

Eben Hopson Sees Need for 13th Region

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Mr. Howard Rock, Editor
Tundra Times
P.O. Box 1287
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Howard:

This is reflecting back to your last issue of the paper, wherein, an article enlarged on the attitude of the South Eastern's Sealaska on the formation of a 13th Regional Corporation.

As usual, I do not have any confusing figures to argue with but instead, I wish to make my position known. Perhaps this is the right time to argue that point since there is no B.I.A. in Washington, D.C. now.

Initially, the B.I.A. and the enrollment office in Alaska made no effort to explain to our out of State brothers and sisters the advantages or disadvantages of organizing a 13th Regional Corporation.

Frankly, I refuse to consider those out of State as mere statistics. They are human beings as you and I. Wherever they may be, they have the same rights as anyone else.

When we, In Alaska, argue for the purpose of getting as much land as we can from the Federal Government, based on population, we tend to forget that, while this may be true, their rights and desires should be respected and we should extend ourselves to assist them, and permit them to realize those rights and desires. An improper administration by the enrollment section of the Land Claims Act for those eligible recipients should not in any way impose

on their right to self determination. I think all of us understand that we have the undeniable right and liberty as anyone else in this country to do what is right by our own judgement. I do not think we will fool anyone. If the author of the article in your paper last week, and I were in California, Oregon and Seattle, we would be screaming our heads off for a 13th Regional Corporation.

I think there is a lot to be gained by this action. Any positive action to permit the organization of a 13th Regional Corporation would be welcomed. After all, this is what they want and they are entitled to it. It is not for you and I to tell them otherwise, just because we happen to feel that it will not benefit us directly.

It is not really a loss of land nor money for us because these people, being Alaskans, were already out of the State even before we started our fight for the settlement that we got.

It is not right for us to deny them their wish, now that we have a settlement. We just have to understand that and live with it.

I think the Secretary of the Interior should immediately investigate this situation, and if found to be the wish of the majority of those out of State, permit the organization of a 13th Regional Corporation.

Sincerely yours,
NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH

Eben Hopson
Mayor

cc: Rogers B. Morton,
Secretary of Interior
Morris Thompson,
B.I.A.