

Letters from Here and There

Stickman for President

Stevens Village, Alaska 99774
Nov. 26, 1973

Mr. Howard Rock,

This is just a suggestion for Mr. Fred Stickman Sr.

Since Mr. Willie Hensley, president of Alaska Federation of Natives, discussed his plans for resigning the presidency, I strongly urge you, Mr. Fred Stickman Sr., to start thinking of running for president for A.F.N.

We need a man like you with the knowledge. I will be a campaigner for you.

Could you imagine a new 1974 Lincoln Continental in front of your home?

You could sit back in your chair, answer the phone, solve some brain problems.

That surely is a good job for a man 66 years old. Get Jimmy Huntington to run for vice president. Talk to him or write, he will help you out. If there isn't anyone willing to help answer your problems, write to Ann Landers.

A friend,
F. B. Stevens

Enrollment Office Hard To Contact

P.O. Box B48584
Represa, Calif. 95671
Re: 0554452063
BRISTOL BAY ASSOC.
At Large

Dear Mr. Rock:

I received verification of my family enrollment on the 21st of November 1973. My sons are enrolled okay. However, there was no mention of my full brother's enrollment. I put him in my claim. How can I find out if he's enrolled if I can't get any answers from any people up there?

I was able to borrow a copy of the Conference Report (Tundra Times, Dec. 17, 1971—can I get you to send me a copy of it) and seen where it said my election vote, and I hope it shall not affect the enrollment of anyone else.

Many things I read in your paper give me hope for our people, Atka, and the Bilingual Prog. was great. The shame of discrimination rests on us older one though. I was beaten in a Catholic school and orphanage for talking Aleut, and now after many years away from the land of my birth I no longer remember my Native language.

Our people's hope lies in our children, along with the land. That was my reason for voting against the 13th Region. The Indians in the lower 48 are a beaten race, this from living too close to the whiteman and his way of life. The "Survival School" by Mary Moses was nice. But these children, including my own, must be taught how to live with the whites. If they don't, our race will never survive.

I have a yearning to be with my own kind. Maybe I've lived with too many tribes down here and know their ways far better than my own people's. With them I've gone to jail for hunting food, not for sport like the white man. Been in towns like Elko, Nev. where Indians sleep on bar-room floors, men and women. This is happening today down in the lower 48. A voice like yours must make our people aware of the dangers ahead.

I am not a racist, Mr. Rock, but my Mother, sister and a brother died from sickness brought to Alaska by whites. I, myself, spent 2½ years in a hospital for TB, as a child.

I've lived with being called a "Siwash, Stinking Indian, etc.", and remember the days when after work, I couldn't get a drink in a bar because even though I an Eskimo, I was a Damn Indian in a whiteman's land—the same land he took from the Indians down here. When will the list of broken Treaties end? With the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act? I think not, but ask my guiding Spirits that it be ended.

Alcoholism, divorce, imprisonment, sickness and death, along with poverty has been the Indian's lot down here, and I will add that it has been the Eskimo's, too. Of the Alaska Natives I know down here a large percent are in prison, myself included. My transfer to Folsom State Prison doubled the Eskimo population here in one day.

The Old Eskimo's letters are wonderful. His description of the whiteman's culture is true. Mine is: The whiteman's civilization (that's disputed as truly civilized people don't act like the whites do) is pure and unadulterated organized madness of man. I have a feeling that Naugga Ciunerput knows more of the whites than he lets on.

My sons will be given their heritage under the Act, formally by their Father Christmas. They are not aware of the meaning of it yet, or what effect this will have on their lives. I put my trust in you People to guard over that heritage by my vote. But, please Mr. Rock, remind all those up north it's their heritage, also.

Our attorney, Richard Baenen warned, "Protect the Land!" He couldn't be more right for that's where our identity is as a separate and distinct race, and as an individual. For the first time in my life, because of the Act I'm finding out and understanding who I am. It's a great feeling. . .

My Eskimo brother here, William A.A. Tahl, and I would like to know if it is possible to get into the Eskimo language course at the University of Alaska? We have heard that one has found its genesis there. We would also like to know if there are any Native-related courses we could take in order to really get back into culture, traditions, language—our Heritage. As you are just "around the corner" from the UA perhaps you can find out if such courses are available to us via correspondence. If they are I can see no reason why the people here would deny us access to them. Please let us know, okay.

In hoping to hear from you soon I remain,
Very truly yours,
John L. Lombard