

Letters to the Tundra Times

Up technology

July 18, 1979
Box 30
Chitina, Alaska

To the Editor:

I wish to comment on John Nevak's theory of and against technology (letter, pg. 11, July 11, TU NDRA TIMES).

There is a growing fear of computers and the overwhelming advance of technocracy on the humans need for peace and close working with nature. But we must not fear machines or computers or technocracy for these are but techniques, tools to enable man to wrest a better living for himself and his loved ones.

Take tools away from any man, Native or newcomer, and we would be no better off than animals, and worse since we don't grow our own fur coats. I ask John and those who fear technology to look over their own personal, household & office belongings and imagine what kind of existence they'd have without all those store bought and technologically constructed goods.

Truly we'd be left bare bodies and helpless if present day food, clothing and shelter items were removed from our lives, then who wants to go back to simpler ancient ways of oil lamps and dugouts of old? From the first the ancients worked tools (technology) to the present day form of super high efficiency thus giving us materially one of the highest standards of living in the world.

So not technology but man the careless user of tools and technology must be blamed, man's dual nature of alternate good and evil causes our socioeconomic problems. What or who is in control of computers or technology?

Man should never be the victim or slave of technology. If he is, then who's fault is it. Today over a fourth of the world's people starve, but can you imagine how many would be cold, homeless and starving if technology stopped harvesting or refining the raw resources of the sky, and the land so people can live better than animals?

Besides, if John would study areas long under technology (western nations) he would see the truth that the land and sky become a greater blessing to people in modern nations than in backward primitive nations. Nevertheless I agree with John that man must always be in full control of technology and not be a victim of it.

/s/J. Sesky

Native hire?

July 7, 1979

Dear Editor:

What is happening to the Native business and contracting firms in Alaska? Every time an Native invitation to bid ad comes out one thing always seems to be missing. Every time a HUD, HEW, BIA, Federal State or Borough contract is awarded who has the upper hand. The Gussack. Why? The Agency doing the purchasing for Native projects 99% of the time forget that B.B.A.-H.C. gives preference to Indian and Alaskan Native firms under P.L. 93-638 "BUY INDIAN ACT". The Regretful part of this farce is that the prime purchasing agency is generally a native controlled operation but with white men calling the shots.

Our firm consists of 3 working partners. One from the Upper Yukon, one from the Lower Yukon and one from Washington state. We have a policy in our corporation papers that requires us to hire local Natives. How many HUD, PHS, HEW, State, Federal, or Borough jobs go to Native firms? Damn few (our black brothers haven't quite gotten the 10% minority hire across yet). Now I'm not talking about jobs that are urban just Native village jobs. How many Natives get to work on the HUD, PHS, HEW & RDA jobs. Damn few.

Example (1) Rural Cap material bid. "Buy Indian Act" allows for a Native firm to get a 10% preference. Our firm was the overall low bidder without the 10%. What did we get? Rural Cap decided to break up the bid and award piecemeal.

We get 1/10th of the award. Had the Buy Indian Act been enforced there would have been no question who was low. But then who wants to deal with a dumb savage.

Example (2) Gussack Firm, builds 10 houses cost \$60,000 each. Locals build same house for \$20,000 and the money stays in the village.

Example (3) Native firm constructs house in Arctic, 3 bdr. 1056 sq. feet in 22 days for \$68,000 Gussack contractor needs \$105,000 and 9 to 18 months to build smaller house.

Sad part about all this is that the Native built houses will endure and the Gussack built houses need major repairs before they are finished.

Almost all construction and supply that goes on in Alaska is controlled by white men. Why? Do we need to learn the finer points of behind the scene pre-contract negotiations? There are better words to use but negotiations will do for now.

Native brothers we have to stick together or we will be absorbed into the white culture. What a waste. We fought like hell for what belongs to us now why give it away? I've seen within my own family the turning away from our heritage and culture.

Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce was forced to stop his flight to Canada & safety. He turned and looked upon his people, and saw them cold, hungry, destitute, homeless, lonely and defeated. He said "We must begin a new life. Take the best the white man has to offer and the best the red man has to offer, and begin this new life."

Ever wonder what really goes on behind closed doors?

An American Indian
(name on file)

Haul road

Allakaket, Alaska
July 21, 1979

Dear Editor:

I would like to make a few comments on the haul road being open to the public.

First I want to state that House Bill 17 was passed in the House March 28. However,

(see LETTERS, page 20)

● *Letters to the Tundra Times*

(from page two)

the next day House Bill 17 failed by one vote. Rep. Pappy Moss changed his vote and voted against the bill. Many thanks to Rep. Pappy Moss for voting against the House Bill 17, also Brian Rogers and Sally Smith who also voted against the bill.

I don't like to see the road open to the public. Heavy travel on the road would put pressure on our wildlife resources which would hurt rural residents, who depend upon them for subsistence living. Here (Allakaket) we hunt and trap for a living, and don't like the road open to the public.

I sure enjoyed reading Sidney Hungington's comments on subsistence issues (TUNDRA

TIMES June issue). I wish more of the older natives would comment on the subsistence issue, being a chief for Allakaket I like to hear or read such comments.

warmest regards
Pollock Simon

Thanks

Nulato Ak. 99765
July 21, 1979

Dear Editor:

This is a letter of gratitude to all the people who worked so hard under such harsh conditions to recover James Ekada's

body. It is hard enough for anyone to lose someone from their family. Therefore it is very comforting to know that people from all the different villages care so much and can still work along side one another in this day and age.

To all you wonderful people who all came to Nulato from all over, the Ekada and McGinty family would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts. And hope the same drastic thing does not have to be experienced by your families in the near future.

Gratefully yours,
Maurice McGinty