

## letters

### Responds to Hammond's address

The Honorable Jay Hammond  
Governor of Alaska  
Governor's Office  
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Governor Hammond:

It was with avid interest that I perused and studied your address to the state regarding your "haul road plan." Equally interesting was the article "Should John Q. Public Cross The Yukon River Bridge?" Both the article and your address appearing in the 18 January 1978 issue of the Tundra Times, which I received this afternoon.

Like the "pipeline" the haul road issue is one of great significance to all Alaskans. As in the pipeline issue there are worthy advocates pro and con on the haul road issue. On the one side are the Eskimos, In-

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dians, Aleuts, and environmentalists pointing out, and rightly so, that there is a viable need to protect the subsistence rights of the Natives and to protect the fragile wilderness environment from terminal abuse while on the other hand private business, huge conglomerates wishing to take advantage of the abundant natural resources, and the government pointing out the need, again, rightly so, to exploit the natural resources for the benefit of all who live within the state and to contribute to the overall "national interest" (these natural resources, of course, include the development of state and private recreational facilities along and within the boundaries adjacent to the haul road).

In following this issue over the years I've noted one particular common factor both sides are generally immediately concerned with: what's happening right now. That is until I read your address to the issue.

All of the people of the state

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should realize one thing; that, based on the purely pragmatic approach, it is empirically proven the Great State of Alaska will be completely open to the public within the foreseeable future.

By "completely open" I mean that the general public (which by necessity includes the "dreaded" tourists) will have access to traditional subsistence grounds of the Natives, use of the highways and byways of rural Alaska (wreaking havoc on the quite fragile tundra with their ATVs), use of the "untamed" rivers by powered and nonpowered boats, and all the rest of it.

And along with the people who move into Alaska to make it their home and the tourists they'll bring their "pollution" with them. We've all seen this happen in the lower 48 because of lack of proper and adequate controls (or lack of enforceable controls) to protect the

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peoples and the environment. One of the most glaring examples of the lack of controls, or enforceable controls, in the lower 48 is the loss of the Great Lakes on the East Coast. For all practical purposes those lakes have been destroyed by civilian and industrial pollution.

Question: Do we want this to happen to any part of our beautiful state? Answer: No? Resoundingly and emphatically, "NO!"?

I believe, Sir, that the only way the Natives and non-Natives of Alaska can assure us that these things won't happen is to work together for common goals. The immediate problems faced by the Natives must be met now to preserve their traditional and cultural way of life. The immediate problems of the state must be met. Resolution of these problems for the benefit of all can be met by working together. What's so hard about that: common interests and common goals by everyone is for the benefit of all.

It should be obvious to everyone alike that the pipeline and the haul road are but mere forerunners of more difficult problems fast coming up the "technological road." And being aware of this they should be more pragmatic about their situation and work for the common good.

I appreciate the things you are accomplishing for my home and I'm sure your other

"Friends" do too. I'll even bet that under their breaths your opponents and enemies are saying "That damned Jay Hammond is doing a good job."

Looking to the future, Walk In Peace.

Respectively Your Humble

Servant,

William A. Tahl

(A concerned Eskimo)

cc: Tundra Times