

# Letters from Here and There

## Stickman Has Running Battle With City Taxes

Nulato, Alaska  
June 23, 1975

Mister Howard Rock, Tundra Times  
Editor:

After leaving Galbraith Lake on the North Slope I came to Fairbanks, bought a boat with outboard motor for \$2,300.00. That's when I started arguing with the salesman who charged me city tax. He said if I shipped it, no tax. I said it's the same thing if I leave with it. But I didn't win. I paid the city tax.

When I reached Nenana, I had to pay city tax there, even, on a newspaper. Then I took it out on the poor girls at the check counter.

I reached Tanana where I had to pay more city tax. Then I had to take it out on the poor girls again at the counter.

I reached Ruby. No tax there. But when I got to Galena, it got worse. I bought a pair of canvas gloves for \$1.25. The girl asked me for four cents. That's when I got mad at the village of Galena and I took it out on the women.

If she charged me \$2.00 I wouldn't have said a word. Then I went up two miles out of the village to Huhndorf store. Then I had to pay tax there for the city. That's when I really blew my top. I was actually the one who started Galena. I moved West Ruby to Galena in 1941. The city should pay me instead of me paying city tax.

I asked what the tax was for and where the money was going. I walked down to the Yukon Inn restaurant and bar, and every time a car passed me, I'm eating dust on the road. And lot of people working on fishwheels. It looks like a fish camp instead of a city.

Also heard everybody bought license for fishing but you have to pull your net out every Friday night. No fishing Saturday and Sunday, so no fresh fish to eat Saturday and Sunday. That's the law now.

If the Fish and Wildlife tell these guys to jump in the river, I guess they'd do it. But not me. I'm the only one that's trying to stop these foolish laws they make for us for years.

But now I give up. I sold and gave away my two nets so I wouldn't fight with the law. I'll just sit here on the riverbank and watch the fish go by. I'll let the Fish and Wildlife eat all the fish. I'm tired of law and I'm tired of living.

I went to Galena for the 800-mile boat race. One hundred seventeen passengers from Fairbanks and people from all over. Everybody was happy, celebrating. Me, sitting there in the dance hall till 4 in the morning wondering what a man like me is living for at 69 years. A man should be lucky and six feet underground. At 69 you have one foot in the grave and one foot on a banana peel.

The only way I could beat the city tax at Galena I went to work for BLM so I could get some free C rations but we got laid off. I worked five days. It was good for long as it lasted. I also cut two cords of wood to get me in shape and also to quit burning oil so I wouldn't have to buy those extra drums again, but I sold the wood to someone that needs it more than I do. I'm still a little young and active yet for a pioneer's home, but I was wondering when they're going to build one around here. Maybe when they finish all the schools.

I hope to go back to work after the heavy run of fish. That's the 20th of July.

I finally got one Tundra Times and I didn't see my name in there. Nobody wants to say hello, even you in Tundra Times.

I have not much lead in my pencil.  
Fred Stickman, Sr.

## Consideration

June 25, 1975  
Box 368  
Bethel, Alaska 99559

Gentlemen:

Rather than that Alaska secede from the union, as is sometimes suggested, I propose an alternative for consideration: that the people of Alaska make of our state, its material and human resources and geography, a planetary endowment.

This endowment would be a token before the world that we are prepared, here where the Old World reaches the New, to attempt new forms of organization to deal with the future. The Last geographical Frontier, is this among the first of another kind of frontier?

Working in accord with the people of Yukon, the NWT, and perhaps with Siberia, Greenland and Scandinavia—areas linked by climate, geography and blood—we may devise a transnational circumpolar ethic. Retaining a mutually advantageous relation with the U.S., we would not be bound to adopt U.S. government policy.

The endowment would be free to establish relations with any foreign nation, and its first allegiance would be not to any historical national government, nor to any state or group of persons—but to the land itself, (the original endowment of all civilized life, tided over to us by higher law). This would have the effect of giving the land, the environment, the planet, legal standing in international law. It could secure to us a refreshing set of priorities; and it would increase trust worldwide, for our use of land intimates our use of one another.

Since the Arctic world is located at the convergence of all longitudes it would represent a focus for a gradual reconditioning of our political and economic relations. If an endowment proved practical, the notion might spread outward as an ideal. Thus, while nations retained nationhood as an administrative and social convulgence, the overall impulse of their energies might be released to supranational, regional, and global efforts to discover the prosperity of all and the degradation of none.

Peace,  
Guy C. Burneko  
Bethel

## Alternative for