

# What others say...

## *One Eskimo's View on Fish and Game*

To the editor:

In March of 1985 the State of Alaska gave the people of Unalakleet fifteen minutes notice to reply on the fisheries issues. Perhaps this was best as I have had a year to contemplate and write.

I would like to apologize for the rebuttle I so poorly presented to the State of Alaska. Fifteen minutes notice to present ones' point of view doesn't make for a rational reply. I would thank the state for this adequate time to contemplate and answer. Now I present you with a proper rebuttle.

1) We have no large rivers north of the Yukon, therefore our salmon stocks are much smaller in escapement and catch. Red salmon which are in abundance from Bristol Bay and south are nonexistent in our water which restricts our catch greatly.

2) The State of Alaska is only in law enforcement on a year round basis. This representation is two fold, the two being Fish and Game and the State Troopers wearing the same uniform. We Inupiat object to this management of our sea life for we have handled this well for thousands of years. I know of no animals or fishes that have gone extinct under our care.

3) Non-Natives are using our waters for reasons of subsistence. We have always used our waters for purposes of subsistence. An impact study is now requested on this further taxing of our lifestyle. Also, I would point out, these non-Natives all have prime employment in our villages.

4) Also requested would be a study of motor activity in regards to our sea mammals. Our sea animals are shy and will flee with the sight and smell of man. These animals and others are mandatory to our subsistence lifestyle. We eat the flesh and use the skins.

5) Non-Natives are obtaining our salmon permits at escalated prices, causing further unemployment in our villages. This also has a devastating effect on local economy as the money is spent somewhere other than the villages.

6) If the State of Alaska is so interested in our well being, then set up loan programs which are not out of reach so that we can pursue this industry properly with loans also available for future bottom fishing.

7) Set up regions of local Native enforcement to control the subsistence and commercial taking of fish for I have seen your control. A case in point would be the king crab fisheries.

8) The State of Alaska, says they cannot afford to come to the villages in person, reason being, deflated monies. We who are further from the capitol have held to tradition. We have again come last in policy making and community funding I would retract this statement (impart) for the State of Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game did send two representatives to our community last winter. Fish and Game wanted our sea animals, for profit by non-Natives. The reason in large being an over abundance of life in our waters. Read Jim Reardons complaints on this issue. (March 1984 Alaska Magazine) Over-kill for once is not the issue.

9) Our young and old have to leave the village if desiring employment, as 70 to 90 percent unemployment is normal in village life. Food stuff and other necessities are available only at inflated prices. Always the goods necessary are inflated 100% and in most cases even much more.

Therefore, I would ask the State of Alaska to limit salmon permits to Native peoples. Each to the village of their choice.

10) Not only is "Fish and Game" at fault for not having proper representation in our community, but also all other state agencies lack communications with our villagers. Now I formally request the state to fulfill this mandatory obligation of communication at a level which will benefit all villagers and not a pampered few. For, we who would desire to protect our lifestyle would surely be lacking in our culture without our animals, both land and sea.

11) We do not have resources with which we can have communities such as yours. Nor do we have this desire. Our fishing only in part support us. Help us, who have very little in a land of once plenty you who have taken and taken with little or no compensation.

In a great land we once lived in harmony which helped us to maintain a small balance of dignity. For we are not asking to take from you, only we are asking for that which has been ours by right of first occupancy. I would further state, we are a species nearing extinction. We have walked hand in hand with our mother earth, now she is dying.

When you come to take yet more from our land you suck from our life blood, scattering our children to lands of no meaning.

One Eskimo's view  
Charlie Blatchford

## *Kotzebue Students Take Field Trip*

To the editor:

*Here are some interesting happenings among the correspondence study program in Kotzebue, Alaska. Hopefully the students will have the opportunity to read about themselves in your paper...this in turn will assist them in further development of the concepts of "self-worth" and "interest in community affairs".*

Thank you!  
Urtha S. Lenharr

### **Camp students travel to Anchorage**

There are thirty-three students in the Kotzebue correspondence study camp program this year. These camps are located outside of the Kotzebue area not accessible to regular direct instruction by schools. Two teachers travel by boat and snowmobile to these subsistence camps and work with the students in their own environment. Ur-

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tha Lenharr and Al Paradise have been doing this type of education delivery system for four and five years now. They find their job most exciting, trying and rewarding.

Each year the two teachers take part of their "Indian Education Funds" and "Johnson O'Malley Funds" and take a cultural field trip to Anchorage with some of their students. This year thirteen students, one parent, and the two teachers made a five day trip through Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, and Knik before returning to their camps above the Arctic Circle.

On March 20th the group left Kotzebue. While on their education field trip they stayed at the Sheffield House. They toured the Anchorage Community College as well as Diamond High School. While at the high school the students were fortunate to see the planetarium. They learned that this is the only Planetarium in the state. Later on in the week the students travel out to Knik to visit famed musher: Joe Reddington Sr. Joe and his wife Vi took the students through the Knik museum and the "Musher Hall of Fame". While in Knik the students stopped at the new Iditarod headquarters which was still under

construction. The trip to Wasilla and the city museum proved to be most interesting; in Palmer they toured the transportation museum, where they saw things from the golden past...items like the dog sled that Joe Reddington Sr. used at the presidential inauguration to an actual peice of the moon brought back by the Appollo 17 crew held the interest of the Kotzebue students and their teachers.

The students also participated in an extensive tour of the McDonald's warehouse, which services all ten McDonald hamburger outlets in the Anchorage area. Other areas that the students covered were: various shopping centers, tour of the *Daily News Paper*, swimming at the Holiday Inn, and a visit to the Anchorage Museum of Art.

Students participating in this field trip ranged in age from 8 through 14. For some of these correspondence study students this trip was not only their first visit to a large city, but also their first experience of flying in a jet.

This annual trip was both educational and culturally enriching to these students in the remote areas of the NANA region. It is hoped that funding is available in the future to continue such programs.

## Nuclear-Free Arctic Urged

To the editor:

The Alaska State Legislature recently voted on a resolution which states Alaska's official support for adopting a Nuclear Free Arctic. Representatives Koponen, M.M. Miller, and Goll presented H.J.R. No. 52 for a vote in the full house last month. It was defeated by 3 votes. The bill was taken back to the committee to evaluate whether sufficient public support exists to change a few votes.

According to Rep. Koponen, a strong display of public support (i.e. about 1,000 letters or calls) is essential before bringing this bill up for a new vote. I am asking all socially responsible people to contact their Representative and request a vote for a Nuclear Free Arctic.

The following representatives voted against the nuclear free arctic: Boucher, Cato, Collins, Frank, Fuller, Hanley, Jenkins, Larson, Marrou, Martin, Miller (North Pole), Pearce, Pettyjohn, Pignalberi, Rieger, Ringstad, Taylor, and Thompson.

To send a message: **POM's** - To send a free Pubic Opinion Message of 50 words or less to legislators, call 278-3668 for assistance. Have your message ready.

**Letters** - The session mailing address for all legislators (January 13 - May 12) is P.O. Box V, Juneau, Alaska 99811.

This resolution reflects the Inuit Circumpolar Conference position which calls for a ban on testing or deploying nuclear weapons in the Arctic. It also includes a moratorium on development of nuclear weapons or placing nuclear dumps in the Arctic. Native culture has neither contributed to or benefitted from destructive nuclear technology. Nobody denies that missile deployment also creates targets for our enemies. It would be morally wrong to further impose the possibility of nuclear annihilation on Alaska's Arctic inhabitants.

If Alaskans do not establish a political stance strongly opposing nuclear waste dumps, we may find ourselves fighting a battle with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Alaska's vast stretches of uninhabited Arctic lands offer many criteria which lend to ideal nuclear waste dump sites. The State of Maine is waging a losing battle with the U.S. Department of Energy. The D.O.E. is intent upon locating nuclear waste dumps in that state despite opposition from: A) 2 out of 3 residents, B) the governor, and C) Both of Maine's Senators.

The Nucler Free Arctic bill is an excellent opportunity for Alaskans to take a socially responsible stand. This issue's importance transcends most other legislative business, and unlike most other bills on which legislators

vote, this one will not deplete our state's tax dollars.

Please join me in demanding our legislature to pass this resolution.

Sincerely yours  
Edward S. Davis  
Citizens Against Nuclear War

## Natives Discuss Subsistence Issue

To the editor:

This letter is being written following a gathering of concerned Alaska Natives to discuss the ramifications of Alaska's so-called subsistence legislation. The informal meeting included individuals from the North Slope, Interior, and Southeast Alaska. Many of those present had also worked in or had lived in remote rural areas where survival depended on the renewable resources of their surroundings. All had immediate family and friends who continue to supplement their lives with the resources available from the ocean and land around them.

The concerns expressed were for the future. Existing legislation and proposed legislation is already in the midst of a slow genocide of a way of life that has perpetuated since people first inhabited this land. The lifestyle that evolved through the various ethnic groups of Alaska also produce their own cultural value systems.

These lifestyles will continue to conform to the various changes that the world experiences. We will drive cars, fly, enjoy television, learn technology, and otherwise find more efficient ways to live. But the feeling is strong throughout Alaska, and the world for that matter, that cultural values must be treasured, preserved, and taught to future generations. We must not allow

the whims of government to eliminate whole cultures through self serving legislation and over-regulation.

History has taught us that many cultures have disappeared. Most often the culprits were greed, power, or religion. In Alaska another culprit has emerged—assimilation. The process of assimilation can be insidious, almost painless, and can be almost totally accomplished in three or four generations, a very short time as history goes. In Alaska, the Eyak people are almost gone; their language exists only in a few written studies and even fewer recordings. The dominant language of the Tlingits and Aleuts is English. Few know the Aleut language. Yupik, Inupiat, and Athapaskan remain widely spoken, but fewer children are fluent in their native languages. Spoken history dies with the passing of every elder who is not fluent in the languages of their grandchildren.

The so-called subsistence legislation at both the federal and state level has become an unwitting, though well meaning, catalyst for genocide through assimilation. Compromises had to be made to accomodate other special interests such as sport fishing, trophy hunting, environmentalists, and

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friends of this or that who rarely knew or understood the long term effects on people here and yet to come.

It was not the purpose of those present to find new ways to oppose any present legislation. The politics of the legislation have been thoroughly discussed. The wounds have just begun to fester. We can, however, keep the process of education alive. Those who must deal with these alternative lifestyles both now and in the future must have a thorough knowledge of the existing and potential problems. Where there is ill will, it must be exposed and discussed.

Where there is ignorance, we must find patient and thoughtful teachers. Where memories have faded we need to remind. Where there are children we must practice our cultures with the same pride and acceptance that were once a part of everyday living.

Other cultures will come and go in Alaska. Each will leave a mark; some good, some not so good. The land and sea will continue, used or unused as may happen. We have learned that our coexistence in this world with the resources of the land and sea are a part of our cultural value system. Our cultural existence is with food, our shelter, our stories and history, and our arts. They are all interconnected and cannot be separated out of our ex-

istence. We may move to other parts, or become educated in the ways of other cultures and make many compromises and individuals. We cannot, however, compromise away a cultural value system that is a part of each of us.

Our meeting ended with a resolve

to meet again. We hope to find others willing to participate in this education process and to make others aware of the very special needs of a very special group of people.

Sincerely,  
Ray Paddock Jr.  
Juneau, AK 99801

## Reader says 7(c) pushes Sovereignty

Senator Ted Stevens  
147 Russell Office Bldg.  
Delaware and Const. Aves  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Stevens:

As Alaskans we all share the desire to see an equitable and final conclusion to the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. I have just recieved my copy of the "1991 Amendments" and am writing this letter to express some of my concerns. It seems to me that slipped into the midst of language, that will change the structure of the Regional Corporations into Native Corporations, is a small section that will radically change the Native Claims Act.

In writing the Native Claims Settlement Act Congress declared that:

Page 1 (b) "the settlement should be accomplished...without establishing any permanent racially defined institutions, rights, privileges, or obligations, without creating a reservation system or lengthy wardship or trusteeship, and without adding to the categories of property and institutions enjoying special tax privileges..."

In a nutshell ANCSA was designed to give \$462,500,000 in cash and \$500,000,000 title to approximately 40 million acres of land to Alaskan Natives and extinguished all aboriginal claims. Section 7c. of the proposed amendments is worded so as to reestablish several of these claims and open a host of others to negotiation (litigation). This section reads:

"Sec. 7c. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as enlarging or diminishing or in any way affecting the scope of any governmental authority of a federally recognized tribe, traditional Native council or Native Council organized or any right, privilege, or immunity of Alaskan Natives as Native Americans in their relationship with the Government of the United States.

The reestablishment or continuation of racially defined tribes and councils with governing authority over non-natives clearly opposes the congressional intent of Congress in ANCSA.

Non-native Alaskans living in areas in which tribal governments claim racial jurisdiction find themselves without legal rights or due process.

Under ANCSA all special rights and privileges were exchanged for the privileges, "rights or welfare of Natives as Citizens of the United States..." The "1991" amendment removes Alaskan Natives from the realm of U.S. citizenship and returns them to a special caste as wards of the federal government, ie: Native Americans. Native Americans have many privileges as subjects in a guardian-ward trusteeship with the U.S. government. I would suggest that these privileges have notably failed to break the poverty cycle.

The vast majority of Native Alaskans have much to lose should they fail to recieve the responsibilities of U.S. citizenship in 1991. My question, Senator, is who will gain? Who will benefit from this racial rewriting of ANCSA? Do the political aspirations of few vocal soapboxers and carpet baggers, and the future contingency fees of a few lawfirms really justify the racial segregation of Native Alaskans?

The effects of these new proposed amendments will be felt statewide. Gubernatorial candidate Ron Summer-vile suggests that the 1991 amendments will act as a tremendous break on the future economic viability of the state. Another candidate for governor put it well when he opposed the creation of apartheid-like racially governed homelands throughout the State of Alaska.

Senator, subsistence has been a politically divisive issue, but the native sovereignty issue raised in Sec.7c. is going to be racially divisive. With all possible respect, I would urge you to delete Section 7c. and support public hearings throughout the State including Fairbanks, Juneau and Anchorage. Please give this matter your fullest personal attention. Do not hesitate to call if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely Yours,  
Bruce W. Campbell

## Resource Development needed

To the editor:

Several recent events cause me concern as an Alaskan.

People from New York visit rural areas of the eastern seaboard and on the basis of this experience take full

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page ads in Alaskan newspapers seeking elimination of subsistence lifestyles which threatens our entire Native culture. Major amounts of monies specifically targeted to lock up the 10% to 20% of Alaskan land left for economic development of any type are donated by eastern foundations to the Wilderness Society. An Alaskan Governor instructs his Attorney General to interpret laws so that the Governor will not support placer miners in their efforts to harvest Alaskan resources on what little land is left for economic development.

A slide in the price of oil is something that we can deal with. As Americans and Alaskans we can come together and overcome many things. Unless we stop shooting ourselves in the foot as outlined above our continued existence as an economically viable political subdivision of the United States is in jeopardy. Should we have our Juneau legislators place an item in the capital budget calling for the erection of a sign on the Alcan Highway reminding the last person leaving the State to turn off the lights? Or should we come together and insist on our rights to use our land to support our families?

Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their State.

A very concerned Alaskan,  
Eugene W. Furman CPA

## *Governor asked to Intervene in Mining suit*

Governor Bill Sheffield  
Pouch A  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Sheffield:

The Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. respectfully asks you reconsider your decision not to intervene in the Sierra Club v. Penfold lawsuit.

We believe this issue is too important for the state to be silent. This suit will determine the extent of mining operations during the upcoming season and could very well determine the viability of operations for the foreseeable future.

No matter what position the state takes regarding this case, it is clearly

in Alaska's interests to be represented in the proceedings and decision.

Thousands of mine workers and support service employees are directly threatened by this case. The millions of dollars generated by this industry are desperately needed by our economy, especially since the bulk of those dollars are spent in cash-poor, rural areas.

Please reconsider your decision on this matter. Mining in Alaska has far too much historic and economic value for our state to ignore in times of such great need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Resource Development Council for  
Alaska, Inc.  
Paula P. Easley, Executive Director