

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Editorial— Land — You Felt Was Yours All the Time'

Since time immemorial, the people of the world have regarded their lands as vitally needed economic bases. This was, and is, an inescapable truth that through time emanated from the sceptres of kings, the iron fists of dictators, presidents of democracies, prime ministers, chiefs of Somaliland, chiefs of the interior Alaska Athabaskan Indians, chiefs of the Arctic Eskimo country, chiefs of the Aleuts, officials of the Eskimo, Indian and Aleut organizations, and all the village council presidents.

Land in many areas of the world is considered sacred—the giver of life and good things therefrom. This reverence toward lands has no less sanctity among the native people of Alaska. It is deep-seated and inviolable. When encroachments are made into the proven use of it, deep concerns develop and along with this—the uneasy, gnawing feeling that the lands that had nurtured them for great many centuries might be in the process of being lost. When feelings reach this point, tempers begin to spring up because the lands mean everything to the people concerned. We are deeply reluctant to say it but that has begun to manifest itself among some of our native people.

The community of Barrow, the northernmost Eskimo settlement on the continent of North America, perhaps is a case in point where serious land problems can be focused as far as Alaska's native people are concerned. The people there are up to their necks with the snarl of land questions and situations. It seemed very likely and perhaps without consultations with the local people, the governmental agencies in the past have hemmed in the community of Barrow by land withdrawals so that at the present time the growing village has no place to expand. The Barrow people are feeling the pinch. The enclosing ring of land withdrawals has become irritating and they are beginning to get angry.

The latest jurisdictional snarl as to what agency has the say on the Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 is not helping matters any at Barrow. About a year ago, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Land Management gave the go-ahead for the Barrow people to file native allotments. The agencies must have known that the land on which the allotments were allowed was within the boundaries of the petroleum reserve. The Navy that has the jurisdiction on the area did not say a word for about a year even though some 99 native allotments were processed or were being processed with the cooperation and assistance of the BIA and the BLM.

Then a few months ago this year, great quantities of oil were discovered just outside of the eastern boundary of the Pet 4 by some of the major oil companies of the United States. About two weeks ago, Barrow people received word that the allotments may not be binding because the Navy suddenly seemed to have reinstated its jurisdiction it had, somehow, allowed to lapse when it allowed native allotments.

This latest development has had a stinging impact on the Barrow Eskimos and they are feeling more hemmed in than ever before. They are, understandably, disturbed and angry. Eben Hopson, executive director of the Arctic Slope Native Association, in his letter to the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of the Interior reflected the feeling of his people when he wrote the following, although in milder form than some of his other utterances in the same letter:

"... How would you like to be in my shoes one time? Live on the Arctic Slope, try to work for a living, hunting for your meat on the table, your house mortgaged, own no real property, not by choice but by government regulation, and watch the State and the federal government take all the land away from you and have to put up with a Secretary of the Interior unwilling or unable to make an honest effort to help you hang on to something that you felt was yours all the time. ... It ain't easy."

Close Friend Mourns, Praises Bush Pilot

Star Route, Box 78-A
Ashland, Oregon 97520
Nov. 22, 1968

Dear Howard Rock & Readers,

I feel much as I did five years ago today when we received word in Barrow, that President Kennedy was dead... overwhelmed with grief. For this morning the radio informed me that there had been a plane crash in Barrow, with several persons killed, and immediately I felt that I must know who the pilot had been. My call to a local newspaper confirmed my very worse fears... it had been Bobby Fischer.

I am certain that one cannot possibly wholly understand nor appreciate what a bush pilot means to an isolated village, unless he has been a part of this way-of-life.

A truly dedicated pilot, as was Bobby Fischer, is much more than a pilot; he is a public servant who goes above and beyond the call of duty, requesting nothing in return.

In Wainwright, where we received no radio reception, had no telephones, and very often could not contact Barrow by 2-way radio for days at a time, he was not only our mailman, but our only contact with the outside world.

When, after days of bad weather, he flew into Wainwright three times on a dark Christmas Eve day, his plane full of gifts for the school children and ours, he couldn't have been more of a Santa Claus, had his little red Cessna been a sleigh.

Several weeks later, ailing with a sprained back, he made an emergency flight to pick up his seriously ill father-in-law, Rev. Roy Ahmaogak, and within the next week made nearly 20 round-trips between Barrow and Wainwright, hauling grieving relatives and friends to Dr. Ahmaogak's funeral, at a cost per person which scarcely paid for his gas, and with his back suffering under the pressure of so many flight hours... yet, he did all this in his ever-generous, non-complaining manner.

And when both the base and the village airports in Barrow were closed down in May, leaving the entire Arctic slope without any transportation to the outside world, it was Bobby and his fellow pilot Joe Felder, who made the more than 1,000 mile round trip to Fairbanks, sometimes each of them making a trip a day in their one little Cessna. And even though the amount of freight, mail, or passengers they were able to haul was relatively small, they prevented any real emergencies from occurring, made it possible for us to receive some mail, and performed a real public service.

He never refused a favor requested, hauling a package of muk-tuk, delivering an important message, or sending a telegram for anyone who asked.

On more than one occasion I heard persons discuss the fact that most bush pilots found it necessary to gamble occasionally; yet Bobby Fischer seemed an exception. Although he had done years of what seems to me as treacherous flying requiring super-human

of what seems to me as treacherous flying requiring super-human skill and courage, for the Arctic Research Lab, out to the ice islands, he never seemed willing to take a chance.

Perhaps it was because of his love for his lovely wife and beautiful children; or maybe because he felt a deep sense of responsibility to the passengers he hauled, who possessed great faith in him as a pilot; or it could be that he had been in the Arctic long enough to acquire the great patience most of the natives have, and was able to wait out a storm or the fog, knowing that they soon would pass.

I personally am inclined to believe that all of these were responsible for his caution, along with various other things I have no way of speculating about.

The sound of the Cessna engine circling the village, brought cries of "airplane" from every Wainwright child, except at our house where our excited toddlers would, without fail, run to the window screaming, "Here comes Bobby Fischer!"

While in Anchorage for a BIA workshop, we took our children to the Top of the World restaurant at the Westward Hotel so that they might see the city from a lofty view. Yet three year old "Sielak," after months of seeing an average of two planes a week, had eyes only for the sky, and when he realized he was seeing three planes all at once, he squealed excitedly, "Look at all the Bobby Fischers!!" His name was a household word, and to our little ones

(Continued on page 5)

Thanksgiving PROCLAMATION

Thanksgiving Day in Alaska

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, Lyndon B. Johnson, has proclaimed Thursday, November 28, 1968 as Thanksgiving day; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Alaska has declared this to be a holiday; and WHEREAS, the observance of Thanksgiving goes back more than a hundred years before the founding of our Nation, to the time when the first settlers arrived on this continent; and

WHEREAS, these freedom-seeking individuals came to this land to establish a society free of ancient prejudice, in which freedom and dignity of the individual would be accorded full recognition; and

WHEREAS, the people of this Nation and Alaska; as perhaps no other, have been blessed spiritually and materially in wholesome abundance;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WALTER J. HICKEL, Governor of the State of Alaska, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1968 to be

THANKSGIVING DAY in Alaska, and I urge all Alaskans to give thanks for the great blessings, spiritual and material, that have been bestowed on us as a Nation and as a state, and to continue to rely on Divine Guidance in ever striving toward a better world for all men. And, on this Thanksgiving Day, 1968, let us continue to remember in our prayers those Americans fighting so gallantly on a distant battlefield to impress upon a godless enemy that the freedom and dignity of the individual shall never be compromised.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the State of Alaska to be affixed this twenty-fifth day of November in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-eight.

/s/ Walter J. Hickel
Governor

ATTEST:
/s/ Keith H. Miller
Secretary of State

LETTERS to EDITOR

Dear Editor:

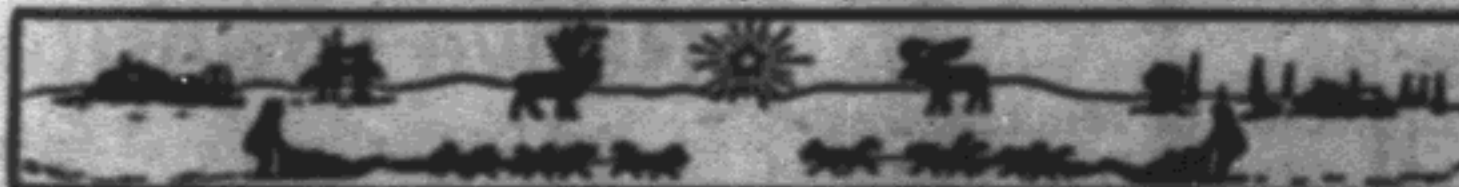
While we were sitting around all over Alaska, things start happening. One side of the Contingent BLM were selling our land piece by piece. I started praying. God, please help us get our land back. My people have no jobs, we need help.

Then my prayers were answered. Things started to happen in the interior. The country started to burn up. Then that's how we started to get some of the money back that they were selling the land for. Every able bodied man worked.

They cannot hold us back too long. We'll find out after this new President. All we need is money to fight them. I can't see how they can win.

—FRED STICKMAN, SR.

Tundra Times



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WANTED: Chukar Blankets; totem poles; ivory pipes and carvings; argillite carvings; potlatch bowls; fish hooks; spoons and all N.W. items 50 years of age or older. Send photo or sketch and prices to: Albert T. Miller, 2235 West Live Oak Dr. Los Angeles, California 90029.