

Eskimos Fed Up With Fast Shuffle

By JOHN HEFFLE

Nine long weary months ago, I began the time consuming task of completing the attempt to obtain city sewer and water for Eskimo Village in Fairbanks. The original people, who for 12 long hard years had tried in vain to get the sanitary facilities, had finally succumbed to the bureaucratic red tape, and vague or empty promises, and asked the Association of Interior Eskimos for help.

My position in Injustice Complaints is what got me into this.

As I began to delve into the situation, I found only half-truths and unconcern for the Eskimos' plight. I soon learned why the others before me failed. The half-truths bolstered by stumbling blocks seemed insurmountable. I enlisted the aid of Tom Snapp, editor of the All-Alaska Weekly, and asked him to print what was going on AND TO REPRINT SOME OF THE RIDICULOUS LETTERS I have received from representatives of government agencies here in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau, and Washington, D.C.

Half truths were numerous in the correspondence I showed to Tom, and local people soon realized that I was getting the old run-around. I assumed this was to discourage me from pushing the issue any further, but it only compounded the matter and forced me on.

The Alaska Railroad officials were the real perpetrators of the crime of putting the Eskimos

into the midst of a mosquito ridden swamp at lower Lathrop Street without concern, and abandoned them without remorse. As an official from the Railroad put it "We have done enough for the Eskimos and don't intend to do anything further." They never did anything in the first place.

The estimated cost of putting city sewer and water into the village is approximately \$160,000. Alaska Railroad has so far put forth no effort in the project, either monetary or

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Village which allowed all available funds allocated for the Water and Sewer project to be given to the City, who in turn would give a contract to the low bidder to complete the installation before freeze-up. This was guaranteed and the Village would have a functional system by fall.

Now I thought the old dodges, buck-passing, half-truths and speeches with forked tongue were over with but much to my dismay, I found this not to be the fact.

There is now a proposal to split the contract into two segments. One would be completed this fall, and the second section would be completed in spring. Now this in itself is contrary to what I have been told a hundred times by the people directly involved in the planning of the project. It is my intention to stop this plan and have everything reverted to the original agreement.

The reason behind the pro-

posed change in the installation is said to be the 60-day completion date. I disagree, as engineers here previously stated that only a six-week period would be required to install the sewer and water to the Village.

These people have suffered long enough. In 1968, there was funding available and a request for the hook-up was never acknowledged. I often wonder how many non-native people working in agencies involved in this matter are still using outmoded and outlawed sanitary facilities, such as Villagers here?

I was informed as a member of the Association of Interior Eskimo, representing the Village that there would be water and sewer in before freezing and all systems would be operational. I only expected what was promised in May of this year. No more half-truths, lies or renegeing. This will be tolerated no more. The statements were made and I expect them to be fulfilled. I don't need another fly in the ointment.