

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

# Tundra Times



Owned, controlled and edited by Eskimo, Indian, Aleut Publishing Company, a corporation of Alaska natives. Published at Fairbanks, Alaska, weekly, on Wednesdays.

Address all mail to Box 1287, Fairbanks, Alaska, 99707. Telephone 452-2244

Second class postage paid at Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.

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Regular Mail (including Alaska, Canada and other states) .....	1 year \$15.00 6 months \$8.50
Air Mail (including Alaska, Canada and other states) .....	1 year \$35.00 6 months \$20.00

Member of the American Indian Press Association

## Other Voices—

### This Eskimo cultural obituary a bit soon

The New York Times Book Review section, Feb. 22, carried an inadvertent obituary for the Eskimo culture. Writer Jim Harrison declared it "extirpated" — the dictionary definition of that one is "to wipe out" — in a favorable review of Farley Mowat's new book, "The Snow Walker" which is about our Canadian Eskimo neighbors.

"In the reading of this book we should first of all forget all the Brotherhood of Man nonsense. We have nothing in common with the Eskimo and he has nothing in common with us other than our accidental simultaneity on earth," Harrison decides. "It is not profitable to look for similarities to make a unity of us all in the usual ritual of breast-beating. The simple fact is the Canadian Government has no better track record with the Eskimo than we with the American Indian in our mutual courses of empire. Despite all the understandable chacha of the Bicentennial year, it is healthier to admit we got off the boat and murdered a civilization as did the Canadians..."

Harrison admires, with considerable poetry, the vanishing breed.

"Before we came along the Eskimos were a strange lot. It was not so much that they were alone but that no one had ever joined them in the most hostile environment on earth, so they had no conception of what 'alone' was. No one is sure how many centuries they managed to endure in the tightest survival units imaginable; but 'survival' is an euphemism within the framework of the Eskimo's closeness to the earth. The land and sea and the Eskimo owned each other with a degree of intimacy we cannot conceive. One of the greatest things about the ocean is that it can kill you. And, as Nowat tells his tales, the immediacy of death assumes a grace totally unknown to us."

After giving a brief rundown of The Snow Walker's content — short stories, apparently done with a traditional, romantic bent — reviewer Harrison goes on to draw his own conclusions and writes the Eskimos off the map.

"The true native populations of earth recede into the mist of history. They were engaged in their environment rather than shielded from it. As the Eskimos' way of life died, as a viable culture, an atomic submarine passed under them without their knowledge."

Harrison is apparently not aware that the Alaskan Eskimos — rather than drifting into the mist of history, created a little of their own, winning an unprecedented land claims settlement from the U.S. Congress and moving smartly into the 20th Century, yet preserving a tremendous amount of their unique culture.

The reviewer is described by the Times as a poet and novelist and the paper also notes the title of his newest novel, to appear this summer, is "Farmer." Hopefully, Harrison will research "hunters" next and discover the Alaskan Eskimo variety is still alive and doing very well, thank you!

— LAEL MORGAN

## Letters from Here and There

### Response to letters on limited entry

Box 582  
Douglas, Alaska 99824

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to various letters to editors concerning Limited Entry. Some have written about Judge Boldt's decision in Washington State, claiming that by spring the Washington Buy Back Program will buy out a large number of the Washington fleet so we don't have to worry about the tremendous fleet increase predicted.

Keeping this in mind and adding other assertions that hatcheries and not Limited Entry is the answer, ask yourself a few questions. As the buy back program is voluntary, would those fishermen who have devoted their lives to fishing and know nothing else, sell their boats to the State or would they come to Alaska to fish if they could? As Washington has had a viable hatchery program for years, why have they had to put a moratorium on vessels entering the fishery (Limited Entry) and why have they instituted a buy back program?

Why does Canada, who also has a very good hatchery program and much expertise in salmon rearing have a Limited Entry Program?

Many seem to feel that pressures are great to get into the salmon fishery because of monetary gain. If that is so, why is the turnover rate of fishermen so high? For instance, in the years 1969-1972 between 300 and 460 fishermen were present every year in the Southeast gillnet fishery, yet only 79 fished all four of these years.

Certain individuals blame the depressed runs on the illegal and overfishing of the commercial fisherman. If this is a main concern it makes sense to support Limited Entry; a smaller more stable fleet is much easier to control and regulate than a large ever shifting fleet. Also, if a fisherman becomes economically sound there is much less chance of illegal fishing occurring.

Some letters suggest alternative methods of Limited Entry. For example, "To charge two or three thousand more for non-resident fishing licenses." This has been brought up many times in the past and is undeniably unconstitutional. Suggest a hatchery program with a reasonable catch quota. This is exactly what would happen with Limited Entry. A reasonable catch quota for the fish and fisherman. Without Limited Entry you have what we had before reasonable catch quota for the fish but split by so many fisherman as to be economically unreasonable.

In conclusion, I ask voters of Alaska to ask many questions as possible to get facts upon which to base your vote.

Sincerely,

Tim Whiting  
Juneau

### Subject on give-away of Panama Canal

February 17, 1976

Editor  
Tundra Times  
Box 1287  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Editor:

I would like to bring to the attention of your readers a national organization that is trying to stop Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, from giving away the Panama Canal.

The organization is called "Save The Panama Canal" Club, and is located at 1110 S. Pomona Avenue, Fullerton, California 92632. The National Chairman is Jim Townsend, Editor and Publisher of the National Educator.

Readers wishing to join the Panama Canal Club can do so by signing a pledge never to vote for any national candidate (congressional, senatorial or presidential) who is unwilling to publicly pledge never to vote to give up our rights to the Panama Canal, including the continued operation thereof, and sending a membership fee of \$5.000. Or they can send \$.25 and a self-addressed envelope to the same address for more details.

The Panama Canal will be one of the major issues in the coming national elections, so I urge all those in favor of keeping our property, to join the Panama Canal Club. Please don't let Henry Kissinger give away this vital link in our national defense. The politicians will hear us if we are strong. As members of the Panama Canal Club, we can speak with a voice that will be heard in Washington, D.C.

Hadley Steghens  
Alaska State Chairman  
"Save the Panama Canal Club"  
Box 4-1495  
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

### Legislator Huntington opposes HB-834

Alaska State Legislature  
House of Representatives

March 2, 1976

Dear Editor:

I am opposing HB-834, a bill that would allow the sale of beer and wine in grocery stores throughout Alaska.

This bill 834 would be the most detrimental piece of legislation ever pushed. As matter of fact its been railroaded through the Commerce Committee.

If this bill passes it means no one under 19 years of age could work in a grocery store. This would put all the teenagers, now working in grocery stores out of a job. Therefore creating a no job delinquency problem, adding to our already over burden delinquency problem within the cities.

We must make every effort to give our High School children

jobs, not take them away. For may this is their only means of making a few dollars for themselves.

Is that what the people sent us legislators down here to do, take jobs away from our young school students? I say no.

The following is some of the effects it would have on bush villages.

This bill would allow any and all villages with a now established or future grocery store to sell beer and wine throughout all of Alaska. This would mean many or more deaths to many of our villagers. Alcohol is one of the worst problems we have in the villages. No one knows the problem better than the villagers themselves.

There would be many grocery stores developed in the rural villages, with very little groceries to sell, but lots of beer and wine. They could and would charge whatever price they wished and they would get it.

The old age pensions, welfare, and Aid to Dependent Children monies, at least 50% of would go for beer and wine in the smaller villages of Alaska. Food stamps would be turned into cash and would support the beer and wine habit. I've seen this happen both in Anchorage and Fairbanks already.

Many men, women, and children would be deprived of their rights to use the welfare monies for the purpose for which they were intended.

I have witnessed the results that alcohol has on Native of Alaska. Many times they (the people) would like to sober up and take care of their families, but as long as it is available many of the people cannot resist buying more.

The way the state regulations are now, there can be liquor establishment per X number population. I believe this is good.

This in short means, that a person from a village, feeling the need to give a party and partake alcoholic beverages can and has order from a now existing Pkge. store. Getting the goods, they drink it up, wake up the next day, mostly looking for another drink. Finding none, the party is over. They then sober up and go on about life in the usual way with no hard ship.

Now if there was beer and wine sold in the village, the same person would get liquored up again and most likely lay in a stupor for a month.

Wine has the most drastic affect of all alcohol related beverages to the natives of rural Alaska. It's very seldom, if ever, a native when ordering liquor, orders wine. HB-834 would bring it right into his village hometown. I am strongly opposing HB-834 in every way I can. This bill is no good and just plainstinks, no matter what amendments might be made. I am urging every citizen to notify their legislators of their feelings on this bill.

We need work on legislation that will benefit all of the people of Alaska. So far most of the legislation passed has been a waste of tax dollars.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Huntington  
Representative