

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Editorial Comment—

Disturbing Dissensions

We are getting a little uncomfortable sitting in our corner watching some of our Native entities becoming embroiled in some worrisome bickerings among their own groups. Some of these encounters are within regional corporations as well as other entities within common areas. They may have been well meant in the first blush but were they thoroughly thought out before they were kindled? Were possible alternatives that might work better considered? Were the protagonists of the questions posed aware that dissensions would weaken not only themselves as well as those that were being subjected?

One thing we are sure of — continuing misgivings and doubts will eat into the fibers of strength of the entities involved. Weaker efforts will result and doubts against the protagonists, as well as the antagonists will grow and something significant will have to be done so whatever recognized wrongs can be set right. Otherwise, continuing battles will weaken both sides and distrust will set in among their own people.

The above statement is not a good thing to write about because our Native people at the present time are heavily involved in the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. This is a huge undertaking and its implementation in a proper manner is of utmost importance if our people at the present time and those in the future are to benefit to the best possible extent.

The Native leaders, surely, have recognized the gravity of tasks for their public — the Native people — for whose welfare they are now working. They are also aware, we're sure, that this public is like any other mass of people anywhere else and that it can be aroused if some efforts don't seem to bode well for that public. This is an eventuality that could be fearsome to meet. Its power cannot be doubted. Its size may be small as compared with other masses of people but its potential potency is not to be taken lightly.

There are other things that must be watched also. Some furtive eyes may be watching for openings to move in. The favorite or favorable situation these eyes are looking for, for one, is dissension. The picture is akin to "divide and conquer."

One thing that might be taken into account with more foresight, more than in the past and since the passage of the land claims act, is the services and aid of the statewide organization — the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. The AFN has proved to be a hard working entity and it certainly has Washington, D.C. and Congress within earshot. With the cooperation of all the regional areas, this group can be a great deal more effective and infinitely more useful for all concerned within Native regions. Instead of eyeing it with some suspicion, more positive approaches for cooperation should be made so many of the problems that have plagued some regional groups can be discussed more fully so the extent of understanding can be attained. AFN, Inc. can serve as a mediation force so that groups can serve along with the people involved and it is likely, cooperative efforts can bring about needed improvements in relations as well as helping to solve some bothersome problems.

— H.R.

Letters from Here and There

Alaskan Natives Still Live In Ice Igloos?

Anchorage, Alaska
May 7, 1975

Dear Editor:

Not since the propaganda that was published during the Third Reich and in editorials of newspapers in the Western U.S. during the "opening of the west" have I witnessed such racially biased reporting as I witnessed on Page 6 of the "Visitors Guide" entitled "Native Alaskan First in Great Land" which was published by the Anchorage Times and Anchorage Daily News on 5/6/75.

The first sentence implies that most Alaskan Natives live in ice igloos except for the "summer season". The writer of this article goes glibly on her libelous way by justifying her ignorance in stating "... Historically — and facts are sketchy because there is no concise history book that's been published on the Alaska Native..." This too is of course not true.

The writer then states that "just in recent years, Alaska Natives... realized that they were reasons for them to be paid back for the land the government had taken from them." For the writer's edification, this fight for justice was started in the early 1900's.

The writer goes on further to state that the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act was "... The largest land and monetary settlement ever given to an aboriginal group." I would like the writer to explain "The Marshall Plan" to me in comparison! Another example of the "accurate reporting in this article is the statement that "... The Natives will own about 10 per cent of Alaska's land." Although the Native would be glad to receive this amount of land back from those who took it from us, the Alaska Native Land Claims Act was not so generous.

The writer has the audacity to say that the Natives have been promised a 20 per cent hire factor on Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction. I challenge the writer to investigate this—"White Man's promise"—if indeed it was ever made.

The writer then states that welfare is one of the Natives' largest sources of income. I ask the writer to go to the Food Stamp line on the corner of 5th and Barrow to see what ethnic groups are benefiting the most.

The writer also states that the rise in V.D. and alcoholism in the state is due to a large extent because of the rural Alaska Native community. Come on now, it's probably no higher, then say the "lily white" workforce of the newspaper industry in Anchorage.

Sincerely,
Frank A. Peratrovich
1435 M St.
Anchorage, Ak 99501

Anti-Gun Can Evolve Into Using Clubs

Point Hope, Alaska 99766
May 5, 1975

Howard Rock, Editor
Tundra Times

Dear Howard:

This letter is really to all your readers, urging them to write to Senator Stevens and Gravel,

Representative Young, and even their Alaska State Legislators.

The anti-gun people in Washington are trying to foul us up again. This time they have a court order to have the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission decide whether or not handgun ammunition is dangerous to have around. If they say yes, it will probably be made illegal. This means that no one will be able to buy it anymore.

Handgun ammunition includes, of course, .22 Rimfire, and .22 Magnum Rimfire ammunition. If this ruling takes place, then very soon after, we will have used up what ammunition we have, and our .22 rifles, as well as handguns, will be useless. Too many people depend on the .22 for small game such as rabbits, grouse, muskrats, and even sometimes seals for us to let them do this to us. We would have to use the more expensive shotguns and larger rifles for small game.

And this is only the first step of the anti-gun people. If they got this passed, then they could say, "Hey look! If handgun ammunition is so dangerous to have around, what about rifle and shotgun ammunition? It is more common and much more powerful, so it must be much more dangerous. We gotta get rid of it, too, for their own protection!"

This will leave all of us to chase moose, caribou, seals, ducks, geese, and all other game with empty guns. If we get close enough, we can hit them over the head. But even so, the balance of a gun is all wrong for a club. Maybe we can put bayonets on them and stab the animals to death, if our knives are not taken away from us for our own good. After all, we MIGHT stab ourselves, or get cut skinning the animal.

Please urge all your readers to write our Congressmen in Washington; this decision will probably be made in the next month or two, so it is important that our Senators and Representatives know what we want. This is the only way we can protect our right to own and use guns, our ability to hunt, and for many people, to feed our families. Please list, if you print this, the Congressmen's names and Washington mailing addresses for concerned readers.

Sincerely,
Larry A. Schweigert

Candy For The Eskimo Children

May 6th

The Seattle Times
Fairview N. & John St.
Seattle, Wa. 98144

To the Editor:

I have held off writing this letter in regards to "Candy for the Eskimo Children," until I had cooled down somewhat. I am sorry pensioners, school children etc. had to donate their money which I'm sure they couldn't afford. Especially so, as it is not necessary.

What's more to the point, it tells us that the "Great White Father" is still trying to play the paternal role, patting us on the head and for us to be good, so that we can get more candy next year. It is also teaching racial prejudice in the home, school, or wherever the money came from. The old trick of the White man keeping the minority races down so the big

shots can do THEIR THING, Watergate, CIA, even owing our soul to the "Company Store." I would like to know if we really need or want your candy? Any intelligent, thinking person tries to stop children from eating candy because of cavities, the Good Lord only knows how television is full of sugar free gum, sugar free this and that. The Whites advertise this, is the protection offered to only Whites, or do you think only Eskimo children are immune to candy and cavities? When the boat load left for Alaska, did you pat yourself on the back and say a "Job Well Done"? Did you ask yourself if there were enough dentists up home to take care of the Eskimo Children? Do you Oh Great white Father feel compelled to send us something to soothe your conscience for the way you have treated the Native Americans since the 1600's? If so, why not send something useful instead, such as canned milk, eggs, sugar, fruits, etc? Why send tons of garbage back home. I wonder if you ever stopped to think how disgusted and degraded this makes us feel.

We had our own candy for thousands of years before we ever saw a White man, you did us no favor by coming and taking away our land. It is the other way around, we did you a favor by allowing you to step foot on our land. I still know people and have relatives who can remember the signs posted on gates, restaurants, etc. "No dogs or Indians allowed." You even put the dog first.

Would you be surprised to know we have our own cultural food? A food that is much better than your food. We have Tingood (Tomcod Liver) Keenach (Cranberries) Lincod Eskimo Pie, Eskimo Candy, that is made from salmon. And a host of others.

Sincerely yours
ALIYA
Seattle.

cc. The Tundra Times
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

VA to Veterans: Request Corrections

The Veteran's Administration today reminded veterans of their right to request corrections of what they feel are errors or injustices in their military records.

Application must be submitted to the branch in which the veteran served, but VA can provide the necessary Department of Defense form, DD-149, "Application for Correction of Military or Naval Record."

It was pointed out that while some errors may seem insignificant, correction of others could prove important, resulting in eligibility for VA and other benefits.

Generally, veterans are expected to file requests for correction within three years, but this deadline may be waived in interest of justice.

Applications may be filed by the veteran, survivors, or legal representatives.

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