

"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—

Native Politics Needs Direction

Politics, all the way from the top down on the Alaskan political arena is rapidly shaping up. Plans for gubernatorial and congressional contests for seats are already well underway. Political strategists are working feverishly to map out winning maneuvers and how to defeat opponents. All this is known but not what the native leaders might have in mind as to what effort might be made to apply native politics in the 1970 political year.

What seems to amount to some apathy toward political matters by the native leadership is seeming to be evident. When issues and candidates are becoming clearer everyday, inaction by the native leaders becomes somewhat alarming. We feel that some positive political actions, with plans for those actions, are imperative in what could be one of the most momentous political years Alaska has ever seen.

The outcome of election results of 1970 will affect the everyday lives of all Alaskans, which means that all villages—all village people—will feel the results of issues and be influenced by many of those elected to office. With this in mind, it is imperative that efforts be made to acquaint the native people as to issues that will be decided and to acquaint them as to the qualifications of major and lesser political candidates. These will be vital facets that should be pushed so the native voters will have a better than ever understanding of political matters when it comes time to cast their votes in the August primary and November general election.

There has been some talk by some native leaders to organize a political club, a political steering committee or a political action group. The idea has merit. It should be pursued and expedited. Its organization should be carefully planned so it will perform for the best interests of our native people. Knowledgeable native citizens should be involved from all regions in native areas. There should be a decision whether the group can operate independently of native associations or whether it should work closely with them. The officers of the Alaska Federation of Natives should be consulted as to the best route to take and what the statewide group might consider the best direction for it. If it should work independently of native organizations, it should then establish the best possible communications with the regional groups. If it must work closely with them, then there should be the best possible spirit of cooperation between them.

The 1970 election year promises to be one of the most intense areas of political activity in the State of Alaska. Our native people should be given a well meant chance to understand more of political matters as never before, gathered for them by politically knowledgeable native persons. The stakes are high and the end results will be felt, most likely for a long time to come in the future.

Dip Net Subsistence Fishing Applications Now Available

Dip net subsistence fishing applications for the salmon fishery in the Copper River at Chitina are now available at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office, Room 116, in the State Court and Office Building. Permits will be mailed to applicants this year to avoid confusion and congestion in the Fairbanks office.

The subsistence fishery will begin on June 1st so participants are asked to get their applications as early as possible. Subsistence fishing permits can only be issued to residents of the State of Alaska.

Also Awards 5 Native Artisans—

Gov. Miller Says Keep Alive Native Art Heritage in Alaska

Five native Alaskan artisans were presented awards by Governor Keith H. Miller on behalf of the Alaska Council on the Arts at the council's first banquet held at the Switzerland last Saturday night in Fairbanks.

Led by Gov. Miller, the banquet speakers stressed the importance of keeping alive, and to revive, the artistic heritage of native Alaskans.

"It constitutes in fact a renaissance," said Gov. Miller.

Miller said that in Kodiak the almost lost art of weaving Attu baskets was being revived by a small group of dedicated women "who are determined to preserve this ancient art for posterity."

He said that Mrs. Henry Neseth of Kodiak organized the effort because "she exemplifies the attitude towards art that seems to be growing in Alaska today. It constitutes in fact a renaissance."

"We in Alaska," Miller went on, "realize that we have the opportunity to revive the ancient ethnic arts of our many peoples and assure that those art forms will not be lost forever as is the case in so many other parts of the world."

"What is more important is the fact that we are taking advantage of that unique opportunity."

Gov. Miller cited as an example the totem pole restoration project under the direction of Mrs. Jane Wallen, Director of Alaska State Museum. She is assisted by Dennis Demmert, a Tlingit Indian.

The restoration was initiated by the Alaska State Council on the Arts headed by its chairman Mary Hale. Smithsonian Institution is also aiding in the restoration project.

The art awards were presented by Gov. Miller to the following native men and women:

—Mrs. Mildred Sparks, who was Alaska's Mother of the Year about two years ago, was the first recipient of a certificate designed by Ronald Senungetuk.

Mrs. Sparks has long been active in the preservation and continuation of the traditions of her people—the Chilkat Indians of Haines and Klukwan.

—Mrs. Emily Ivanoff Brown of Unalakleet who has, and is now writing, the songs and legends of her people handed down through the women in her family for generations.

—Anfesia Shapsnikoff who is now involved in the development of a historical society in Unalakleet on the Aleutian Chain "which

has as its objective the thoughtful preservation—and just as importantly—the interpretation of traditional Aleut culture."

—Amos Wallace, a Tlingit totem pole carver. Wallace has consistently pursued his interest in carving.

"He combines a concern for the traditional with a realistic

ability to succeed as a contemporary carver," said Mary Hale.

—Bea Starkweather who, along with her interests in the performing arts (she is a member of the Saxman Indian Dance Group), has shown concern for the retention of Southeastern Alaska's rich cultural heritage.

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Letters to the Editor

P.O. Box 58
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752
April 17, 1970

Pioneers Home
Sitka, Alaska 99835
April 25, 1970

Speaker of the House
House of Representatives
Alaska Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

My dear Sir:

This communication refers to House Joint Resolution No. 112 introduced in the House by Commerce Committee just a month ago today. Such a commendation and writ of appreciation about the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been long overdue in my opinion. I wish to state my compliments to the House for this fine gesture.

As a native of Alaska and as an employee of the Bureau since 1954 (I lost the 1954 election) the passage of the said Resolution would have had my strong support were I still sitting in legislative chambers.

In opposition to destructive criticism against the BIA by "unthinking persons" (as the Resolution states) it has always been my firm belief that the Bureau of Indian Affairs has done a pretty good job in assisting all Alaskan natives for advancement to American way of life. True, we can always accept constructive criticism, but in any situation destructive type does not always help.

You, with this Resolution, have my utmost respect, and I am sure many a native in Alaska feels the same way.

Yours respectfully,
Percy Ipalook, Sr.

cc: Chairman, Commerce Committee.

To My Eskimo Friends:

Not long ago, I visited one of the Eskimo villages. On the last day of my visit the following incident took place.

I returned to the clinic after lunch to find a husky about three to four years old on the doorstep bleeding from an apparent bullet hole below the ribs. Investigation of the trail of blood revealed he had made a complete circuit looking for help. Attempts to locate his family were futile in that they refused to come. As the patient was beyond help, he was mercifully shot to death by the teacher.

Were this an isolated incident, perhaps it would be easier to forget the look in that dog's eyes. But I am learning (from Eskimo sources) that the practice of shooting a dog so he will die later and thus conceal his murderer's identity is not an uncommon practice, nor is it confined to this village.

The village law prohibiting loose dogs is a good one; nor do I object to the law saying loose dogs may be shot. I only hope the next time it seems necessary, each of you will be man enough to shoot to kill—instantly.

Sincerely,
A Gussuk Friend

Open letter to Alaska legislators—Republicans, Democrats and Independents.

Dear Editor:

As ever before State of Alaska needs Independent, democratic governor instead of undemocratic, reactionary, greedy wonder boy man.

So it is up to you legislators of Alaska.

Alaska Constitution needs amendment (to curb power of the Governor). Let's hear from you legislators, people's representatives. Let's hear from you about Wickersham, and Hickel Highway deal. Clarify that.

Present legislators must thrash out all those wonder deals before adjourning, and remember "Panama Oil Scandal" during Republican President Harding's administration in 1924-1925.

Truth always comes out sooner or later. Money is not everything.

Honest man, sleep sound.

Yours truly,
/s/ Boris Chernikoff, Sr.

Nikolai, Alaska 99691
April 16, 1970

Dear Editor:

During the six months my husband and I have spent in Nikolai as Vista Volunteers many children have asked questions about the "outside." This "outside" refers not to the lower-48 but to that part of Alaska outside the village.

It may seem strange to call Fairbanks, Anchorage, the Matanuska Valley, and Kodiak Island the "outside," but when a whole life is spent living in a small village between the Alaska Range and the Kuskokwim Mountains and isolated from the rest of Alaska by trees, valleys, mountains, and miles of wilderness, it seems reasonable to assume that these children would call anything not near the village "outside."

Because the Nikolai school children have inquisitive minds and strong curiosities they have gotten together and are trying to raise enough money to see Fairbanks, Anchorage, the Matanuska Valley, and Kodiak Island. The children have been raising money through bake sales and selling their own handicrafts, but they have a long way to go and need all the support they can get.

We need help from individuals or organizations that would be interested in participating in the planning and support of this trip. If you would like more information about the children, the village or how you can help with the Nikolai Children's Fund, then please write to me and the children.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Kai Dickey

Poem—

North Slope Summer

Boxcars are flying
to eldorado;
metal monsters
flounder
on marshy tundra;
at Northwest Passage.

Mosquitos of steel
and rubber
suck up
through layers of frost
the black juice
of old reptiles.

Yet to the King
who watches
over our blue planet
one day is like another:
immune to oil fever
the midnight sun
snoozes among the derricks.

—OLIVER EVERETTE
Fairbanks