

"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—

Determined Leader Of North Corporation

We salute Joe Upicksoun's election as first president of the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation. Upicksoun, who served as interim president of the corporation, was elected to head ASRC at its first stockholders' meeting April 20 at Barrow. He wrote in his message to the stockholders: "We are independent, autonomous and are practicing self-determination. With your (stockholders) participation we will succeed in all our endeavors." ASRC is a small corporation in terms of the number of villages and people it represents, but its reach over the vast Arctic region, from Point Hope on Alaska's west coast to Kaktovik in the state's northeastern corner and Anaktuvuk in the Brooks Range, makes it among the most important. In a sense, the eyes of all the other regional corporations are on ASRC because that is where a lot of the action is. The development of the Arctic in Alaska, in fact, will be in the national public eye from 1974 onward into the 21st Century. How the Native people there handle their affairs, how they will fit in with the enormous development that is bound to come in the next 25 years and how they rightfully benefit from that development should be of paramount interest to all Natives. The oil and gas under the feet of Arctic Natives are restless commodities soon to be set in motion with the construction of pipelines. That motion will profoundly affect their lives. Life will change in Barrow, Wainwright, Point Hope, Anaktuvuk, Kaktovik, Nooiksut, Point Lay and Atkasook — ASRC's eight member villages — and it is a primary responsibility of the regional corporation to see that it changes for the better. ASRC is a private endeavor, yet it must have a public conscience. It cannot be cold and calculating as are many large American corporations. Rather, it must have a heart, a soul, and with those virtues work to preserve a way of life for its people that has been historically close to the land, the rivers, the lakes and the sea. It was fitting that ASRC decided to conduct its entire first stockholders meeting almost entirely in Inupiaq rather than English. We hope through all the challenges ahead that it will continue to speak in the people's language — whatever that may be — as long as the talk is straightforward. "We are independent, autonomous and are practicing self-determination. . . . Those are strong, firm words. In a sense, they describe Joe Upicksoun as well as the corporation he heads. In his battles with government on behalf of Native people, his actions have been independent, autonomous and determined. He has had to be tough and straightforward and outspoken in his role as one of the chief architects of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act. We hope he continues in the same tradition for ASRC.

Whaling Observer

It looks as if Senator James Buckley, R-New York, will be able to come to the village of Point Hope to observe Arctic Eskimo whaling and to perhaps actually take a paddle in pursuit of a whale if the opportunity arises. Senator Buckley likes unusual, high adventure type activities once in a while. He will be going along with the crew of Seymour Tuzroyluke. He should have a rather scintillating type experience and which is also a serious business.

Letters from Here and There

To Native People, Concerned Folks

Anchorage, Alaska
April 29, 1974

Dear Editor:

I would like to direct this letter of appeal to my fellow Native people, and to all concerned citizens of our once-great North-western area.

First of all, let me say flatly that I do not like to say the following in writing, but I have made up my mind to do so, and will do just that with no consideration for your feelings, or even my own pride and self-respect. I am writing with respect to the crime of taking life, and our own disregard of various dangers that seem to be looking us straight in the eyes at this time. So, friends, let's get down to it and ask ourselves some questions.

First, where are we going? How long are we willing to struggle blindly against this wind that no one seems willing to face, including our own teachers, counselors, preachers, law enforcement officers, and even our judges.

My fellow Native people, where are our former, respectful family ties? Our simple, one-room homes were almost empty of furniture, but full of love, and sharing. Where is our respect for our elders — the parents, the grandparents, chiefs and elders. Stop now, whoever you are, wherever you may be, and take a look at our present situation and compare today's values with those of our past:

The Eskimo of yesterday, your grandfather and mine, did not approve of the useless taking of life, for any reason other than self-defense. His unwritten laws stated firmly that the person who killed wantonly did not himself deserve life, so the penalty was death, executed promptly by the order of one chief (with no costly trials.)

The Bible, the Book of books, which has survived the most severe criticisms and many attempts by man to destroy its teachings and laws, holds a similar penalty for the crime of Murder. (I may be wrong, but revisions of the Bible may be Man's attempt to weaken or harm its value of guidance to man.)

My fellow citizens of all races, occupations and creeds; I feel very small in urging you to band together in an attempt to curb the growing crime in our state, but it will take every last one of us, each doing his part. I must have confidence in you, for if we neglect our duty, the next victim just might turn out to be you, me, or someone close to both of us.

First: my fellow Natives, if you are depressed to the point of regretting that you are alive, don't turn to alcohol for solace. Drink water and ask yourself a few questions, like 'Does anyone care for me?' If not, why not? 'Who loves me, and why do I love?' Give love in a smile, or by way of a favor, advice or comfort. Remember that we are not necessarily what malicious people say we are, just by their words, any more than other people are what we say they are.

Second: maybe you simply have too much time on your hands and don't know what to do with it except to drink and get into trouble. If so, take time to search your mind for past

projects left undone, plans not carried out. Now is the time to start or finish them.

We must not kid ourselves. We do not have to travel to Cambodia, Viet Nam or Israel or Arabia to see the cruel shedding of innocent blood, ever foolish shedding of foolish blood. Look around at its results: Bleeding hearts, broken homes. The hearts of those dear to us are torn, yet still beating, though they skip a beat at the odd sounds — a sudden yell, the slam of a door, the sudden appearance for us all to declare war against crime in the streets, in the homes and businesses. Wake up! Our America the Beautiful is losing her beauty before our eyes.

Let's re-establish respect and trust, the love that used to burn brightly in our homes to warm even the cold hearts of our visitors. Let's revive our Constitutional liberty and justice for all, not just for criminals. Are

we in captivity under a new form of government? I say no. Old Glory still waves the right way. All we need are real people, you and me, to face the storm of crime, with strong captains to lead us.

With these views in mind: Parents, do your duty at home. Quit acting like children. Children, quit trying to grow up too soon, do what you are told, and learn all you can from your parents, so you will know how to survive in life. In short, life begins at home. Family ties mean love, and close relationships create a happy home. Man must act as Father; Woman as Mother; Boy as a son should, and Girl as the proper daughter.

Our community must realize its need for unity, both in the home and its dealings with each other daily. We must work hand in hands with our eyes on God, beyond Man's weaknesses.

Teachers should utilize their
(Continued on page 10)

Your Dental Health

The contents of this series of "Dental Health Talks" was originally prepared by the American Dental Association. They are made available for Tundra Times through the Public Health Education Office of the Alaska Native Health Service.

It is well known that our dental health program in Interior Alaska has not yet reached everyone needing dental services. This is especially true about the people in the rural communities. However, everyone understands how important it is to take care of our teeth which is a part of our total well-being.

No. 9 — New Preventive

Techniques in Dental Practice

Within the past few years dental researchers have added new techniques to the field of preventive dentistry that can make teeth much more resistant to decay than ever before. Children in particular are reaping great benefits.

In case you haven't taken a child to the dentist for a while, you might be surprised to see the doctor painting teeth with a fluoride solution and applying a plastic sealant to the biting surfaces. Both procedures are completely pain-free and, according to extensive studies, both can help fight tooth decay.

Studies have shown that certain fluoride liquids and gels applied directly to the teeth by the dentist can bring about a substantial reduction of dental decay. The reduction can be as much as 30 or 40 per cent — impressive but still not the 60 to 65 per cent that can be achieved by water fluoridation.

Dentists particularly recommend the application of fluorides about age three to protect children's primary teeth and again about ages 7, 11 and 13 when permanent teeth are erupting.

The job of the fluoride applications is to help the enamel of the teeth become more resistant to decay. The sealants, on the other hand, are designed to seal the tiny cracks and pits in the biting surfaces of the teeth so that food and bacteria cannot collect there.

One of the first questions asked about pit and fissure sealants is often, "What are pits and fissures and why should they be sealed?" The answer lies with an understanding of how teeth grow.

As teeth develop, enamel usually forms smoothly on the surfaces of front teeth. The

teeth in the back of the mouth, however, have irregularities on their chewing or "occlusal" surfaces. These irregularities are in the form of tiny indentations and grooves called pits and fissures. They are actually defects in the teeth which are common to normal teeth.

The pits and fissures are the sites of much of the dental decay that occurs particularly in children and adolescents. The bristles of a toothbrush cannot reach effectively into the minute depressions.

A sealant, then, is a material that is applied as a coating to the grinding surfaces to seal off the pits and fissures.

The product is sold as a product only to dentists. The material is a liquid that is brushed on the grinding surfaces of the teeth. In one procedure, it hardens to a transparent coating under ultra-violet light. A small hand-held ultra-violet lamp is focused on the teeth for less than a minute. The material is not applied to the sides of teeth.

Since pit and fissure sealants are designed to coat only the biting surfaces, they have no value for other areas that are particularly susceptible to decay — for instance, the surface between teeth and near the gumline.

The pit and fissure sealants and fluorides applied in the dental office are not designed as an alternative to regular oral hygiene. Instead, they are intended to augment other proven preventive practices including brushing with an accepted toothpaste, daily use of dental floss, fluoridation of drinking water and regular professional care.

(Next article: "How to Find a Dentist")