

Letters

To the Editor:

SHALAK NAIL "MY PEOPLE" IN GWICHIN DIALECT.

I want to talk about Independence; Independent means: 1. self-governing. 2. not requiring or relying on something or somebody else. 3. showing self-reliance (in mind). 4. not committed to a political party. 5. refusing or disliking to look to others for help. 6. freedom in four wind.

Before 1971 or before the food stamp, G.A. ENERGY ASSIST., and welfare "we" used to be self-sufficient (meeting our own needs, instead of welfare meeting our needs) people.

For some, all those are just a memory of past, forgotten because of unknown thing came into our world or our life.

Let me tell you how life used to be when I was growing up; as far as I can remember we used to go hunting or fishing every summer, nearby the village or 40-50 mile away. All of our families pile into one boat, with all our belonging. Our family's boat was 30 foot wooden boat, it has to be patch up every spring before the ice go out on river, in order to stay afloat. It was power by 10 h.p. Johnson; it is a slow moving machine today but at that time it was like a 50 h.p. to me. How happy we were to get back to our old fish camp. Once again fish for white fish, sheefish, pike, and dry or smoke them. When they are nice and fat. Or once again set rabbit snare or trap for fat ground squirrel around the camp. Or us kids just to play on fresh grass and fresh flowers. Once again en-

joy independent living as our father, grandparents, and our ancestor has done for thousand of years. Yes, at the same time we hunt muskrats and ducks, my father would go out early in the morning when the muskrat are bathing in the morning sun. He used a .22 rifle to shoot them. He also would set trap along the shore. Sometime I would go with him in our small, reliable canoe, I would be sitting in the back listening to my father whispering quiet words like, 'keep quiet,' or 'don't move around too much.' It was a happy place to be for us children because we were brought up in that kind of living.

All these mean so much to us because this is our way of living, our way of being happy. You and I know soon all these will be just memory, or they will be destroy by alcohol, drugs, and money, because money is the roots of all evils, if you don't control it wisely. That is the reason for the special AFN conference. That meeting is for one or two reason only, and that is to keep alive the sovereignty, or keep the tradition way of life. If we want to stay alive, we will have to divorce alcohol, drugs, because they are all evil things. They are a stumbling block to our living and to our way of life. The only way to get out of this situation is by turning to "GOD" for guidance, because wisdom come from "GOD," knowledge come from "GOD," life come from "GOD," prosperity come from "GOD." The only reason for all the problem is that we have wander far away from "GOD." He gave us this land to live on, to take care of it

by the wisdom and knowledge He gave us in time past. Let us not destroy what GOD has given us, let us not destroy them by alcohol, drugs, and greediness. You and I know, if we keep on drinking, keep on using drugs we will be hopeless people in 1991, few of us will make it, and succeed. But many of us will be hurt badly. So let's unite like loving families and turn to GOD for guidance and help.

And lastly, but not the last from me. I want to give you all a word of hope from "GOD." Because I love you all and have a strong burden for all people, rich or poor, Native or non-Native. Now a word of hope from GOD our creator, even President Ronald Reagan quoted or read this scripture to the people of U.S., But the news people never put (critic) it out on newspaper or T.V. And I quote this scripture and is found in II Chronicles 7:14 in Old Testament; "If my people will humble themselves and pray, and search for me and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear them from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land."

One more thing, year ago when our grandparents were chief and council they used to pray to GOD for guidance and strength for future prosperity. Let us remember our grandparents who used to look to God for guidance, let us also look to GOD for guidance. Thank you for reading this letter. May GOD bless us and all other races of people.

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