

## **Editorial —**

# **The yellow sheet**

Last Sunday and Monday in Anchorage, upwards of 60,000 yellow circulars from the Alaska Outdoor Association were delivered with the daily papers.

Those yellow sheets carried a message that, in its ugliness and its blatant appeal to racism, seldom, if ever, has been seen in Alaska in recent years — at least in civilized circles or in a civil society where it is hoped that the common rules of decency prevail.

It is a call to arms of "all Alaska sport fishermen and hunters," telling them, it claims, how they can stop their rights "from being given away to the Alaskan Natives and/or the so-called subsistence users." Later news reports on the issue quote one of the authors of the circular complaining that under current subsistence concepts no development can take place in Alaska because "some Joe Indian up there on the hill says it is going to scare away his moose."

Some observers have characterized the circulars as being "the order of public flatulence — something that should be discreetly ignored or overlooked, something that should not be dignified by any public notice because it would be in bad taste to do so."

But, the circular, which urges its readers to write their congressmen and legislators informing them that they "will not tolerate any group of people in Alaska, such as Natives and/or subsistence users" being given subsistence rights, is no mere public passing of bilious wind.

It is much more than that, and, as such, it can't be ignored. It is a call designed to rouse the rabble, and unfortunately, it probably will. It is base, and it is low, and it seems designed to appeal to the meanest instincts in some sectors of our society. At a time when unity and agreement are needed, are in fact absolutely necessary for any progress at all in the state, it is utterly divisive.

It breeds the same spirit with which it was written, an intolerant ignorance which will feed upon itself and can only become worse.

One wonders why former legislator and gubernatorial candidate Tom Fink lent his name to it. Though one might not agree with him in his views, one used to be able to at least give him a kind of respect, even though it might be grudging.

As long as he feels he must be a part of such shoddy and ignoble tactics to get that point of view across, the time for any respect perhaps is past.