

"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—

The Exploiter

Gordon L. Corbett, an executive with the United Presbyterian Church for the Alaska and Yukon area, has forwarded to the Tundra Times an astonishing clipping from the San Diego Union newspaper.

On April 11, a California columnist carried a shocking interview with a Bethel bartender which reveals some attitudes throughout the state that bear looking into.

"What's the idea of a guy like you living in Alaska in a town of 2,800 people just to hold a job managing a bar?" the interviewer asked the former San Diego man, described in the column as a California "swinger" and "fun guy," who left for Alaska three years ago.

Back on a visit, the bartender answered, "It's the money. Bethel is surrounded by 55 Eskimo villages, each with at least 300 persons. I haven't learned to speak Eskimo, but I have no trouble selling them beer at \$1.25, 'call' whiskey, \$1.50 a drink. I get bonuses in addition to a salary and next year, the owner is giving me half the bar."

"My wife draws \$13,000 a year as regional director of A_____ and I'm opening a Laundromat. I'll come back to San Diego in five years and you won't know me. I'll be rich."

Commented Mr. Corbett who sent us the clipping: "It seems to me a real shame that so many people come to Alaska with the openly avowed intention of getting rich as quick as possible and then getting out."

"When such people are so frankly open in their boasting, it seems to me we have a right to identify them and their attitudes and pass the word along to the people who are being exploited by them and trust that the people will then use their common sense in dealing with them in the future."

We agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Corbett and urge the people of Alaska, particularly the native people, to take a good look at the fly-by-night, get-rich-quick merchants in the state who are here only to make a fast buck, to exploit people and to exploit Alaska.

This kind of man is not likely to want to contribute to building anything toward Alaska's future, nor to protecting the land and its people.

Wherever possible, we would like to see the boycotting of such merchants. Find out who they are and stop adding dollars to their pot, even if it means doing without things.

The new native corporations must develop locally owned, locally controlled businesses and these fledgling enterprises will need all the support of the people. We urge Alaskans to support the merchants and businessmen who are here to become part of Alaska, to build it together toward a future, and who respect its people.

LETTERS FROM HERE AND THERE

Fairbanks, Alaska
April 6, 1973

Dear Editor:

The Chena Bar is one place where it's at. You will also find it at radio stations, music stores and even in peoples homes. It's a song. A song that is highly negative towards native peoples. The name of the song is, "Squaws Along The Yukon". Here is an example of some of the words . . . She makes her underwear, from hides of Grizzly bear . . . She has the air-corps down, the sourdoughs hang around, cheechakos tryin

to date her night and day. Sounds like a hot chick. And dig the chorus . . . and I can hear her say, "Ooga Ooga Mushka which means that I love you, if you will be my baby I'll Ooga Ooga Mushka you".

This song really bothers me, but what bothers me more is the fact that its been around since 1958. The fact that natives let this continue. I hear the song is a favorite among some of the older white men. I also hear that some natives tap their feet and sing along when it's playing. What a Bummer.

I asked the manager of Chena

Tom Richards Jr.'s Column--

Amazing Tablecloth Manipulation by Etook

(c) 1973 by
THOMAS RICHARDS, JR.

OLONGAPO CITY — I can't hold back any longer, Etook. I have refrained from telling the story for over a year now. It is about time that I let loose with it. Someone has to immortalize the tale, so it might as well be me.

Etook, Charlie, I'll bet you thought that I would be satisfied only with a quote which I ficticiously attributed to Wayne Aspinall to explain the origin of your name. You remember, I am sure, that I had the Chairman give you your Eskimo name when I quoted the former

Congressman as stating, "He's the guy who is always following me around, and saying, 'E-took my land. E-took my life.'"

Sorry Charlie, but I feel obligated to relate the story of the Incident at the Monocle Restaurant. You must recall that evening when you joined Laura Bergt, and Don Wright, and John Rainer (Chief Indian Member of the National Council on Indian Opportunity), several other nationally recognized Indian leaders and myself at that outstanding French restaurant near the New Senate Office Building.

The Monocle certainly lived

up to its reputation that evening, Etook. We had appetizers of superbly prepared escargot, that snail with a sauce which is ideally suited to wet one's bread with. And, Charlie, you must remember those generous portions of roast beef and lobster tail. And, those perfectly mixed drinks we ordered, and fabulous wines. Even the salad was delightfully crisp. There was so much offered us that the table was cluttered with candleholders, many plates, and many more glasses, and a lot of silverware.

It was a very good meal, and we had excellent company, and it was one of those pleasant summer evenings in Washington.

Maybe you shouldn't have responded the way you did, Etook, but we shouldn't have angered you so much. Don wasn't very complimentary toward you that evening, and Laura was enthusiastic about the way she was criticizing your rural housing program, and I wasn't doing anything to improve your morale.

Up until the time you reacted that way, Charlie, I think those Indian leaders were just passively taking it all in and attributing our argument to Native politics. Afterwards, I believe, they began to think that you had great powers as a shaman.

It all happened so fast, Charlie, that I nearly missed it. We were giving you such a terrible time that you stood up, and you paused for a brief instant to figure out how you were going to demonstrate your displeasure with our uncompilimentary treatment of your ideas. You really decided upon an excellent gesture.

You know, Etook, I was concentrating on the texture of the red tablecloth, and it changed color before my very eyes. It lifted my head to analyze this feat of magic, you were rapidly exiting the Monocle and the tablecloth was resting across the room. For some time later, we were all completely astonished. Everybody in the restaurant marveled at what you had done. All was quiet until laughter broke the silence.

You gripped that tablecloth and jerked it off the table so skillfully, that of all the wine glasses and drinks, candleholders, all the plates and water glasses, and of all the silverware at our big table, only your own dinner plate fell. And Charlie, your dinner plate glided to the carpet so smoothly that it didn't even break.

We offered apologies when the waiter came over, but they weren't necessary. No need to apologize, he said, I have heard about people being able to do this thing. But this is the first time that I have seen anybody do it, he added.

Etook, I was under the impression that you had accomplished that feat just to give us a sample of your magic. You know, Charlie, that you shattered this illusion when you went to the restaurant the next day to see about paying the breakage fee, and were surprised to discover that there was none.

The next time you have to travel to Washington, why don't you alert the Monocle so that they can advertise your special talent. And, some of us who witnessed your magic, have lately been tempted to ask you, Etook, "Have you learned any new tricks lately?"

The Alaska Plan . . .

(Continued from page 1)

chairman with an all-volunteer unpaid committee. They sandwiched in work on the Alaska Plan between regular full-time jobs. When the committee gathered together, each member paid his own expenses.

Last week, Willard resigned from the Human Rights Commission and was unable to be reached, but it is questionable whether he will continue to serve as Chairman of the Alaska Plan Commission. The non-existent offices and yet-to-be-hired staff remain somewhere in limbo.

Which is not to say that nothing is being done. In spite of its obvious difficulties, some of the goals are being met. What is lacking is a central organizing force. Each party is operating separate programs. When asked how it ties into the Alaska Plan, most look confused and say, "Well, we're just going ahead on our own."

The objective of the Alaska Plan is to bring minorities into the building trade unions, and while many of the participants in the plan can talk about guidelines and goals, the unions must produce a specific number of trained minority apprentices and journeymen within a strict time frame. They are wrestling with the problem with little assistance.

"We were supposed to achieve 26-27 per cent minority membership by 1976," said Julius Kornfeind, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. "We really didn't have too far to go."

"Our coordinator in Anchorage keeps records, but I think we were up to 25 per cent last year. If we didn't keep records, I'd never know who was a minority. We had one kid mark down American Indian and I thought he was putting me on, because you sure couldn't tell it."

The forms which a contractor is required to fill out for the

federal Dept. of Labor, Office of Equal Opportunity, has columns to list minority workers as Black, Filipino, Spanish-American, Oriental, American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut.

The forms are considered a nightmare of paperwork and one contractor commented that between the requirements for the Alaska Plan, the Occupational Safety Act, and the Environmental Protection Act, he spends more time shuffling paper than building a project.

And the forms are not fool-proof. They must be followed up with on-site enforcement checks. Morris Thompson of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, said contractors have been known to use the term "Alaska Native" to mean anyone born in Alaska.

A contractor's joke tells the story of the supervisor who told the enforcement officer that half his men were Negroes. "They don't look like Negroes," said the officer. "Just ask them," was the answer.

Personnel shuffling to fill minority quotas can only be done at the apprentice level. Every unions operates on strict rules as to work lists and a business manager of the union can NOT alter those lists in any way. Journeymen must be sent out as they sign in.

Traditionally, union members must come in person to the union hall to sign in. In Alaska, however, there are many remote communities with no union halls. So a man who is a union member but lives in the bush faces a disadvantage in signing up for jobs.

Because of the distance problems, some unions have adopted a more flexible attitude, and allow the man to be signed in by phone notification.

This does not alter the fact that the unions, the contractors and the industry are based in urban areas. Bud Wadsworth, Department of Labor, commented, "A union man has to be urban oriented because that's where the work is."

"In the Plumbers Union, for example," he said, "they have to come in and sign up every 90 days. But if a man's unemployed, the union pays him \$160 a month supplemental unemployment. That makes it worthwhile to pay his dues and come in to Fairbanks."

The joint labor-management apprenticeship programs is also urban based. Recruitment trips are made to the bush to search for talented youngsters, "But once he's accepted into the program, that youngster's going

(Continued on page 8)

Bob Gregory