

letters

Advantage of local govt.

Eben Hopson, Mayor
North Slope Borough
Point Barrow, Alaska 99723

Dear Mayor Hopson:

Your article on Tundra Times concerning formation of strong local governments was interesting. I would think your article would have a tremendous effect on upgrading our subsistence lifestyle by formation of strong local governments in Native communities. In one of the provisions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, it states that our aboriginal rights are extinguished which literally means the end of our subsistence lifestyles. The Act, which became law, would end our dependency on land for survival. We would now have to depend on jobs to survive in our communities. How can you fight back law with strong and wise words? In the end we are losers. It would seem to me that the Governments (Federal and State), are creating laws to end our dependency on land, and there is nothing we can do to fight back these laws. Our Native leaders may have tried everything they can to protect our subsistence lifestyles, but in the end they may not be successful in their efforts.

How can we fight back these laws? In your letter you indicated that the only way to protect our subsistence lifestyles is to form strong local govern-
PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 11 --

● **Local govt.**

—CONTINUED OFF OF PAGE TWO
ments in our communities. As local governing entities, we could pass certain ordinances, laws, and regulations that would upgrade our subsistence lifestyles. For example, "anyone jeopardizing the subsistence lifestyle in the community, boroughs, Native lands, would be fined or be given a jail sentence." These local ordinances would apply to anyone living in the area, Natives or non-Natives.

I would think that the only solution to fight back laws is to create and pass some laws that would protect our Native subsistence lifestyles in our communities.

Lastly, I wish you success in your fight for your Inupiat Whaling Rights.

Sincerely,
Owen Lewis

cc: Tundra Times