

Elbert Answers—**Elbert Surprised at Vindictive Retorts**

By Paul A. Elbert

I was surprised to draw such vindictive fire from an Eskimo village, especially a village where surely the older Eskimos remember clearly that wolves destroyed their great herds of reindeer, often eating only the tongue.

The history of that awful event, and our inability to stop it, is to our everlasting shame.

Probably there are in Selawik, Eskimos whose fathers or mothers (when food was scarce) walked off into the cold night and set down to freeze to death leaving a little more food for their children and grandchildren.

These peoples' economy, health and happiness has always depended on an ABUNDANCE of EDIBLE wild game not wolves.

Abundant, edible game is a very beautiful concept, predation by wolves is a very ugly concept not at all aesthetic.

My dictionary defines aesthetic as, "of or pertaining to the beautiful as distinguished from the moral and, esp., the useful."

I deplore the immoral and the useless and I despise the wasteful and the destructive. I believe that is true aestheticism.

Sometimes I do not swat a mosquito because I realize the drop of blood she is stealing from my hand will soon become a thousand wrigglers in pond and stream on which grayling and goslings will grow fat. This is my aestheticism, beautiful, delightful, productive.

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Unalakleet Lady Finds Interest In Wolf Topic

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest Celia Hunter's informative letter in defense of the wolf. Mr. Laurence Ellison presented an equally interesting rebuttal to Mr. Elbert's article.

Were the problem discussed in an actual debate I'm sure that the pro's and con's would provide a thought provoking discussion.

In this small segment of Alaska, wolves have been sighted alarmingly close to the village, four of which have been killed to date. As there is no substantial employment for the majority of the men, the bounty tag has hired a few hunters out toward the tundra and nearby hills.

During the past month, I have been forced to eliminate my weekly one-mile hikes out of town. The wolf and I have perplexing problems though very dissimilar ones. While my calorie intake increases I cannot walk a good two miles to burn the excess energy. The wolf suffers most—it has no calorie intake and plenty of rambling running grounds.

Sincerely,

Helga Christine Eakon

Just announced to the people of Fairbanks that caribou are crossing and they leave this city by the hundreds for Eagle Summit one hundred miles away, or the Denali 200 miles away, or even to the Taylor 300 miles away.

Abundant game stirs the imagination in a most delightful way, but just let a hunter report that a valley is filled with wolves and that place will be avoided.

For many years, South Dakota boasted that it was the Pheasant Capitol of the World. Then about five years ago, the state reduced the bounty of predators so low that few were killed. result, now five years later 15 counties had NO open season on pheasant and the remaining counties had only a five-day season with a two-cock-a-day limit.

South Dakota lost its pride and glory, and some of its economy, to predators.

My critics accuse me of saying, "Wolves are bad because they not doctors." Such twisting of my words and meaning are dirty pool and unbecoming to a learned educator.

KAIBEB

The tragedy of Kaibeb National Forest is that hungry human hunters were not permitted to harvest the mule deer when they began crowding the range. I can't help but feel that it is a very low, despicable and anti-social trait of character that would rather wild wolves got the game rather than fellow human beings.

The Kaibeb tragedy could hardly be reenacted in Alaska. Alaska has abundant moisture and vegetation bounces back quickly, and besides there is room for a herd, even our largest, to expand in every direction.

I'll admit that food and cover are the first and most important factors supporting game, my cry is that we have an awful lot of food and cover that is not being used.

I'll admit, "The wolf has played an important part in the history of Alaska," namely, the destruction of 500,000 reindeer, thus impoverishing the Eskimos, reducing them to dependance and shame.

My critics suggest, "that all animals be placed under the intelligent, educated control of conservation." I take those words at face value and endorse them emphatically. But isn't it apparent to my critics that they will be laughed at for reversing their stand, for haven't they just advocated the unintelligent, uneducated lack of control of predation?

If my information is correct, one moose and eleven caribou were shot recently near Healy, Alaska. The man drove off but was captured in Nenana. He will be fittingly punished I am sure.

Such slaughter is unpardonable for a man, but our economic loss is just as great when wolves make the kills.

Wolves are increasing at an alarming rate. They will soon reduce our edible big game to

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Hensley Suggests HEW Operate Schools on 10-Year Pilot Plan

Willie Hensley, vice-chairman of the Statewide Federation of Native Associations, recently reported to federation directors in a memorandum concerning a special conference in Denver concerning Indian Education.

The basic purpose of the meeting was to discuss whether the Bureau of Indian Affairs education function should be taken over by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Attending the conference along with Hensley were Flore Lekanof, chairman of the statewide association, and Howard Rock, publisher of the Tundra Times.

Hensley also attended the convention of the National Congress of American Indians in Oklahoma City.

Hensley pointed out that conference was called basically for the tribal groups which predominate in the lower states, and which all have treaty relationships with the federal government.

"Most Indian legislation coming out of Congress is usually directed toward reservation Indians of the mainland United States—and Alaska must frequently be considered separately," Hensley commented.

However he added, "More and more, we will be consulted and we should keep

abreast of happenings in Washington."

Hensley said the biggest hurdle was a political one as most tribes felt the move to place education under the HEW was a "termination" move and anything pushed on too hastily may be dangerous.

He pointed out Alaska receives large proportions of BIA education funds, but perhaps more than any other group, lacks participation in forming educational policy. Many Indian tribes administer large education trust funds and have standing education committees, he indicated.

Another factor Hensley pointed out was that while tribes from the lower states feared "termination," or the severing of the Federal-Indian relationship, that this was a word that had little meaning to Alaskan natives. "Some would prefer to use the word dissolution of the (Federal) responsibility in favor of the State," Hensley commented.

"The Indians prefer to work with the Indian Bureau in education, although many feel that a change is needed and should be worked toward," Hensley said.

The Kotzebue native leader and legislator said he had suggested that HEW operate and fund the present BIA education program in the state

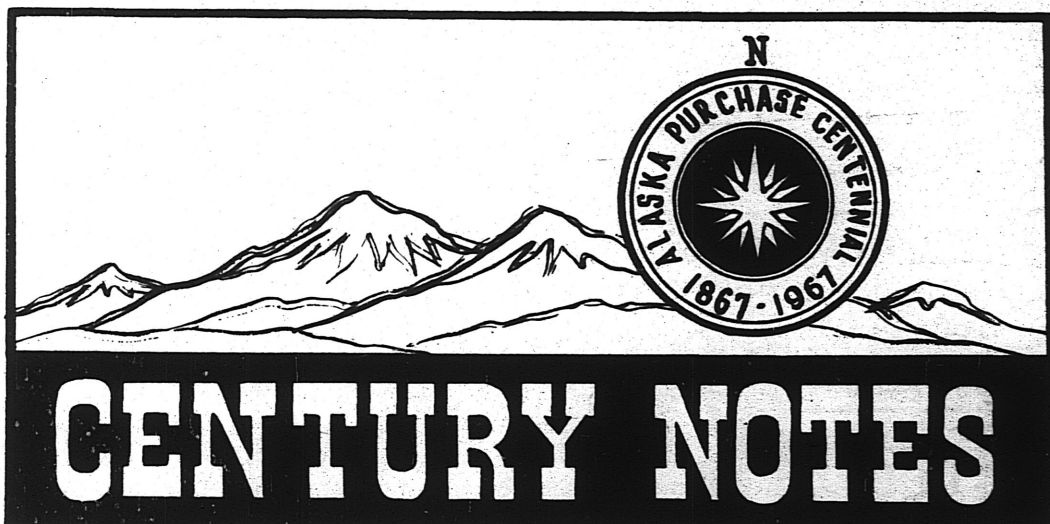
in a 10 year pilot-program to prove its ability to actually run a school system.

Following the Denver meet Hensley went to Oklahoma City to attend the National Congress of American Indians November 14-18th. Hensley said he reported on the newly formed statewide federation in Alaska and on Alaska land claims.

Tuberculosis Figures Reduced 50 Per Cent

Doctor Robert I. Fraser, Chief, Tuberculosis Control Unit, announced that preliminary figures indicate the incidence of tuberculosis in Alaska in 1966 showed an approximate 50% reduction over 1965, and expressed the opinion that the disease of tuberculosis which has been one of the most major health problems in Alaska, may soon be removed from this position of tragedy and common occurrence.

He emphasized that continued decrease in the incidence of this disease rests in continued cooperation between the state of Alaska Department of Health & Welfare, private physicians, United States Public Health Service, and the population of Alaska.



BY BETZI WOODMAN • BOX 3-1967, ANCHORAGE 99501

One could easily hear trumpets over the Great Land as 1967 sweeps in, imbuing the year with excitement and exhilaration. Now it all begins in truth and long-made plans to celebrate the Purchase Centennial blossom more splendidly than committees had dared to hope.

And imaginative programs are still in the making. One of the most gratifying developments will take place next spring in Sitka and possibly also at the Fairbanks Exposition Site.

Steadily devoting himself to find some means of carrying out his dream, Ray Neilsen, Tlingit descendant in Sitka, is responsible for the plan to have a contest among Native dancers from all over the state.

The simple statement of plan, however, belies the deeper significance of Neilsen's interest. He has become increasingly fearful that authentic Native dance forms are being vitiated through lack of performance or being misperformed.

A first step to keep the old

dances alive was to begin teaching them to the children of the Native Brotherhood in the Sitka area.

Older members of this organization were in the unique position to help preserve dances outside their immediate clans because of the history of the area.

As center for so long of the Russian Fur Company, Sitka was a place to which Natives of other areas were brought as forced workers for the Russians. These included Aleuts and Indians from other cultural areas besides the immediate vicinity.

Observing the dances of these other groups, the Tlingits here were able to keep a knowledge of some dances now unknown to any others.

Although there will be prizes and recognition for this competitive event, the real purpose is to emphasize authenticity and to revive interest in all Native communities in these folk ways which even their own children often do not know about.

To this end, careful choice

of judges will be made. It will be vital to find persons not only familiar with the old dances, but who have a wider acquaintance than with just their own group's styles.

Means are being developed to choose ten dance groups to represent the state's wide-

spread Native communities. Three top teams selected will be declared state champions.

As in the case of most Centennial projects, finances are an important consideration and Neilsen is exploring every possible means of helping this project which he hopes will become the basis for an annual Native folk dance festival.

Costumes for dancers are to be authentic as far as possible, but it is recognized that original such garb is rare, with much reposing in museums -- too often outside the state. Thus, replicas will be permissible.

CENTURY NOTES invites responses to this program, including thoughts of financial assistance.