

PRIBILOF ISLANDS: END OF FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION

From October 1983 the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea, under federal US administration for the last 73 years, will revert to home rule. Termination of the Pribilof Islands Program is linked with the establishment of a \$20 million trust fund to ease the transition. Critics regard the amount as wholly inadequate to promote the development of a stable, self-sufficient enduring and diversified economy not dependent on sealing' — one of the government's declared aims. The communities of St Paul and St George, with total population about 700, rely largely on the commercial fur seal industry; hitherto under federal government control, this is now the responsibility of the communities themselves, but the US Government is considered likely to seek termination of the industry on the Pribilofs when the Interim Convention for the Conservation of Northern Fur Seals (involving also Canada, Japan and the USSR) comes up for review late in 1984. Oil and natural gas, tourism and fishing are thought to be likely alternative sources of income for the future. (Sources: *Northern Raven*, 3(4): 1-2; correspondence, Dr Oran Young.)

Obituary

Dr scient HELGE LARSEN, an outstanding expert on Eskimo culture, died on 14 February 1984, nearly 79 years old. Born 25 February 1905 in Copenhagen, he was married to Gerda (nee Claussen), who died in 1979. On graduating from the University of Copenhagen in 1930, Helge Larsen was appointed scientific assistant in the ethnographic department of Denmark's National Museum. There he worked all his life, finally as Chief Inspector. He participated in expeditions to East Greenland in 1931-32, 1935 and 1937, and to West Greenland in 1953 and 1958. His travels in Greenland led to several publications: one of the main works was *Dødemandsbugten: an Eskimo Settlement on Clavering Island*. He was active in Greenland in the 1950s on the Eskimo Stone Age People, the Sarqaq and Dorset Cultures, publishing *Paleo-Eskimo Cultures in Disko Bay, West Greenland* in 1958.

His many travels to Alaska between 1939 and 1966 and extensive excavations there were of great scientific significance. In 1939 at Point Hope he discovered, along with an American scientist, a palaeo-eskimo settlement; *Ipiutak and the Arctic Whale Hunting Culture*, the main publication arising from these excavations, became basic for the understanding of the Eskimo culture development. Later field work, especially excavations near the Bering Strait, deepened our knowledge of the early cultures in Asia and North America; this work was summarized in *Trail Creek: Final Report on the Excavation of two camps on Seward Peninsula, Alaska* (1968).

From 1943 to 1945 he was Associate Curator of Prehistoric Archaeology at the American Museum of Natural History, New York; he was appointed visiting professor at the University of Alaska 1949-50, and at the University of Oregon in 1962.

Apart from these activities Helge Larsen found time and effort for other ways of promoting knowledge of Greenland and other Arctic areas. Particularly should be mentioned his achievement in establishing in 1954 the Arktisk Institut, in Charlottenlund, near Copenhagen, of which he was Director until 1963 and later Chairman of the Board. He was a member of the Commission for Scientific Research in Greenland 1955-75, and an active chairman of the Greenland Society in 1956-65. Among numerous other



Arktisk Institut, Denmark.

appointments he was Corresponding Fellow and later Governor of the Arctic Institute of North America, a member of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America from 1978, and Chairman of the Editorial Committee of *Meddelelser om Grønland* 1955–75. He was a Knight of the first class of the Order of Dannebrog and was decorated with the Royal Medal of Award, first class. He received in 1955 the Hans Egede Medal from the Royal Danish Geographic Society, and in 1980 the Rink Medal from the Greenland Society.

Helge Larsen's scientific achievement was of great significance, but he also had unique human qualities. He was a highly respected and admired teacher to his students. He conceived the greatest affection for the Eskimo peoples from East Greenland to western Alaska, not only for their past, but also for their present living conditions and their future, and his basis for judgement was sounder than most. He was an eminent expedition leader, with the ability to publish the results in a universally acknowledged way. Finally, he was a warm, beloved and admired family man.

N. O. Christensen

MASAHARU NISHIWAKI, known internationally for his research on the biology of marine mammals, died suddenly of a heart attack in Tokyo on 14 April 1984. Born there on 23 January 1915, he graduated in 1939 from the Fisheries Science School (Faculty of Agriculture) of Tokyo Imperial University and was appointed assistant in the faculty. A reserve naval air force officer, he served in the Japanese forces from 1940 to 1946. After the war he returned to the university, working concurrently at the Whales Research Institute. He joined the Institute staff in 1950, working there until 1965 when he was appointed Professor in the Ocean Research Institute, University of Tokyo. He served as Director of the Institute in 1967–68 and again in 1972–74. In 1975 he moved to the University of Tyukyus and was Dean of the Faculty of Sciences there until his resignation in March 1980, when he became a Professor of Tokai University.

He sailed as a biologist with the Japanese Antarctic whaling fleet in the 1947–48 and 1948–49 seasons, studying the blue and fin whales caught. During the two seasons 32 blue and 29 fin whales were weighed in constituent parts and organs, the first series of such weights obtained for the great whales. He also conducted a whale-marking cruise in Antarctic waters in the 1955–56 season, and pioneered experiments to mark small cetaceans. His first publications concerned the biology of the commercially important whales, especially studies of age determination and reproduction, but he soon expanded his research to include the biology, anatomy and taxonomy of smaller cetaceans. Work on seals and, more recently, on sirenians followed. He was the author of some 120 publications, including several books. In 1977 he and Hideo Omura were jointly awarded a Japan Academy prize for studies on cetaceans. He was elected President of Mammalogical Society of Japan in 1982 and he was for many years Chairman of the IUCN Survival Service Commission Whale Group. Friends and colleagues worldwide will long remember him as a delightful and generous companion, with a great sense of humour and an infectious enthusiasm for all marine mammals. I am indebted to Hideo Omura and Seiji Ohsumi for assistance in preparing this note.

S. G. Brown

Professor TEIZO OGAWA, the eminent anatomist who carried out pioneer studies on cetaceans in Japanese waters, died on 29 April 1984, aged 83. He graduated in medicine at the University of Tokyo in 1926 and became an Assistant Professor at Tohoku University, Sendai. In 1939 he joined the staff of Tokyo University, becoming Professor of Anatomy in 1944 and Professor Emeritus in 1962. He was also a Professor at Juntendo University (Medical History) from 1962. In 1951 he received a Japan Academy Prize and he was elected to the Academy in 1966. Professor Ogawa published the first catalogue of toothed whales in Japanese waters in 1936–37. In 1946 he helped to establish the Whales Research Institute, which was to become a notable centre of cetacean research; he was one of its directors until 1960. Throughout this period he worked on the anatomy and histology of cetaceans, sending his students to join the Japanese Antarctic whaling fleet (usually as ships' doctors) to study the anatomy of whales and collect specimens. He and his students were responsible for a long series of papers in the Scientific Reports of the Institute.

I thank Hideo Omura for his help in preparing this note.

S. G. Brown

KONSTANTIN SERGEYEVICH BADIGIN died on 16 March 1984, age 73. He achieved fame as the captain of the icebreaking steamer *Georgiy Sedov* during her famous drift of 1937–40. Together with two other ships of similar capacity, *Sadko* and *Malygin*, she was caught in the ice of the Laptev Sea in the autumn of 1937, and drifted across the Arctic Ocean, roughly following the course of *Fram* in the 1890s, until she was released in January 1940. The other two were released in 1938. Badigin was first officer aboard *Sadko* in 1937–38, and then transferred as captain to *Georgiy Sedov*. Although *Sedov's* drift was unintended, largely through Badigin's efforts considerable scientific value was obtained. He was awarded the Order of Lenin and the title Hero of the Soviet Union. He continued his sea-going career in the Red Navy during the war, and afterwards sailed again in Arctic-going ships. In later years he turned his hand to literature, becoming a member of the Union of Writers. He wrote historical novels and stories about the Arctic and the sea. His work attracted quite a wide following, but it was not well regarded by historians.

Terence E. Armstrong

NAOMI UEMARA, the Japanese explorer, aged 42, whose one-man expedition in 1978 reached the North Pole by dog-sledge, was reported lost during his return from a solitary climb on Mt McKinley, Alaska, in February 1984.