

Anchorage Editorial

Displeases Woman

(Editor's Note: Norman C. Brown, publisher of Anchorage Daily News, wrote an editorial entitled, OUR LAND PROBLEMS THEIRS, TOO, on July 26. Alice E. Brown of Anchorage took exception to the editorial and has asked Tundra Times to publish her rebuttal. We are printing both the editorial and Alice Brown's letter of rebuttal.)

Our Land Problems Theirs, Too

IT'S HEARTENING to know that something is being done about settling the Indians claims to Alaska's public lands. This is coming about through Governor Hickel's determination to see this long-time controversy set on a course of clarification and perhaps solution by the first of September.

On Monday the conference of Western states attorneys general heard first hand the dangers that lie in unsolved Indians claims. The speaker was the governor's special counsel looking into the land claims, Edgar P. Boyko, who has more recently been appointed attorney general for Alaska. The emphasis of his office at the governor's request will be on the solution to the claims and the clearing of titles as rapidly as possible.

Mr. Boyko told the conference that through the U.S. Department of Interior's apathy and silence even though the statehood act spells out land usages very distinctly, Alaska is reaching a very dangerous point in its ability to exercise its prerogative in that respect. The most alarming aspect will be the effect such a vacuum will have on the future of oil development. With clouds hanging over the titles to state public lands oil developers are hampered in expanding their areas of exploration. Questionable areas will automatically become off limits to future drilling.

MR. BOYKO'S STRATEGY in bringing our land problems to the attention of other western states is good. Their problems are similar to ours in regard to the federal government's restrictive habits on public lands. As the attorney general pointed out, what's happening to us could well happen to the other "public land" states. A coalition of forces along this line would be of mutual benefit to all of the western part of the nation.

It is good to see this surge of action in one of the sorriest blights since statehood. With the determination of the governor's office to solve the claims and the energetic and intelligent help of the attorney general's office this bothersome Gordian Knot may soon be cut through. When it is the entire state can start to breathe more easily.—NBC



532 East 9th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

July 27, 1967

Mr. Norman C. Brown
Publisher Anchorage Daily News
Anchorage, Alaska

Mr. Brown:

This is in regard to your editorial of July 26, 1967.

You evidently believe the Indians are not entitled to any of "your public lands" even though they have lived in their areas for possibly thousands of years. It's fine for you to be able to have "squatter's rights" but the Indians and their asking for justice is to you "the sorriest blight since statehood." It's fine for the Non-Natives to have title to lands and it makes no difference how they have acquired them. For you and them possession is nine points of the law. But when an Indian asks for title to his land, then it's "the sorriest blight since statehood."

If we had quietly moved out from our homes and villages when the State decided to take them, your so-called "public lands", we would have done what you expected and you would have been able to occasionally throw us a bare bone as in the past. Thereby making you feel so sanctimonious and such a good guy. This is your idea of justice for the Indians. But we had the nerve to stand up and fight for our homes so now we're "the sorriest blight since statehood." It's just too bad you can't simply wipe us out, isn't it? If you could get your "coalition of forces", it surely would be beneficial for you and your ilk.

Your excuse of the "alarming aspect" of the State not being able to take all the Natives' villages and homes as causing a vacuum on the future oil development is simply propaganda. What's going on in the Inlet and everywhere else in Alaska? What are those platforms, drilling rigs, oil and gas wells all over the Kenai Peninsula doing? Are they a mirage? The millions of dollars the State is getting on leases, is that a figment of our imagination? You have been brain-washed by Mr. Boyko! Wake up! Or maybe you are wide awake and cold-bloodedly trying to arouse hatred between the Natives

(Continued on page 7)

Editorial Displeases Woman . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

and Non-Natives? Isn't there enough violence in this world to suit you? Isn't there enough land in this biggest State for the Indians to have their plot of ground as well as you? White man's greed has caused every war that I can remember—why? If you dislike us so much, why don't you go to Australia? We were here thousands of years before you, and can get along for thousands more if you and your ilk would leave!

Sincerely,
Alice E. Brown