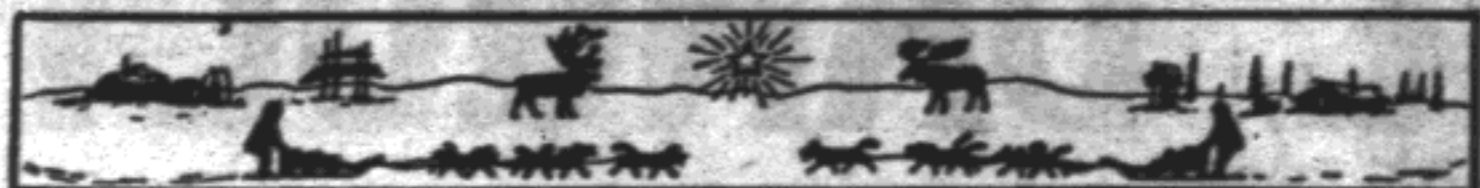


"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Editorial—

Eyes Are Upon You — The Native Voters

It is becoming most evident that the native voters of rural Alaska are being eyed more and more each general election year. The Senate and U.S. House hopefuls, as well as that of the governorship of Alaska and on lesser degree, some of the state legislative seat seekers, depending on the area from which they run, are increasingly seeking the native vote. Why is this going on? The most potent answer might be that an office seeker can coast in to his chosen office target if he can line up sufficient native vote in his favor.

This is the fact that should be fully understood by our native people that they have the voting power to elect a candidate. This could be done almost with certainty if an organized and concerted effort is made to aim the vote. This eventuality can happen and our major politicians are only too aware that it can. This is the reason why they work hard for the native vote. We hope that they will always pursue it with vigor because it is a revealing process that our people are very much in the political picture of the State of Alaska.

This fact should always be in the minds of our native leaders because it is one of our most prized possessions in the affairs of our state. It is our IN for benefits that can come our way. It is a potent possession that should be carefully nursed along by our leaders. They should make efforts to refine it so it can work better. And it can IF conscientious and serious efforts are made. It is a possession that should not be allowed to exist without direction. If this is allowed, it can be of little use to us. It is too great a possession to be left unattended.

We have heard discussions that the native voting power that is evident today will not always be. Some people are saying that with the influx of many people into Alaska now, and this may accelerate in the future, that the percentage of the native vote will not be as significant as the native people enjoy it today.

This is a sobering possibility that should be kept in mind and it may not be as remote as we might think. Perhaps this can be circumvented by starting grassroots work in cultivation of political repore and amicability among the friends of the native people throughout Alaska to offset the percentage drop of the native vote that could happen. Our native population cannot afford to lose whatever effectiveness it now possesses—the voting power—and we may need help to keep it effective in the future.

At any rate, the voting effectiveness of our native people will again have the opportunity to demonstrate itself in the coming November 5 general election. The ballots, if directed well, could play a paramount role. This is something our native leaders should consider perhaps, because the native vote without adequate information means little. If an aim should be considered, it should be done with reason based on well-founded evaluations.

Dear Editor:

When I was 14 years old, that's 47 years ago, I was interpreter in court at Nulato, Alaska. The storekeeper, or trader, was going to take or attach a motor and boat, 6-8 Kenneth inboard motor.

The law says you can't take away something what you're making a living with. Now, I like to know why the Internal Revenue could lock a place where people are making a living, just for tax. That is if a fellow can't pay tax.

The tax is going to starve us. Now where is these guys that we vote for? Now is the time they should wake up and do something about it before it goes too far.

—FRED STICKMAN, SR.

United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Sept. 6, 1968

Robert L. Bennett,
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

I recently visited White Mountain and was shocked to see that the school that has been repeatedly condemned as a fire-trap and otherwise unfit, is still that village's school and that there are apparently no plans for a new school. While I appreciate that many new school buildings are needed and that all those needs cannot be satisfied at once, I would consider that the case of White Mountain is one of the highest priority. Actually the lives of the children are being daily risked as long as that school is in operation. It is in every way not only inadequate but dangerous.

May I add at this point that I am dismayed to learn that in the new schools which the BIA is building or planning to build in Native villages throughout Alaska, there is no provision for a gymnasium or even for a multi-purpose room. That, to me, is shocking. In no part of the Nation is such a facility more needed. As you know, our winters are longer and colder than in any other part of the U.S. and the opportunities for outdoor recreating during those long, dark, cold months for our youngsters are limited.

I think it should be established as a principle that no new school should be built without a gymnasium or, at least, a multi-purpose room which can be used as such.

Please let me know that you have provided for a new school for White Mountain in the forthcoming budget.

With best wishes, I remain

Cordially yours,
Ernest Gruening, U.S.S.

cc: Andrew Brown, President
White Mountain Council
Howard Rock, Tundra Times

Collective eyes of the politically astute will again be focused on the vote of the native people on November 5. This is indeed a position of respect but this respect can be enhanced considerably if the ballots are cast with care and wisdom. After all, when the votes are counted, those people we helped to get elected will live with us for some years to come.

Letters to the Editor

Mourns Dr. H. Forbes; Cites T. Times' Worth

P.O. Box 115
Gakona, Alaska
September 5, 1968

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

Dear Mr. Rock:

It was sad to hear of the death of a friend that many of us never met, Dr. Forbes, Tundra Times Benefactor.

I think the eulogy by the editor was fitting a man beloved by many native Alaskans and just as fitting is the coming Tundra Times Banquet, which was designated for the commemoration and appreciation of the late Dr. Henry S. Forbes.

As an employee of Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. and as officer of several Native Organizations, I had the opportunity to visit many rural Alaskan communities. I learned that Tundra Times played a very important role in the lives of many Alaskans.

There have been articles I wasn't pleased with in the past; but I have yet to find a substitute for the Times that could satisfy my desire to read about people with whom I am identified.

The Tundra Times has benefited the native people in so many ways that we now take these for granted. There is so much news these days that many of the rural Native just can't keep up with them. The Tundra Times has done its work in filling him in on the latest, which he is concerned.

Keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,
Roy S. Ewan
Area Community Developer

P.S. More articles like the August 30, article about the State Labor Department.

Struggle to Improve Housing Shows Gains

The long struggle by many agencies and individuals toward improvement of the deplorable housing conditions in the remote villages of Alaska is beginning to show tangible results.

Jay C. Mueller, Executive Director for the Alaska State Housing Authority announced this week that shipments of materials for construction of the first 100 houses and the pre-fabrication plant which will produce the new homes have arrived in Bethel.

"The plant which is being built by Braund, Inc., of Anchorage will be completed this year, and ten of the initial 200 homes authorized will be erected and in place by the end of this year," Mueller said.

The ASHA Executive Director said that funds have been made available by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for construction of the homes and that Hal Grindle, Assistant Executive Director, had just returned from Bethel where he and Janet McCabe, of ASHA's Planning Department, met with local officials and townspeople to give them a preview of the town plan, prepared by ASHA, and the layout and location for the houses.

The houses will be arranged in neighborhood clusters and for the first time in Alaska the occupants will enter into an

agreement to purchase these homes rather than rent them.

The plan for the house was prepared by ASHA and offers a practical and economical approach to housing for the arctic regions of the state.

"Various agencies are involved in the Bethel housing project. One of the unique features of the program is that local residents will be trained through funding by the Office of Economic Opportunity in home ownership, budgeting, maintenance and related skills," Mueller commented.

The Federal Economic Development Administration, State Department of Education, and the State and U.S. Departments of Labor have cooperated to provide training in construction skills to accomplish the fabrication and erection of the homes.

Mueller said that the program at Bethel is the beginning of a continuing program to improve the physical and social conditions throughout the deprived, remote areas of Alaska. The project schedule calls for completion of the entire 200 homes during the 1970 building season.

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WANTED: Chilkat Blankets; totem poles; ivory pipes and carvings; argillite carvings; petlatch bowls; fish hooks; spoons and all N.W. items 50 years of age or older. Send photo or sketch and prices to: Albert T. Miller, 2235 West Live Oak Dr. Los Angeles, California 90028.