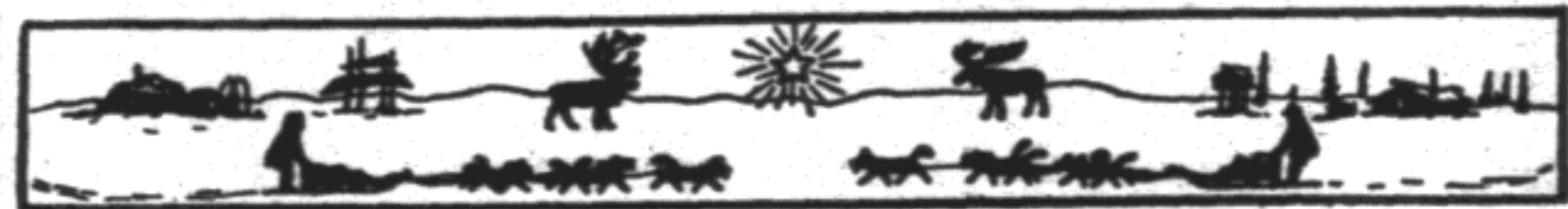


"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Editorial—

Ill-timed Dismissal

James W. Thomas, public relations chief for the Alaska Federation of Natives, has been asked to resign by the officialdom of the native statewide organization. Thomas has served in that capacity for the past five months.

There are always mixed reactions when such things happen in an important organization. Initial reactions to this one seem to lean toward the opinion that Jim Thomas' dismissal will be a serious setback for the federation. No one is faultless in any field, including the AFN PR chief, but with his resignation, AFN will have shed itself of a most dynamic assistance it has had since its inception. Before Thomas came on the scene the organization through the years of its existence has tended to be reticent, almost too uncommunicative with the native people it served.

When Jim Thomas was appointed, AFN actually became alive. The native people began to become more acquainted with the efforts of the organization. It was good for the folks to see their own statewide group doing things they could perceive—to learn of what it was doing from week to week and to be able to evaluate the efforts of their leaders. This was the way it should have been always because the AFN was their own organization—their own federation made up of those native men and women they voted for to serve them. It was only right that they knew about the efforts for the betterment of their situations.

AFN officials said the reason for asking Jim Thomas to resign was lack of funds. Surely the PR chief spent money, perhaps a little too much at times, but he also got results. He also used his talents to get more money to fund the efforts of his office.

Asked to resign a day after he returned from New York and Washington, D.C. last week, Jim Thomas had this to say:

"... I have just returned from New York and Washington, D.C. and indications are that substantial more funding will be forthcoming to the Public Awareness Program of the AFN and indications are that the next three weeks are the most crucial in the 1970 land claims settlement effort. However, the finances appear to be available..."

As of March 15, the Public Awareness Program of the AFN will be "abolished," as the federation office said. It seems to us that it is the most importune time to do such a thing. Anything that will replace the AFN PR office will have to be a good one. The native people should demand that it be. If there is a chance that it would not measure up, perhaps it might be a prime idea for Jim Thomas and the officials and the board of directors of the AFN to talk the thing over thoroughly and iron out the difficulties that have been experienced. We feel this is worth trying. To change horses in midstream, especially at this particular time, can be damaging.

Churches Back Revenue Sharing

The Alaska Council of Churches, meeting in Kotzebue the last of February, went on record in support of State revenue sharing in the settlement of the native land claims issue and liberalized abortion laws.

The resolution on native land claims called for a just and equitable settlement that would include a cash grant, a grant of land, and an over-riding royalty on sub-surface mineral resources of the state.

The Alaska Council of Churches, with member communions including the American Baptists, Disciples of Christ, United Presbyterian, Episcopal, Lutheran Church in America, United Methodist and the Salvation Army, has adopted resolutions of support for the land claims settlement of the claims from the National Council of Churches in December.

The national council represents the major Protestant and Orthodox bodies of the United States with a membership over 44 million persons.

On the subject of abortion, the Alaska Council voiced support for legislation to provide for legally constituted therapeutic abortion boards and a review of applications for abortions performed prior to the 20th week of pregnancy.

Liberal abortion proposals—with and without a statewide referendum—were narrowly defeated in the Senate Wednesday, but it was reported that plans were being made to introduce a new version.

The defeated bill would have made abortion a matter of medical practice until the 16th week of pregnancy and required approval of a hospital abortion committee after that. Present law prohibits abortion unless it is "necessary to preserve the life" of the mother.

In its statement, the Council said, "As Christians we should work for the day where every child will be born into a home where he is wanted and where there are adequate resources to help him develop into the full human being that God intended him to be... it is more immoral to allow the birth of a child into certain circumstances than it is to permit an abortion."

"It cannot be denied that the fetus is a form of human life, but weighing this with the value of the mother and the consequences

of a deformed or unwanted child himself, the greater love is served by permitting therapeutic abortions."

In other action, the assembly authorized the appointment and funding of a special study committee to examine the possible restructuring of the Alaska Council of Churches for a broader and more effective ministry.

The body also approved the co-sponsorship and funding for a team of college students from the University of Alaska who

will participate in a service project in a rural Alaskan village in late May.

A special scholarship fund that will bring children from remote Alaskan villages to urban areas of the state for a full week's camping experience was also authorized by the council. The special fund was made possible by a Christmas offering from Elmendorf AFB Chapels.

The next annual assembly of the council will be held in Sitka, Jan. 18-21, 1971.

Letters to the Editor

Russian Orthodox Diocese Says Armistead Not Member of Clergy

Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church
Diocese of Sitka and Alaska
Box 697
Sitka, Alaska 99835
March 3, 1970

Dear Sir:

It was with interest that we noted the letter of Rev. Elias J. Armistead in the February 27th issue of the Tundra Times.

This letter is forwarded to you to make clear to all your readers that Father Armistead is not a member of the clergy of this diocese nor is he affiliated in any way with the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sitka and Alaska.

Therefore, the opinions which he expressed in his letter should not be understood, in any way, to reflect the position of this Diocese in regards to the question under discussion.

Father Armistead speaks for himself, which is his obvious right. He does not, however, speak for the administration, clergy or any official of the Diocese of Sitka and Alaska.

Yours Sincerely,
Rev. Michael T. Irvin,
Secretary of the Diocese

Armistead Taken to Task

532 East 9th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
March 3, 1970

Dear Editor:

This is in answer to Elias J. Armistead's letter to the Editor of February 27, 1970, in the Tundra Times.

Mr. Emil Notti made it very plain when he spoke at Tacoma, that when he mentioned a possible separate Native State, he was speaking for himself. He said it was not discussed by the Board of Directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Mr. Emil Notti has been and is a dedicated man to the Native cause. This means all the Natives of Alaska.

You, as a priest, may mention that our Jesus may return tomorrow. Will your saying this make it so?

We still have freedom of speech even though sometimes it seems to be hanging by a tenuous thread.

Where did the Israelites originate, Mr. Armistead?

What do you stand for, Mr. Armistead?

Sincerely,
Mrs. Alice E. Brown

Fred Stickman Bawls Out Times Editor

Nulato, Alaska
March 5, 1970

Dear Friend:

I just wanted to remind you how come you have white man's picture in Tundra Times. I thought you said the paper was Indian-Eskimo paper. You know just as well as I do what the white people, some of them think about us poor Indians and Eskimos. I told you I wanted to run myself but I don't see my mug face on there yet. Maybe I haven't got the money or I'm not smart enough.

I been beat for 63 years, I should know something by now, but no one wants to listen to me.

The airfield here at Nulato is up on top of the hill two miles. It was built 1938 but they didn't finish it because the upper end was permafrost, so it's still on a slope. At that time I worked two weeks cutting brush. Everybody worked two weeks except the operators.

Two years ago I got a job as foreman to fix it. At the upper end where permafrost was 14 feet deep. We hauled dirt with wheelbarrows and filled the ditches, cut brush, same with the road. The road was nothing but muck. I fixed it by hand for \$2.00 an hour, and you talk about mosquitoes and gnats. They almost ate us alive.

The white people don't even want to give us our land back. They know we own it. That's how much they think of us. I know a lot of them kind. I worked with lot of them all my life. Everytime I get a foreman's job, they got no use for me. I don't blame them. They're jealous same way about our land. That's the reason they don't want to settle right away. They're just stalling us. In the long run they can't win and they know it.

—Fred Stickman

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Fred, when you're in Fairbanks again drop in to our office and we'll make special effort to take a good picture of you. If you have a good picture of you at home, I wish you'd send us one. We don't have one in our picture file so that's why we haven't run your picture. Many of our readers want to know what you look like.)

Bethel IMC Gets Film on 'Man on Moon'

The Instructional Materials Center at Bethel has recently received "The Man on the Moon," a multi-media set published by the New York Times.

In the set are three filmstrips with tapes, two silent 16 mm filmstrips, a tape of conversations with the earth, a paperback book "We Reach the Moon," three special sections from the New York Times, a teaching guide and a slide conversion kit.

Schools interested in the set should send in a regular IMC loan form giving first and alternate dates for use.

Schools are requested to use the film on the day or the day after it is received and to send it to the next village on the very next mail plane.

Every reform, however necessary, will be weak minds be carried to an excess, that itself will need reforming.

—COLERIDGE

War never slays a bad man in its course, But the good always!

—Sophocles

WANTED: Chilkat Blankets, totem poles, ivory pipes and carvings; argillite carvings; pot-latch bowls; fish hooks; spoons and all N.W. items 50 years of age or older. Send photo or sketch and prices to: Albert T. Miller, 2235 West Live Oak Drive, Los Angeles, California 90028.