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THE EASTERN ARCTIC PATROL

It's E.A.P. time again.

A changing north, used now to the crackling of radio and the roar of aircraft, is preparing for what is still the greatest event of the year in many settlements: the 37th annual Eastern Arctic Patrol, which left Montreal June 27 aboard the Canadian Government Ship "C.D. Howe".

Taking administrators, doctors, nurses, scientists, welfare workers, police, a post master and a school inspector on a 10,000-mile voyage through ice-strewn waters as far north as Grise Fiord, 700 miles beyond the Arctic Circle, the Eastern Arctic Patrol remains the chief link with many remote communities. It is also the most effective way of providing some 2,500 Eskimos with complete medical examinations and a chance to talk over their needs with the people responsible for their welfare.

The "C.D. Howe" will visit some 28 settlements, drop vital supplies all along its route and transport three Eskimo families from Port Harrison to new hunting grounds at Grise Fiord, where they will join other former Port Harrison people who have been in the High Arctic for some years.

The ship is to return early in October.

A 12-man medical team from the Department of National Health and Welfare will give chest X-rays, physical and dental check-ups and inoculations to all Eskimos within reach.

Educational and recreational films with sound-tracks in the Eskimo language will be shown to Eskimos who come from their distant

camps to the ship. Photographs and tape-recorded messages from relatives in hospitals in Southern Canada will also be delivered. Pictures will be taken and voice messages recorded in answer to these greetings.

Northern Affairs officers will go ashore in every port to discuss community business with residents.

A number of ex-patients from sanatoria and hospitals outside the Arctic will be repatriated and new patients picked up en route wherever they are found. The "Howe's" Eskimo quarters were enlarged last year to accommodate 42 patients.

Eskimos returning north on the "Howe" will be able to produce handicrafts and make carvings from a supply of materials on board.

Robbed of its uniqueness by modern communications, the Eastern Arctic Patrol is nevertheless a part of life in the north, and a sense of drama still attends each voyage as it did three quarters of a century ago.

The first Patrol was made aboard the steamship "Neptune" in 1884, four years after Great Britain transferred control over the Arctic Islands to Canada. The ship did not travel beyond Hudson Strait, where it investigated magnetic conditions.

Several expeditions followed, but a regular series of Patrols was not begun until 1903 when Norwegian explorers challenged Canadian sovereignty over the Arctic.

After World War I permanent settlements of white men gradually dotting the Arctic created

(Over)