

# Lost VISTA Volunteer

## And an Old Eskimo

### Strange Encounter Leads Into Extensive Analysis of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

Land's End Village  
State of Alaska  
August 23, 1973

Dear Howard,

We are still trying to figure out how AN ACT is going to affect the way we do things in the village. Wally and I were reading Section 21 of AN ACT, where it talks about taxation. Apparently as long as we don't do anything with our land, we will pay no taxes. This is for 20 years from the passage of AN ACT or until 1991. If the land is developed, leased, or in any way makes any rent, royalty, revenue, profit, or preceeds it will be taxed according to Sec. 21 (d). If there are any substantial revenues, however much it may be, U.S. forest fire protection at no cost will be stopped — Sec. 21 (e). I guess that means if any Natives make any money with one hand, they will turn right around and pay it back out with the other hand.

The people from the Regional Corporation told us that our village had a choice between a profit corporation and a non-profit corporation. We are still waiting to find out exactly what the difference is, but it will probably have something to do with taxation. I wonder if there is such a thing as non-profit Natives and profit Natives? Personally, I don't want any substantial revenues, I just want subsistence hunting and fishing

and no taxes. But by December 18, 1991 the taxes will start on the land even for this non-profit Native, if he should live so long.

But why taxation anyway? The answer, as Wally points out, is in Sec. 2 (c) of AN ACT. The Secretary is supposed to be making a study of all federal services to Native people in Alaska. If he reads Sec. 2 (b) of AN ACT, the Secretary will probably say in his report that there are not supposed to be any permanent racially defined institutions, rights, privileges, or obligations so federal services will be phased out now that Natives are such wealthy citizens of the United States. We will be told that if we want these health, education, and welfare services we should provide them ourselves. That is supposed to be self-determination.

The irony of this whole thing, Howard, is that in the past we were able to provide for ourselves. But our land has been taken, the fish and game destroyed, our children stolen from us, and our culture put on display for the tourists and museums. AN ACT will not bring true self-determination, it is really one more step in the plan for termination of the Native way of life in Alaska. It makes me sad and angry just to think about these things.

Your friend,  
Naugga Ciunerput