

# *A Book Review—* **LETTERS TO HOWARD**

**JUST PUBLISHED:** *Fred Bigjim and James Ito-Adler, LETTERS TO HOWARD: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ALASKA NATIVE LAND CLAIMS; Alaska Methodist University Press, 1974. 115 pages. Frontispiece. Topical Index. \$8.00 hardcover. \$5.00 paperback.*

LETTERS TO HOWARD is a collection of 24 letters on critical issues of the Alaska Native Land Claims. The letters are written to Howard Rock, editor of the Tundra Times, by an old Eskimo and a young ex-VISTA volunteer Naugga Ciunerput and Wally Morton respectively.

Naugga and Wally dare "to look the gift horse in the mouth, "not to second guess the Native leadership who were faced with the impossible task of representing Alaska's diverse peoples in the negotiations and drafting of the bill, but rather to attempt to look to the future, to understand what effect this legislation will have on Native ways of life. Naugga, for example, asks Howard (Letter 7) about the division between surface and subsurface rights in village land: "What will mining and drilling do to life in the small villages? Maybe they are afraid that if there are rich minerals underneath the ground, there may be rich Natives above it."

The letters, mailed from Land's End Village, Alaska, appeared in the Tundra Times from April to November 197

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In real life, Naugga Ciunerput and Wally Morton are Fred Bigjim and James Ito-Adler. Fred is an Alaskan Eskimo enrolled in the Bering Straits Regional Corporation, and Jim is an ex-Peace Corps volunteer in Brazil. They worked on these letters while both were Teaching Fellows in a Harvard University course entitled "Native Americans in the Contemporary United States." Fred has subsequently used the letters in Alaska Methodist University courses and workshops on the Alaska Native Land Claims.

Both men are presently doctoral candidates—Fred at the Suffolk Law School and Jim at Harvard.

Sample topics of the book: Anthropologist, Change vs. Progress, Competition Vs. Cooperation, Enrollment, Integration, Land Selection, Land Use Planning Commission, Leadership, Native as defined in AN ACT, Native vs. Citizen Rights, Oil Spill, Pipeline, Profit vs. Non-Profit Corporations, Regional Corporation, Self-determination, Taxation, Village Corporation.