

Letters from Here and There

Stickman Maybe Got Mixed Up

Nulato, Alaska
May 17, 1974

Dear Friend:

I was just getting mad, not really mad, because I didn't see my letter in Tundra Times. But last night when I got my mail, it was in the News-Miner. Somewhere I got off or forgot so I'm sending it to you as a lot of people don't buy the News-Miner, but I like to read my letters to the Tundra Times. I even heard they put that letter, your staff, put it on the bulletin board. They really got a kick out of it more than I did, the way they talk.

The Ice been running here for five days but in the water is 10 feet below the normal break-up stage. Kicker boats run down Nulato River, get fish while the ice is running.

It's hard to believe the carpenters building the school here caught a lot of fish after 10 hours work. I asked them if they had a permit from the village to catch fish.

The school building and laundry is coming right along. We might have a good high school building here but we have no modern houses like other villages — same old houses, no water, no wood, no oil, no gas to haul wood, and no woman to cook for me, but that's just the way I like it sometimes. But sometimes it gets awful stink.

Hope to see you soon. Best regards to all your staff and friends.

Fred Stickman, Sr.

Stickman Does Like Hermit

Nulato, Alaska
May 3, 1974

Dear Editor:

Well, I'm still up here 13½ miles above Nulato and 4½ miles below Koyukuk since March 14.

I was here when Carl Huntington went by here March 17 at 10:30 a.m. headed for Nome in the Iditarod Race.

There are a lot of reasons why I'm here. I'm trying to beat the income tax, the social security, drinking problem, fuel bill and gasoline problem and high prices for grub.

I have them all whipped so far. Everytime I want to go back to work it comes to my mind that I worked last fall 20 days and got \$830 deducted from my checks. That hurts me. No I'm not going to work till I get my social security checks back.

They were paying me, or giving me \$186 check a month while I was working at the cannery south of Naknek in 1971 and Eielson Air Force Base 1972. I mailed the card back when I went to work at South Naknek. When I went to work at Eielson I was still getting it.

So I asked my boss, Jack Wilson, I have to see the social security before I get in trouble. I went to the office in Lathrop Building on Second Ave., but I was still getting it till they caught up with me, or they finally woke up. Now when I need it, I don't get it for 18 months.

I had to quit drinking, also I quit eating "white man's grub." I live off the land. No gasoline to worry about, or wood. Maybe

that's my good luck that happened. I don't get social security. I quit drinking. It's hard to believe. I can't hardly believe it myself. If someone told me that two months ago, I'd told him he's crazy, including myself.

Well, they have the ducks and geese in good shape before they got here over at Creamer's field.

But anyway if anybody wants to hire me who wants to hire 67-year-old man. Oh, wait a minute, they might need a supervisor. I'm always available. I'm not married. I'm foots loose, no shoestring tied to me.

I heard the new high school laundry is coming up. The white men, the union men is building it for the poor Indians. Where is Doyon, which means "rich man?" I wonder where is the next meeting? What's the meeting for, just a waste of money?

Have a meeting here at Nulato now, and see why the poor Indians are not working. The white man is moving into Nulato. Why, I got rid of the marshal here and jail also liquor store. Now I want liquor store here. Well, I have been trying my best for years but now nobody vote for me last winter so I'm giving up.

I don't think nobody wants to work nowadays anyway. No spring camp, no trapping camp anymore. Me, I was raised poor, no vegetables or fruit, just straight fish with one slice of bread or one biscuit or one cracker. That's why I was allowed. That's why I still want to live the same way right now.

Fred Stickman, Sr.

Where Does BIA Come in?

Bethel, Alaska
May 2, 1974

Tundra Times

Dear General Public,

I am very concerned about the attitude the B.I.A. Administration here in Bethel has taken in the past two or three years concerning the welfare of the Native people. These are the people that they are here to help. There are many things here to change and no effort has been made to change things here. The changes here would have to start with the administration.

The B.I.A. Agency is here to help and work for the people they serve. It should help develop the Native peoples' pride, self-confidence, and help them make their own decisions as they struggle towards the goal of Indian Self-Determination. I feel that this is not being done in Bethel.

When I first started working here I took pride in my work and tried to put out quality work, towards the last I lost all of that attitude of self-pride and the job wasn't a job any more. To me it was a pay check.

A question always being asked around here is, "Why are there so many of you quitting out there all of a sudden?"

My answer to that question is poor, very poor management.

The housing here for the locals are under such living standards that some of the employees' were refused furniture and had to buy their own refrigerators, etc. The B.I.A. warehouse had all these items stocked, why were they refused to the employees. Why did apartments go empty for long periods of time when the employees were badly

in need of housing? Why is it that an outsider can take a Government vehicle anytime and go downtown and do his own personal shopping when the locals can't? Why can the "Big-Wigs" do work on their own private vehicles on Government time and not the locals? Why didn't the grievances that were handed to the A.V.C.P. brought up at the last convention here in Bethel?

Someone, somewhere along the line doesn't care.

Roy Hall
Box 118
Bethel, Alaska 99559

Legal Services Object to ASHA

ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES
CORPORATION
Post Office Box 40
Nome, Alaska 99762
Telephone 443-2951
May 21, 1974

Robert Butler
Executive Director
Alaska State Housing Authority
Box 80
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Mr. Butler:

We object to the contemptuous way that Alaska State Housing Authority is attempting to harass the attorneys and clients of Alaska Legal Services, and to impede the resolution of the legitimate complaints of those who live in public housing.

There is no excuse for the way you and your office have responded to our letter of April 9, 1974, in which we sought answers to pressing problems of those who live in ASHA's Beringue project here in Nome. That letter brought to ASHA's attention such problems as dangerously exposed power lines, hazardous building defects, violations of ownership contracts, and violations of Federal law with regard to monthly payment ceilings.

We sought a response to these problems, but the only reply we received was your request for a "certification" that we indeed represented the Beringue Homebuyers Association, the formal spokesman for the project's homebuyers.

This was certainly an unheard of request. Not only are attorneys unaccustomed to proving they represent their clients, but I seriously doubt whether any attorney representing ASHA, or any other government unit, has ever sent a similar "certification" of their authority.

And no wonder, any attorney who falsely claims he represents someone has violated his oath of office and is subject to sure disbarment. In addition, such a false claim would be a felony offense under state law, and under federal law if made through the mails.

Your demand for "certification" clearly goes beyond any justifiable administrative rationale when our extensive involvement with the Beringue project and ASHA is considered. Attorneys in this office have had continuous contact with ASHA over this project, beginning in 1971 with our representation of the Nome Housing Committees, the subsequent negotiations over the Homebuyers Ownership Agreements, and the formation of the present Beringue Homebuyers' Association, Inc.

In fact, our managing attorney has been the registered agent

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since the corporation's inception, and this office is its registered address. Furthermore, we have been in continuous contact with your past and present project managers, and have had numerous letter and phone contacts with your Anchorage staff.

I might also mention that one of our staff is the attorney of record in a class action against ASHA, which involves the Beringvue homebuyers as both named and class plaintiffs. And I hardly need remind you of the other current suits against ASHA brought by our other branch offices.

Despite the absurdity of your request, Mrs. Bertha Adsuna, the president of the Beringvue HBA, sent you a confirming telegram, in the hope that this would expedite a responsive answer.

But even after this telegram, and after our talking by phone with Messrs. Wilson and Fleming of your office, a letter was sent to Mrs. Adsuna by Mr. Tolbert Elliot, requiring that she confirm her sending of the cable, and to reconfirm our representation before ASHA would respond.

In light of our long-standing representation of Beringvue, and especially in view of Alaska Legal Service's unblemished history of honest and dignified representation of the poor, these responses of yours can only be considered as another episode of continued harassment of Alaskan Natives who seek to obtain safe, decent housing under federal and state law. Again you have avoided responding to their needs, and delayed fulfillment of ASHA's legal obligations. And again you have violated your legal and moral responsibilities as public servants.

This strategy of delay has already jeopardized the lives of everyone in Beringvue. Your negligent failure last summer to secure drainage of the swamps between the homes has forced everyone in Nome to live with dangerously exposed high-tension wires lying on the grounds throughout Beringvue. We will not permit your dilatory tactics to cause another summer to slip by without correction of the problems ASHA has created.

If you will not respond to our letters and telegrams, we will send a summons and complaint. If we cannot talk with you, we will be glad to talk with your attorneys.

We will not require any "certification"; only attention to the legitimate complaints of project residents.

Very truly yours,

ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES

CORPORATION

Bruce Abramson

Attorney at Law

cc: Gov. William Egan

Senator Gravel

Senator Hensley

Representative Degnan

Representative Ferguson

Howard Rock

Frank Flavin