

Lost VISTA Volunteer And an Old Eskimo Strange Encounter Leads Into Extensive Analysis of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

Lands End Village
State of Alaska
October 30, 1973

Dear Howard:

Well, Wally and I have been very busy trying to prepare for the coming winter months. The work is hard and requires much physical endurance, but it is also rewarding to know one has done a good day's work. Wally and I can see the results of our work and will benefit from it later. When the wind is blowing, it is 40° below, etc. Wally and I will be sitting in our warm cabin enjoying the warmth of our work.

Sometimes I wonder if the people who are working in the Regional offices or BIA offices making good money think as we do after they have done a day's work. Hopefully, we will benefit later from the work they are doing now.

As you probably know, Howard, in December they're having a convention in Anchorage and at the same time money authorized under Section 6 (a) will be released to the Natives.

Over 130 million dollars will be available for distribution to the regional corporations. That is a lot of money, Howard. I am used to dealing in a few cents and an occasional dollar, and I know many of my native friends can say the same. What is going to happen to our way of life once we begin to receive lumps of money in these amounts? Will the poor remain poor and the new well-to-do become more comfortable in the life style they are fast embracing?

Wally said the great White leader from Washington will also certify the Alaska Native Enrollment complying with Section 5 of AN ACT. This is sad because after that is done, all Natives enrolled will have a number and all Natives that are not enrolled will be left out in the cold. It will be a sad day for the Native people when the Secretary types and signs his name to that enrollment document.

As for this old man, I think, tomorrow, I will take Wally and show him the beauty that covers this land at this time of year and at the same time try not to foresee what activity will disrupt my village's peaceful, sleepy atmosphere, before winter sets in. Take care, old friend.

Your native friend,
Naugga Ciunerput