

Letters from Here and There

Native cut off from federal benefits?

January 14, 1977

Dear Editor:

Well, I finally got the low down on what's in store for the Natives. I am, sorry to say there are a lot of people who are misleading the interpretation of Land Claims Settlement Act. No the government knew all along that the Natives were not given full title of the land, they never will. They the government will get the land back when all the Natives have to pay property tax. Sure they promise the Natives, forty million acres—Ok suppose they do. How in the h—do you Natives think that we will pay property, and if we don't pay taxes on property. We naturally lose all the land to Internal Revenue Service. Only thing we look for is tax free land and free choice of selection of land. This is known as reservation. Naturally we don't want that.

But the point is we have choice of accepting that or be cut off from all federal benefits. Including, and from Bureau of Indian Affairs, always remember that we as Natives, have far less rights as the Blacks or other minority groups.

I am writing at the conclusion of this letter to the Secretary of Interior. Don't worry I will not bring up the issue of reservations in Alaska. Although there is no doubt in my mind that there will eventually be one. Only sad thing about the whole d— set up is that people don't seem to realize the future plans of the Dept. of Interior.

All I could say is more power to those who have their hands in cookie jar. For tomorrow might be too late.

I have been in this world 53 years, and in last thirty years the Natives, have been permitted into the bars. I remember when I was young. There were signs all along Second Avenue that: No Natives permitted on where any kind of alcoholic beverages is served. There have been many changes these lot of Natives have lost what little pride they had. Look around!

There are too d— many welfare agencies. I see down at the Tanana Chiefs Social Service where young man asking for welfare assistance. And if you ask the young man why he is not working he usually say there is no work. That's a d— lie. Because at the time pipeline was going full blast. Yet the young man seems to give me positive reason why he's not working. As soon as he gets his check from the agencies. He goes directly to the bar. This type of welfare assistance we could do without?

Well so much for this and that. I will close with this little phrase: Be thankful you have seen the Sun rise today. For tomorrow there might not be no Sun for all of us.

Signed

Gilford

AVCP has fish and game concerns

January 11, 1977

Governor Jay Hammond
Office of the Governor
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Governor Hammond:

The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) has to our knowledge the only functioning fish and game organization in the rural areas of the state. Because of the dependence of our region on fish and game our village presidents have allocated the major part of the funds coming to this region for the advocacy cash poor peoples to be spent in the areas of fish and game.

This program has led to the formation of fisheries boards on both the Lower Yukon and Kuskokwim whose representatives were selected at public meetings within the villages represented by the specific fisheries organization. These individuals were selected because the villagers believed the individual selected to be most qualified and willing to represent the village on fish and game matters. Through this constant attention to fish and game these groups decided that they were capable of participating in the state fish and game advisory board system. You are well aware that the system designed to allow rural peoples to participate in the Boards of fish and game decision making has never worked in Rural Alaska.

It is with dismay that I am

writing this letter to you now concerning the recent actions by the boards of fish and game in selecting the original 5 members in the lower Yukon and lower Kuskokwims advisory boards. The Boards selected around the nominees of the subregional fisheries groups and the AVCP which supported these nominees. We believe that the board acted out of ignorance and without proper input from individuals familiar with our region. The feedback we have received from our villages who have attempted to work within the regulatory process is one of confusion and mistrust. We would like immediate attention on this matter.

Sincerely,

AVCP, INC.

Edward Hoffman, President

Carl Jack

Executive Director

BIA leftovers ...

c/o General Delivery
Emmonak, Alaska 99581

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at the Emmonak Elementary School. We are a "new" school, the state having taken over the old B.I.A. school here. Among the "leftovers" given us by the B.I.A. was an incomplete series of the Alaskan Reading Series (1973). I am using the series and enjoying it very much. As the school is beginning to build its curriculum and considering a new reading series (that is a complete series—at this point we have only bit and pieces) I would like to know as much as possible about the Alaskan Readers.

Gregg P. Johnson