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Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson

## Eskimo Seeks to Block Confirmation Of Hickel as Secretary of Interior

AN ESKIMO named Charlie Edwardson, wearing a shirt but no jacket, has been calling on Senators about the new Secretary of the Interior, Walter J. Hickel, now Governor of Alaska. Edwardson wears no jacket because he finds it hot in Washington offices, and of course the 30-degree weather here is a lot warmer than the 50-below weather at Point Barrow where he lives.

Charlie Edwardson is in Washington to protect Eskimo land from the encroachment of oil companies and to challenge the confirmation of Wally Hickel as Secretary of the Interior.

Edwardson doesn't think Hickel, an oil and gas man himself, will be impartial regarding Eskimo land. Already Hickel has announced that he would remove the freeze Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall has put on the distribution of land until Congress can act.

"The north slope of Alaska is 58 million acres—about the size of Pennsylvania," explained Edwardson. "It contains some of the richest oil lands in the world. Gov. Hickel has estimated the present oil strike



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at five to ten billion barrels, but other estimates of the surrounding area go up to 40 billion barrels.

"The Eskimo has been hunting and fishing on this land for hundreds of years," continued Edwardson. "Then the white man comes along and wants to take it because of oil. All the white man thinks about is oil. It was the Eskimo who showed the white man oil seeps in 1923, and after that the Navy set aside an oil reserve.

"The State of Alaska has 103 million acres given it by the Federal Government under statehood. And the State selected a block of land at Point Lay, down here," Edwardson pointed to the map. "It's the best polar bear hunting in the world

and also has excellent coal deposits—about 80 billion tons of coal in about 200,000 acres along the coast."

POLAR BEARS, Charlie said, are getting scarcer in Alaska.

"You hunt them by airplane," he explained. "So you can't lose. You fly around until you see a bear. If you're a bad shot, your guide will shoot it for you. It costs you about \$2500 per bear.

"Let Hickel have his oil," said Edwardson, "but we want to collect a royalty on it when it's taken from our hunting lands. They'll take oil the way they took gold and there'll be nothing left. The white man makes a killing, and then he leaves.

"When one Eskimo lady, Lucy Ahvakana, went up to her summer fishing camp on the north slope last summer, she found that Sinclair Oil had taken over her shack and was using her home for storage. Sinclair had built an air strip nearby, which of course will scare away all the game.

"How long must we sit by while creeping wolves sneak away our territory?" Charlie asked.

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