government policies maintaining the closed border; yet these same services were eventually put to effective use by advocates in each nation seeking reestablishment of state and Eskimo relations, and media played a dramatic role in

highlighting the events of the border opening in a way which solidified public support for the new societal relationship in the region. Soviet media consequently was forced to undergo dramatic changes in its outlook and operational approach in order to deal with the new realities forced by the border opening and the necessity of establishing a working relationship with Alaska.

3. The opening of the U.S.-Soviet border created the potential for dramatic changes impacting the Eskimo people; first, in societal reunification efforts; second, in Soviet and Alaskan Eskimo broadcast operations; and finally, in future broadcast/telecom links between Eskimos in each region.

Transition in Broadcasting Impacting Chukotka and Western Alaska

In meeting the third proximate objective, the study has provided a comprehensive overview of the myriad changes in state broadcast policy and operations affecting Eskimos; first, addressing national mass media changes in the USSR and later, Russia--with its subsequent impact on Chukotka; and second, describing and analyzing the transition of private and state-supported radio and TV operations in Alaska.

The following general findings were reached with regard to Chukotka:

1. The Soviet campaign of *glasnost* and *perestroika* ultimately facilitated the abandonment of historic press policies; accelerated the pace of national broadcast reform; fomented the emergence of independent, non-state media; and generated the conditions

making possible the future establishment of Eskimo-controlled broadcasting.

2. In conjunction with changes in operational control engendered by national reform efforts, Chukotka state and Eskimo broadcasting was radically affected by the new governmental and media relationship with Alaska, with the end result of program operations and editorial control moving from an authoritarian to essentially western press orientation.

3. With the demise of the USSR, Chukotkan broadcasting entered a new period, symbolized by new possibilities for the development of alternative services, yet beset by a lack of federal funding to maintain existing state-sponsored operations.

4. Despite the new Russian media environment, Eskimo broadcasting has been unable to expand from its state-sponsored dependence; and Chukotka's Eskimo community has yet to employ independent services to the task of creating a native-controlled media system for serving domestic societal needs, or for engaging in socioeconomic and cultural relations with Alaskan Eskimos.

Alaskan Broadcasting

Concerning transition in Alaska, the following general conclusions were reached:

1. While the State of Alaska played a primary role in the provision of radio and television service to the Bering Strait Eskimos (via satellite and local transmission centers), changes in state financial budgets and policies, along with the availability of com-

mercial satellite and cable-based services, has forced changes in broadcast subsidization policies which will ultimately shift responsibility for the maintenance of existing and culturally relevant services upon the Eskimo media consumer at the local, regional, and state level.

2. The Eskimo communities have historically been unable, or unwilling, to harness both state-subsidized and private broadcast media to its fullest potential.

3. Despite access to a variety of media and telecom systems in Western Alaska, as well as possessing reasonably developed financial resources, Eskimos have been unable to establish viable broadcast or telecom links with Chukotkan Eskimo media, and currently have no strategy for accomplishing this task.

Communications Model of Empowerment for the Chukotkan and Alaskan Eskimos

In conclusion, the dissertation has put forth a unique and credible model, which in essence, provides an organizational strategy of broadcast and information technology utilization that, if employed, can effectively promote Eskimo media empowerment and communication access within the study region.

The model, as a culmination of this study's diverse analyses seeking to define native media empowerment and the general forces of broadcast media within a Russian/American context, clearly outlines a relationship between Eskimo sociocultural survival and empowerment--that control over media expedites. The model provides insight into the interrelationship of broadcast media control--

noting its past use by governments in the areas of political and economic control, assimilation and socialization policies, etc.-- with the general life condition and prosperity of Eskimos on each side of the Bering Strait.

While non-native use of media in each region was relatively successful in achieving its goals in stages (ie., whether the attainment of socialism in Chukotka; or effective local and regional self administration in tandem with state governmental oversight in Alaska), Eskimos have been less successful in adapting this same media to the task of promoting basic and specific issues of importance to the Eskimo population. While the Alaskans had greater chances than Chukotkans to employ media in this regard, the end result has been a relative inability to achieve a desired level of media empowerment, and this study has identified reasons on each side for this occurrence.

To counteract this deficiency, the communications model put forward identifies the new opportunities which exist for Alaskans and Chukotkans to separately, and collectively access broadcast and information technology--outlining a comprehensive strategy, which if adhered to, can provide them a powerful voice and greater input into the various decision-making forums responsible for governance across the Bering Strait region. Such empowerment could also allow them to forge new cooperative ties with the scattered Eskimo/Inuit peoples in the circumpolar regions.

If Eskimos are to achieve this degree of communication and sociopolitical power, and the flourishing of their distinctive way

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