

Letters to the Editor

Guard officer responds to discrimination story

Dear Editor:

I spoke to you on January 19, 1995 concerning an article in your Wednesday, January 18, 1995 edition. In that article you quote a report by Hightower Investigations. I have given Mr. Hightower notice to cease publication of this libelous and defamatory information and to take remedial action to correct the harm his unfounded assertions are causing me and my family.

I am a Colonel in the Air Guard. Mr. Hightower has failed to make any connection between his allegations against me and any connection with actions in the Army Guard. You have also failed to make that connection. Mr. Hightower accuses me of building a soccer field for my son and of removing Major Overly from his position to put in another officer. In the case of the former, I did indeed work with the Municipality of Anchorage to develop Loretta French Park. This is a municipality owned Park and the work was done as a community service project by the Guard. I received recognition from the Mayor for my assistance. I have

worked on similar projects in the past and plan to do so again. I am proud that I took part in this project. The accusation concerning Major Overly is ridiculous. Major Overly hasn't worked for me in years, he was never the Director of Personnel, and the individual who was selected for the position was selected into the same position he had resigned from a few months earlier. In any event, what do you see as the connection to these two allegations and bias treatment of Alaska Natives? Although I can only speak for myself, this same logic applies to General Taylor.

I have been in the Alaska Air Guard for several years. I was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel by General Pagano and to Colonel by General Schaeffer. I have received the highest evaluations and also military decorations from each of these gentlemen. I have been a supporter of increasing minorities in the guard and I have a record of accomplishment in that area. I do not believe you will find anyone in the Alaska Guard who has done as much as Headquarters of the Alaska Air Guard. Two of those are female, one black and

two are white. When General Taylor and I came to the Headquarters all of the Colonels were white males.

Had you talked to me, you would have known this. I urge you to talk to the Colonels in the headquarters, ask them about General Taylor and I. Instead, you chose to quote from a report of a "Investigator" who also never bothered to talk to me. Your assertion that you attempted to contact me is utter rubbish. I have voice mail in the office and a recorder on my phone at home.

Sincerely,
Jerry W. Gillean
Chugiak, AK