

ESKIMO WRITES CHILD'S STORY

The first piece of creative fiction written by an Eskimo for Eskimo children has just come off the press. Leah Illauq, a 23-year-old girl from Pond Inlet on northern Baffin Island, tells a story much like a tale from Eskimo mythology of a polar bear that incubates the egg of an Arctic tern. When the egg hatches, a small polar bear with wings crawls out of the shell. Illustrated with pen and ink sketches by the author, the booklet, entitled *Imiroutailakulu Nanuaalullu* (The Little Arctic tern and the Big Polar Bear), will be distributed to Eskimo children throughout the north.

NEW SPELLING SYSTEM

"The imaginative little story is the first of many that we hope will be written by Eskimos for their own enjoyment," said Northern Affairs Minister Walter Dinsdale. "The story has another purpose, too, for it introduces a new standard orthography - which is actually a common tool kit of symbols (letters) to be used by Eskimos to express themselves in their own dialect. Once the new system of writing is learned, one of the dialects will probably emerge as a standard literary Eskimo language."

A specialist in linguistics, Dr. Raymond Gagne, has played a major role in developing the system, in co-operation with the Welfare Division of the Department of Northern Affairs. "Key sounds in the Eskimo tongue are represented by roman letters,"

Dr. Gagne explains. "This does away with the need for Eskimo syllabic typewriters and letter presses. Greenland Eskimos will also be able to understand much of the story and we expect to send them a supply of booklets."

AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND

Miss Illauq is mostly self-educated and has always had a keen interest in reading and writing. At an early age, she moved north from Pond Inlet to Resolute on Cornwallis Island, where she persuaded residents to allow her to work as a teacher's aide in the one-room school that had been built by the community. She helped at the school for nearly three years. Her father is the well-known Eskimo hunter, Josephie Illauq, who is now teaching members of the Royal Canadian Air Force how to build igloos in the four corners of the Arctic as part of their survival training.

In 1961, Miss Illauq came to Ottawa and joined the Welfare Division. She was one of a group of Eskimos who were introduced to the new system of writing.

"I studied it for about a month before I used it," says Leah, who had previously written her dialect in syllabics used in the Eastern Arctic. "It is easy to understand and use."

Miss Illauq's story is the first of a series of original booklets that is planned to help teach the new standard orthography to the Eskimo people.

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CANADIAN LOCOMOTIVES TO MEXICO

A \$16.1 million sale of Canadian diesel-electric locomotives to Mexico was announced recently by Mr. George Hees, the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The sale was made possible through financing facilities provided by the Canadian Government and administered by the Export Credits Insurance Corporation.

The order for the supply of 80 locomotives to National Railways of Mexico was obtained by the Montreal Locomotive Works. The Canadian General Electric Company Limited will supply the major electrical components. Other main sub-suppliers include Canadian Westinghouse Company, Hart Battery Company (1957) Limited, and Adanac Supplies Limited.

Montreal Locomotive Works estimate that the transaction will provide 1.5 million man-hours of work for their own plant and a number of Canadian sub-suppliers. The company also announces that their production facilities are being expanded to meet this order. Whereas they formerly produced the locomotive body only, they will now undertake the production of the diesel engines as well.

REVAMPING MEXICO'S RAILROADS

The order is part of Mexico's long-range plan for the rehabilitation of its railroads. Montreal Locomotive Works believe the present order should establish them as a supplier in the Mexican market and open

the door for future locomotive sales as Mexico progresses with its rehabilitation project, which calls for the eventual dieselization of its entire railway system.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Claimants for unemployment insurance benefit numbered 374,200 on November 30, 1962, up 130,000 from October 31 but about 12,000 below the 386,000 claimants reported on November 30, 1961. Male claimants increased by 110,000, while the number of female claimants was about 20,000 greater than at the end of October. The year-over-year decline occurred in the male segment of the claimant group only. Some 12,000 of the current claimants were identified as seasonal benefit in comparison with 15,000 on November 30, 1961.

Initial and renewal claims numbered 243,600 during November, compared to 150,400 in October and 252,600 in November 1961.

The average weekly estimate of beneficiaries was 189,000 in November, 152,900 in October and 209,800 in November 1961. Benefit payments totalled \$18.9 million during November compared to \$15.8 million during October and \$20.9 million during November 1961. The average weekly payment a week compensated was \$23.85 in November, \$23.42 in October and \$23.76 in November 1961.