

Letters to the Editor

P. O. Box 58
Kotzebue, Alaska
March 13, 1968

Dear Editor:

It is somewhat with a certain amount of apathy that I read of Mrs. Rosaire M. Kennedy's viewpoints as presented in TUNDRA TIMES (March 8, 1968). It so happens that I, too, am a full-fledged Eskimo like the Natives living at Noorvik.

As some of us have seen, well-meaning benefactors come to us, stay with us a while, and learn all the answers to our native problems. I will, however, give the credit to Mrs. Kennedy for her concern and willingness to correct any and all discrepancies of BIA method of education.

What I cannot fully comprehend is Mrs. Kennedy's report on a certain Wainwright young lady, who started out like any other native child on "Dick and Jane" series of reading in a BIA school. As it happily ended this young woman went on through school and graduated from the University of Alaska. But she was "exceptional."

I am happy to add that there are a few natives—Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos—who are "exceptional" and graduates of higher schools of learning. But there are still too few of such.

As I see it, the BIA is still striving to provide the modern means of education for all natives. But the culmination of modern education can happen only when a student takes the initiative, and takes the full advantage of what is being offered.

Percy Ipalook, Sr.

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Juneau Area Office
P.O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

March 13, 1968

Dear Mr. Rock:

I am writing this letter to express my appreciation to you for being an open-minded editorial writer. You are, no doubt, aware of the fact that I am leaving Alaska and will be assigned to the BIA offices in Washington, D. C.

Your ability to express the views of the Natives has been outstanding and your fairness in reaching judgments has been most appreciated by myself. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has made many mistakes and in all probability will make more mistakes, but I assure you that they were done in good conscience and in an attempt to better the lives of the Native people. It is only through media such as you are responsible for that both sides of issues can be placed before the public.

My association with you personally as well as from a business standpoint has

been a satisfaction to me during my tenure in Alaska. I wish you the best of success in carrying the story to the people and, more especially, to the Natives. Thank you for everything.

Sincerely yours,
Owen D. Morken
Area Director