

The system does not have answers

To the Editor:

It has been said to me many times the way to beat the system, or get what you want is to learn how the legal system in America works. In other words beat them at their own game.

I personally disagree with that statement, 'cause if you go to their school, learn their language and law, you'll be subjected to do things their way. Because when you return to do your legal work for the Indian people, that your battles will be in their surroundings. Meaning, they'll have their lawyers and judges who are getting paid by the state. Also the majority of the people's mind, who already conform to the capitalistic view of this democratic society, buy what money can buy.

These same civilized people,

who's ancestors were the first boat people from the old world, have forced their ways upon the Natives and justify anything that they do against the original inhabitants of this country by saying that it is for the benefit of the people.

Example, excerpt from early letter to Tundra Times:

"It is frightening when you think of the land that your parents and great grandparents lived on for the past thousand years can be taken away from you without the consent of Congress, the President, or the People.

People that had a hand in the settling of the Alaska Land Claims Act shouldn't be to blame. As Willie Hensley said, 'The only thing they fought with was broken bows and broken lances on alien soil with a very few troops.'

Another example, is the agreement that the Copper River Indian made with the state, concerning the running of their fishwheel. The Indians from the Copper River or any other area who is using the fish to survive, isn't the one to blame for the diminishing supply of salmon. It is the commercial fisherman along with the foreign fishing fleets off the coast of Alaska, who can catch as many as he wants because of the money that's involved."

Point I'm trying to get across is that the Natives have been wrong in the court of law since the arrival of Western Civilization, by the pronouncement of the law of eminent domain.

If there is any questions that your readers would like to ask, please feel free to write.

In Spirit,
Harry John

Aboriginal title protects subsistence

To the Editor:

The letter I am now voicing is of grave concern of Alaskan Natives if they wish to have title to land to use as they see fit. The state has fishing guides and sportsmen who feel that the subsistence law will have preferential favor for Natives. Since Russian-America was sold to the U.S., all that was sold was a trading post. Therefore, the issues of aboriginal title have not been fully addressed.

Let's say for simple example — the Alaska Native Land Claims Act was, for the sole benefit of the state. Since 1867 Alaskan Natives have experienced and endured "colonial rule." Every country that dabbles in economic "trade and commerce" has to settle

an issue of basic human rights.

You who live in the village know the full impact of unions in Alaska as far as employment opportunities. We have Native Corporations who require union membership for hire.

The state is interceding in affairs of Natives and the federal government. If the state pursues the matter of subsistence it will really promote the further decline of the Native population. This may not be the true intent, but may very well be the consequences.

The village people, the "Athabascan Nation" must not let their rights be denied under Federal Indian Law. If they can air concerns and share certain alignments on

moral issues, the question of subsistence can be laid to rest. If the current trend continues, Alaska Natives must not be idle, but exercise the valid existing rights. If the state denies the Natives their right to livelihood and sustenance, the days of self-sufficiency and self-reliance are gone forever. Not only that, can you be a part of a state plot to further deny the rights of Indians to less dependence on rural stores for food provisions?

If the final course of action is to let the Feds take control of fish and game, they will have upheld the basic moral right for people of the land. Traditional Village government will keep the state out of our lives if they take a stand.

William Silas