

Letters from Here and There

TT Agitates Racial Tension Says Writer

INUPIAK DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION, INC.

15 June 1972

Mr. Howard Rock
Editor: Tundra Times
Box 1287
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Dear Sir:

Since you invited comments regarding the Kotzebue situation mentioned in Tundra Times June 7 issue, here are some.

According to the article written by Jane Pender and the subsequent reply by Bobby Schaeffer regarding interracial relations in Kotzebue, it would seem that racial tensions are on the rise there. Both the article and the reply were pretty vague in several areas but from all appearances the argument seems to be more on a personal level involving two people rather than full-scale race warfare as your glaring headlines suggest. From personal experience in the area and knowledge of the parties involved I have seen nothing to indicate that "racism is stirring in Kotzebue."

Your reporter quotes a "bush traveler" who says that at least "one white businessman is carrying a gun in his car." You qualify this particular quote as second-hand yet you include it in the article anyway. The fact is that many people in Kotzebue as well as many parts of rural

Alaska, white and Eskimo alike, have carried guns in their cars for years for hunting purposes only. Certainly Miss Morgan knows this and she should not have included it to substantiate her allegation that trouble exists in Kotzebue.

The format of the Tundra Times, has in the past been marked by attempts to agitate racial relations in bush areas but this kind of dangerous sensationalism can do nothing but create tensions where none existed before. I trust that despite this issue the great majority of Kotzebueites will continue to live harmoniously.

In the future it would be wise to relegate a personal argument of this nature to a minor level where it belongs; stop implying that armed warfare is imminent in a peaceful town.

Sincerely yours,
Thomas Trainor

Natives Involved, Charges of Prejudice Begin

Box 156
White Pine, Mich. 44971
June 15, 1972

Gentlemen:

I have just read the two articles by Jane Pender and Bob Schaeffer. I went to school with Bob and know his relationships with whites was very good. I am proud and pleased to learn he is Mayor of Kotzebue. I am pleasantly surprised because how many Eskimo mayors are there? Hooray and loads of luck for Bob. It is unusual for Natives to get so involved with politics. I am glad we are finally taking a hand with our destinies.

Isn't it strange that when the Whites were in power there were no sad and trembling sighs of racism heard in the newspapers? Now that we are getting involved and naturally our first commitment is to our people, we are accused of prejudice! We have improved and advanced, I feel, more quickly and more meaningfully because our own people are working for us and understand our true needs.

Bob and I and others like us owe a lot to Whites and will always be grateful. The White people who truly understand and want to help are the first to encourage self government and independence. They want us to get in the driver's seat. Natives who love their people can combine their cultures and education to serve Alaskans and I feel are better suited to govern we can give our people pride in being themselves and have their own to govern them, someone who understands and loves them. We

are not White. We are Alaskan Natives who should take pride in our cultures and preserve them. It is important for all people to be proud of their race and to respect all other races. We can all work together for improvements.

Let's throw out all the stupid, whimpering about prejudice and get to important matters.

Barbara Demoski Paquette
Athabascan Indian

Eskimo Olympics Seeks Queens

The Tundra Times is once again looking for a queen. On July 27, 28, and 29 the 1972 Eskimo Olympics will be held in Fairbanks. During the week's festivities, a new Miss Eskimo Olympics Queen will be chosen to reign over the traditional games of strength and endurance and Native dancing.

The queen must be 17 to 21 years of age, single, and at least one-quarter Alaskan Native. The contestants will be competing in Native costumes and will be judged on knowledge of their local area and culture, as well as on beauty, poise, and personality.

Any village, Native association, regional corporation, or Native organization may sponsor a contestant. Entrants must provide their own transportation to and from Fairbanks, but housing and meals will be provided and paid for by the Eskimo Olympics.

Contestants will be met at the airport and taken to the University of Alaska where they will be carefully chaperoned by the queen committee.

Arriving on July 24, the contestants will take part in a program of modeling, speech lessons, hair grooming, and luncheons prior to the judging.

The queen will be awarded a scholarship, prizes, and a trip to Lancaster, California to attend the Antelope Valley Festival and Fair.

Villages and Native organizations are urged to enter a contestant as soon as possible. Complete rules and an application blank will be sent on request. For further information, write:

Chairman
Eskimo Olympics
Queen Committee
P.O. Box 1287
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701