

'We Are Visibly Shaken'

Says Hydaburg Pastor

United Presbyterian
Church of the U.S.A.
Hydaburg, Alaska
February, 1966

Gentlemen:

We want a hearing.

The people of Hydaburg were visibly shaken when the Bureau of Indian Affairs officials from Juneau recently announced that their cannery would not operate again this summer. The people do not know where to turn in seeking their rights as they realize that ALL powers and authority lie opposed to them.

According to its constitution, the council of Hydaburg Cooperative Association is supposed to run its own business, but it seems to me that the BIA is dictating a policy of, "You do this or else . . ." The BIA has given these general reasons for operating the Klawock Oceanside Cannery over Hydaburg:

1. Klawock is more centrally located to the fishing grounds.
2. Adequate space is not available for housing transient workers.
3. The Klawock operation is more efficiently run.

In dealing with fish, is there a central fishing ground? In past years there was adequate housing for those that needed to be brought in from outside. They say that we have been given figures showing the efficiency of the Klawock operation, but no audits for the last two years can be found. Will they give us duplications if our originals have been lost? In the most recent audit sheet that I saw, Hydaburg was more efficient by \$100,000.

At the informal meeting last month, when straightforward questions were put to the BIA concerning the operations, they answered in generalities, off the cuff, or with no reply. It seems that in all correspondence or verbal communication, the BIA has always spoken in generalities and never in specifics. The Cooperative Association is being dealt with unfairly. We would like to know the facts, have them in writing, and would request an impartial hearing by qualified personnel either congressional and/or from the Department of Interior. An appeal for a hearing must be made. Rights as operators of a business and rights as American citizens have been neglected or undermined.

The Association does not say its views or ideas are correct. The members contend that they have not been presented the whole story, for it is their belief that the facts themselves will bring out the truth.

The cannery operation is the only industry in both of the above mentioned communities. To my knowledge, there has never existed a community without a means of income. I cannot see why both operations cannot continue to exist jointly if need be, shifting operations in alternate years. But for the government to support the one and allow the other to die is a bit hard to take.

A love and a concern for ALL people is my ministry. Hatred is all too prominent in the Twentieth Century world, and this is another case of people who have been slighted and whose freedom has been boxed in.

Any advice, personal help, organizational strength, or legal counsel will be appreciated.

/s/ Robert W. Frye
Intern Pastor