

Letters to the Editor

Feb. 9, 1969

Dear Editor:

Just because my Mom and Dad couldn't speak a word of English and I had a little schooling, that's when I was going to school, I thought I was smart and I knew more than them. This is how dumb I was.

They always respect the old people and help the old, then you will live as long as them. Listen to the old people. This is what some of them say, "Gee, you're getting fat, pot-bellied, Gee, look at your hair, When you going to retire?" Some of them old men, etc. I don't think I'm old yet as long as I'm working.

Last time I saw my Dad was in March one month before he passed away. I remember I just got married, my wife was 100 miles away that morning in March. That time of the year you have to travel early while the snow is hard. Soon as the sun gets up it warms up and hard and and slow going.

So I was up early, had breakfast. As I was putting on my mocassins, my Dad started talking to me. This how smart he was:

"Son, you going to be in trouble a lot after I pass away. This might be the last time you see me. You will be arrested quite a few times but not to stay in jail. You're going to live a long time. You're going to make a lot of money but you won't save any. This is how you are going to have a long life. If you get rich, the money will kill you. Your wife won't live long. Your brother won't live long, but you will live long.

"So I don't care how much schooling you have don't think you're better than someone."

Experience is the best teacher. Think I'll make a good teacher.

When you build all the schools, don't forget to build a pioneer home for the Indians, especially.

I'm paying tax now—one third of my wages.

—FRED STICKMAN

February 11, 1969

Dear Mr. Rock:

I have been trying to keep up with the changes taking place since the past two years or so. I know that there are encouraging changes among our native people in all three areas of life—economy, politics, and organization.

Subjectively, I would like to explain some new things that might be good to know and be aware of. These "things" could happen if they are not happening today:

1) "Land Freeze" has become one of our topics, which reflects our thinking, and our future setting. One must not forget that land freeze could go on for another decade, and certain things could happen to Natives in the following way:

a) long duration of land freeze could cause Natives and their leaders to break down, or "quit" trying to get their land back, and thus, help some others to lease or sell any land to any speculator. This may be what a speculator is waiting for.

b) taking land piece by piece by any speculator could trigger a sudden large sectional leasing or selling until any group of Natives and their leaders come to break down, or given no chance. This is starting.

2) Thinking now in terms of the future, awareness of certain expectations is what all natives should keep in mind. Once an action starts, it should not be given up if helpful.

3) Some things that are told to be helpful to any native group are sometimes negating which result in unbeneficial manner.

What we are doing today with our own native population is a moral issue, whether it be in education, or land claims. Also, this transition among our native population is the part of the universal movement of the minority groups in the world. It is the law of today.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Name on File