

Letters to the Tundra Times

Atka transportation

Atka Village Council
Atka Rural Branch
Atka, Alaska 99502
January 9, 1980

Mr. John A. Moore II
Assistant Area
Directors (Programs)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
P.O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Dear Mr. Moore:

We are writing this letter in response to your letter of October 17 and December 11, 1979. We feel that the guidelines given in those letters are unfair and will place unnecessary hardship on the full time residents of Atka as well as the various agencies and groups that come to Atka to assist the people here.

Below are our feelings and comments regarding the guidelines set forth in your letter of December 11, 1979 with your guideline listed first in capitals.

1. THAT ANYTHING MORE THAN TWO (2) PIECES OF LUGGAGE OR FORTY (40) POUNDS PER PASSENGER WILL BE SHIPPED VIA MAIL OR REMAIN BEHIND. THIS IS BOTH AS ADAK AND ATKA. First of all, we feel that at least sixty-six (66) pounds of baggage should be allowable as this is the baggage allowed on Reeve Aleutian Airways. Because of the exorbitant cost of flying on Reeve (\$542 round trip to Anchorage) our people get to travel infrequently. When they do travel, they like to shop for things that are unavailable to them here in Atka. Secondly, it would be difficult to mail any excess baggage from Adak....

2. ONLY FULL TIME RESIDENTS OF ATKA ARE TO USE THIS SERVICE WHEN THE AIRCRAFT AND PILOTS ARE BEING PAID FOR WITH BUREAU FUNDS. Many full time residents have family who are originally from Atka but living elsewhere. These people would be visiting Atka occasionally and we feel they should be allowed to travel on Bureau flights without adding any additional costs to the high air fare they have already paid to get to Adak.

3. NO FREIGHT WILL BE TRANSPORTED WHEN THE AIRCRAFT IS AVAILABLE

TO THE BUREAU. I'M SUGGESTING THAT THE U.S. MAIL BE USED. We were not exactly sure what you meant by 'freight' but we assume that you meant items sent by air freight to Adak. There are times when something is needed in a hurry or times when air freight is the only way something can be sent. We do not, however, feel that the people make it a habitual practice to send items over by air freight as the cost is too prohibitive for most of Atka's residents.

4. THE OTHER GUIDELINES REGARDING CLEARANCE BY THE NAVY TO ENTER THE NAVY BASE AS WELL AS THE NEED TO GET CLEARANCE FROM THE ANCHORAGE AGENCY PRIOR TO TRAVEL ARE STILL IN EFFECT. The Security personnel on Adak have a listing of the names of people who are authorized by the Village Council to come to Atka. These are the people we consider to be 'residents'. Regarding obtaining clearance from the Anchorage Agency, at this time, we would like to suggest

that more than one person be responsible for giving the clearance. Some of the residents have reported difficulty in contacting the person in charge of giving clearance. The person is hard to reach, is unusually not available to the caller, does not return calls.

5. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE TO BE MADE WITH OAS FOR ALL FLIGHTS THAT ARE NOT BUREAU SPONSORED. THIS INCLUDES THE PROCUREMENT OF FUEL AND LUBRICANTS FOR THE AIRCRAFT. How are others who wish to use the aircraft supposed to obtain fuel and lubricants for the plane when the only source is the fuel BIA has at Adak and the Navy has made it clear that there will be no fuel available for use in the plane? We would like to know for our own information.

You mention in your letter of October 17th that 'groceries for resale by the store' were being brought over on the flights. Any groceries that the store has ordered have been sent over by parcel post and are items that could not easily come on the once yearly trip of the North Star II; i.e., eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, canned milk (which was not shipped on North Star this past year), cere-

als, etc. Are you saying our people should not be allowed to have these things?

In summation, we do not feel that we are abusing the transportation service that is being offered to us. It is currently the only means available. If there were an alternative it would very likely be used. We realize that your agency has gone to a great deal of trouble and expense to provide us with transportation and we are appreciative of the agency's efforts on our behalf. However, we also feel that now that the agency has provided us with the service that you are trying to restrict our use of it. The people of Atka has no say-so about the adoption of these guidelines. We would like to suggest that someone from either the Juneau or Anchorage office (preferably the Juneau office) visit Atka so that they may see first hand what the situation is and find out from the people of Atka what problems have been encountered. After that perhaps some guidelines can be developed that will be equitable to both parties concerned.

Sincerely,
Gregory Golodoff
President, Atka Village Council

cc: Tundra Times

Rural education

Andy Durny
Nulato, Alaska 99765

January 23, 1980

Dear Editor:

I've heard some stories about the "Kivalina Crisis" (regarding the Kivalina School) and I recently read a letter in the Tundra Times about some complaints a group of parents at Hooper Bay had regarding their school. These things prompted me to write about a matter which has been bothering me for some time.

About 5 years ago, when most of the rural schools were run by the BIA or State Operated Schools, and when the state was preparing the villages for the formation of the unorganized Burrough School Districts, the big emphasis was on "local control" of the schools. I remember people from the State coming here for (See LETTERS, Page Five)

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meetings to tell us that the whole purpose for the change-over (from S.O.S. to the school boards. The local boards are now strictly advisory. What this means is that the district office is not obliged to follow the wishes and desires of the local school boards and that it can - and in some instances it does - completely ignore the wishes of the local boards.

Although most of the districts still retain the local boards (at least the districts I have come into contact with) on at least an advisory capacity, I still feel that taking away the powers of the local community school boards was an action directly opposed to the spirit of "local control of the schools." In my opinion, one of the requirements for the rural schools to be effective is to have an active involvement and participation by parents and community members. The district offices serve a vital and very useful purpose in running the rural schools, but at the same time they cannot be effective if they do not work in cooperation with local boards. The district boards and the local boards should have the responsibility to work together in a spirit of cooperation for the purpose of improving education in the villages.

Sincerely,
Andy Dumry

ANCADA complaint

Alaska Native Commission
on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
750 E. Fireweed Lane, Suite 2
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
January 24, 1980

Dear Editor:

As President of the Alaska Native Commission on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ANCADA), I have been advised by Village Council leaders both in the Villages of Akiak and Akiachuk that they shortly would be submitting to me for the purpose of advocacy action on their behalf by ANCADA, statements expressing the disapproval of their Villages towards the allegedly discourteous and prejudicially demeaning manner in which Mr. William Lomack, Village Alcoholism Educational Counselor from Akiachuk, was treated by Mr. Fred Miller, Vice-Chairman, Governor's Advisory Board on Alcoholism,

at the December 7-8, 1979 meeting of that Board which was held in Ketchikan.

If and when these statements from the two villages are received, ANCADA will request that the Governor's office conduct a review of the alleged incident in order to ascertain whether the human rights of Mr. Lomack were violated by an appointed State Official. If such an investigation concludes that, indeed the human rights of Mr. Lomack were violated, then ANCADA strongly will recommend to the Governor's Office that disciplinary action be taken. It is the opinion of ANCADA that the Governor's Advisory Board, as the representative Body of all State residents in alcohol misuse matters, should not merely tolerate the expressing of informed opinion regarding alcohol misuse as its meetings but should welcome and encourage the presentation of such testimony. It is unfortunate that Mr. Lomack's attempts to express himself before the Board, regardless of the human rights question, were so singularly prohibited.

Sincerely,
Daisy May Lamont, President
ANCADA Board of Directors

Different world

Barrow, Alaska 99723
January 22, 1980

Ms. Dorothy Storck
c/o Philadelphia Inquirer
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Ms. Storck:

My mother recently sent me a copy of your column dealing with Alaska's North Slope. From the general tone of the first section of that column, I get the feeling that part of you still loves this land and its people very much. I can see how

the information in the second part must have truly been disturbing.

It was disturbing to me also, not because it isn't true - it is. There are tremendous problems here. But that's only one part of the story. And to be fair to this land and its people, the other part should be told.

First of all, I's like to clarify two statements in your column. Dr. Foulks and his colleagues did not work in six Eskimo villages. They were contracted to do a study of the alcohol problem in Barrow - the largest North Slope village and the one most impacted by change. Those of us involved on a day to day basis with the problems of change wanted a definite idea of the pervasiveness and pattern of the problem. Some of our smaller villages are in danger of the same impact due to off shore development. We hoped an understanding of the pattern of alcohol abuse here would help us stop it before it was exported to the smaller communities, as well as giving us some guidance in tackling the problem in Barrow.

Also, Dr. Foulks and his colleagues did not talk to 1200 Eskimos. They did interview a random sampling of the adult population for their study that probably totaled 150 people at least. Since our population is only 2800 in Barrow, that number, though small at first glance,

represents a scientifically valid basis for a study.

I said earlier there was another part to the picture presented in your column. It is a picture of hope and hard work. It is a picture of families so strong that they still survive as active, supportive units despite pressures and change that should have des-

troyed them long ago. Yes, we do have family problems, wife and child abuse - all related to alcohol abuse. But the wonder is not the extent of the destruction. The wonder is the strength that has allowed so much of the traditional Inupiat culture to survive.

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● *Surviving in a Different World*

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The outside world did come crashing in here.

Outside ways have changed much of the surface of this culture. Traditions are hard to maintain when outsiders make rules and regulations with no local input. But the Inupiat are learning the "white man's" way and using it to preserve the best of their world. A few years ago, the issue of off shore oil development would have been raised, debated and resolved with no voice of the Inupiat heard. Now, state and federal delegations come to our villages and hold public hearings. Our seniors offer the benefit of their age old knowledge of our land and seas. Our young people work to find a way to preserve the old and accomodate the new.

The problems and pain of this community cannot be denied. But neither can its strength. By all rights, there should be no Inupiat left today. The outsiders wiped over half of them out with contagious disease over 70 years ago. Then they introduced alcohol. Then came T.B. Then came the discovery of oil and its attendant intrusions.

But the Inupiat did survive. The strength that allowed them

to survive in the Arctic is helping them survive in a different world. And if you think about it, they're not asking for much help to survive. They just want the rest of us to love their land and seas and creatures as much as they do. They ask that we treat their world with respect and love - as they do. They ask that when the outside world

enters this time, it does so gently and with reverence.

Our problems are many. But given a chance, we can solve them. And protect our world and our people. It's not really asking too much.

Sincerely yours,
Elise Sereni Patkotak
Director

NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH
Health and

Social Services Agency
cc: Tundra Times