

Letters from Here and There

Fairbanks Same as Seattle

TUNDRA TIMES
Fairbanks, Alaska

I don't believe that your editor has given the problem of the non-residents the usual careful consideration of the non-residents in their relation to the residents of Fairbanks or you might take a different position (this I get by hearsay since the complimentary copy of your paper promised by your reporter has not yet arrived.)

I would ask why should the non-residents who migrated to Fairbanks (and elsewhere) receive aboriginal benefits while the non-residents of Seattle are excluded?

There is no legal difference between the two except that of the fictitious boundary line by which the Fairbanks non-residents are in Alaska and those in Seattle are in Washington. The Fairbanks migrants from the villages are getting these benefits by the fiat of congress as heirs of those who held "Indian title" by "use and occupation." Why should they be given "compensation" for the land which each of them long ago abandoned their native habitat? I see one prominent claimant there is from Petersburg where he was also a migrant from an area still 300 miles distant and at a place where he didn't own any aboriginal land.

Congress is not compensating us for the land which the government took from our aboriginal ancestors. It was merely its way of solving a problem much as Alexander the Great "cut the Gordian knot." In effect Congress said "let's extinguish whatever title the Natives had on terms by which that won't cost us anything" and so the Act of Dec. 18, 1971 was enacted. The principle on which the migrants at Fairbanks are to be paid is based on the Anglo-Saxon system of heirship. Once you realize that fact, then you will realize that the non-residents of Seattle are just as much entitled to share equally with the migrants of Fairbanks (which never was an aboriginal town) and Anchorage

(where by fiat) the Executive Department shunted them 30 miles out of the way of the whites there, and Juneau (where 1800 Indian migrants abandoned their native areas and disposed the 200 aborigines there) or John Borbridge whose tribe long ago abandoned its domicile on the Copper River, then abandoned the newer one at Sitka, and yet talk about "the land which we lost" when actually they lost no land.

Arthur Goldberg was right — the groups (except the North Slope) who employed local attorneys were merely third party agents and were not primary owners of land.

WILLIAM L. PAUL, SR.
Attorney at Law
1521-16th Avenue East
Seattle, Washington 98102

June 26, 1973

Bergman Wants Support On Land Use Testimony

May 5, 1973 was a very important, hard, and sad day for people here at Allakaket, Alutia, Bettles and Hughes. Part of the State-Federal Land Use Planning Commission were here to hold hearing on part of the 80 million acre D-2 land. The one that will affect us is the proposed National Park North of Allakaket on the Brooks Range. Also the proposed Wildlife Refuge about East and South-East of Allakaket. A total of 41 testimonies were spoken in Athabaskan and translated (as close as possible) in English. In every testimony the word was clear — we want our lands as it is forever — we want subsistence hunting within the Systems by our Native people — we don't want roads, mining, commercial harvesting of logs, home-steading and mass influx of people within the Systems. I can't remember everything that was said during the hearing, but these are the main parts of it. The main part of the testimonies was the part that we want our children and their children to be free

to hunt for subsistence when they grow up. Will they be? Can they go hunting 30, 40 miles from Allakaket, 20 or 30 years from now? If they can't how the hell are they going to make their living? I forgot to mention fishing, trapping and berry-picking. Also during the hearing the words "Native Input" kept coming up. Well, for the L.U.P.C. members that were here, they heard true "Native Input" about the concern of our land and especially our children who will be living with it. We spoke from the bottom of our hearts. I personally hope the Secretary of Interior and eventually the United States Congress will thoroughly consider our so-called "Native Input." Seems to me the only way "Native Input" will work for Natives, Non-Natives and any of the four systems will be to actually have Natives take part in policy-making and the management of the Systems that directly affects them.

Sincerely yours,

Edward Bergman Jr.
Allakaket, Alaska 99720

P.S. These D-2 lands around Allakaket will affect everyone along the Koyukuk River so PLEASE let your feelings be heard!! Write to our Congressman and Senators in Washington, D.C.

Wolves Will Be Wolves

June 29, 1973

Dear Editor,

One unique thing that struck me about Fairbanks when I first came here last summer was that everybody here seemed to have big dogs. I've never seen so many big dogs per person anywhere I've been before. And in inquiring as to why there were so many big dogs, I soon discovered the reason: almost every one of the big dogs, except for some of the St. Bernards, were part wolf. That's true, you can check it for yourself. You ask any Fairbanksan who owns a German shepherd/husky-type dog (or any variation

(Continued on page 8)

Letters...

(Continued from page 2)

thereof), and he will proudly admit that his dog is part wolf.

In being told this, I have always asked these people how their dogs got to be part wolf, but none of them have ever really given me a satisfactory answer. Still, not one of them doubts in the least that the blood of the savage wolf flows in his dog's veins. And for proof, they point out such things as their dog's wolfy eyes, the way he carries his tail, or how he digs holes in the yard. These are the more common proofs. I've also heard a few unusual proofs. One fellow on Farmers Loop Road told me he could tell his dog was part wolf because it wouldn't eat Gravy Train. A university student said he figured his dog was part wolf because he couldn't housebreak it. I'm sure all these reasons are valid.

But that still doesn't explain how all these hundreds of dogs in and around Fairbanks got to be part wolf. This question bothered me for a long time until recently when that female wolf wandered into town and was unfortunately hit by a car. I was reading about that and wondering why the female wolf had come to town in the first place when suddenly I realized the answer to both my questions. Why did that female wolf come to town? Because she couldn't find any male wolves out in the woods, that's why. They were all in town messing around with female dogs. That female wolf was hunting for her old man!

This may seem a bit far fetched, but stop and think. All of these Fairbanks dogs had to get their wolf ancestry from somewhere. And isn't it possible that male wolves have a hankering for variety just as do human beings? Personally, I suspect that they like pretty female dogs even more than they like female wolves, because the female wolves are old hat to them. Therefore, all these male wolves hang around the outskirts of Fairbanks, waiting for a chance to sneak into town and make out with some strange, exotic dog. Doesn't that make sense? If anyone has a better theory, I'd like to hear it.

Sincerely,

Ron Crowe
P.O. Box 80763
College, Alaska 99701