

Den Nena Henash - Our Land Speaks

Ut Kah neek - Informing and Reporting

Yupiit Kaniautciat - The Way Eskimos Talk

Unangan Tunukun - The Aleuts Speak

Inupiat Paitot - People's Heritage

Oil spill at Unalaska

To the editor:

We are writing to inform you of a situation that you might not know about, but that is a concern to the environment.

On the night of Feb. 26, a Japanese processor ran aground at the mouth of the bay to Unalakaska/Dutch Harbor. Oil has been leaking out of the ship, killing geese, ducks and other sea life, and still no action has been taken to stop the oil leakage. There is an estimated 80,000 to 100,000 gallons of oil still on the ship, much of it in a very crude state.

The oil has already covered several miles of beach, and there are dead birds and sealife washed up on the beach everywhere.

The community is in an uproar, not only because of the dead sealife, but because if the oil gets into the harbor, it could make the fish processing plants which are the basis of the town's economy inoperable.

For three days following the grounding there was calm weather in which the oil could have been cleaned up, or the salvage could have been done, but was not. Since then bad weather has supposedly hindered the salvage operation.

Many people think that the ship should be blown up in order to burn the oil. The Japanese refuse to give

permission, and the oil continues to leak.

It is ironic that a community which played such an important strategic role in the war with Japan in World War II should be held captive by them in this way.

The Japanese already control this town economically. They own most of the largest processing plants, which as we mentioned earlier are the base of Unalaska/Dutch Harbor's economy. Members of the community complain constantly about their lack of sensitivity to the local environment, to no avail. The outflow from their processors damages Unalaska/Dutch Harbor waters on a daily basis.

Unalaska/Dutch Harbor is the busiest fishing port in Alaska, but it does not have a single full-time environmental official of any sort whose responsibility is to protect this island's environment. Only today, March 6, 300 oil-covered seabirds, including Emperor Geese, were discovered in the waters near the spit, located near the beached processor. No effort has been made yet to capture and clean them.

Sincerely,
Danielle Avila
Amy Looby
Unalaska High School seniors
Unalaska

'His Hands In Service' in Haiti

To the editor:

It is with great thankfulness and a new meaning in my life that I am writing to you today.

I had an opportunity to travel to Haiti with a group of 18 people through an organization named, "His Hands In Service."

I now deeply appreciate a clean,

cold drink of water, water being more important than food. Hunger and thirst are there. Food and clothing can be sent, but how do you make it rain? It mists. Water everywhere, but it's saltwater, and one is thirsty.

So many people, all friendly and hungry and thirsty. They speak French

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AFN is too late with sovereignty, reform banners

To the editor:

In 1969 the Alaska Federation of Natives was a true representative of the Alaska Native people.

AFN was then comprised of legitimate Native non-profit organizations. It was not long after this that oil was discovered on the North Slope.

AFN pushed for passage of land claims. The Native people did not know it was to be handled through state institutions.

Shortly after 1971 when the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act became law, AFN reorganized.

Native leaders met in Juneau with 26 AFN representatives. It was at this meeting that the 26 representatives were abolished, and AFN became a political arm of the 12 regional corporations, which had been set up to administer the land claims act.

This new powerful AFN organiza-

tion armed with plenty of money from ANCSA forgot all about the Native people's social problems for the next 20 years.

The new Native elite began to enjoy thousands of dollars as compensation for their employment in the regional corporations.

Congress in 1985 ordered a report on the status of Natives and Native groups. A new drive for changes to ANCSA was hard fought by AFN. Congress then demanded one unified voice of the Native people before changes would be accepted.

AFN then wisely passed a resolution to allow village tribal governments into their organization. The votes were not equally divided however, and the villages lost their bid to include the QTE amendment which would have allowed corporate lands to be turned over to tribal entities. Congress accepted the new 1991 amend-

ments and they became law.

It was just last fall that AFN held their statewide convention in Fairbanks. Their banner was "Sovereignty." Never mind that it came 20 years too late. Now this year, they have just released a report on Alaska Natives: "A call to action." Again 20 years too late.

Janie Leask, president of AFN, claims that the Bush villages have social problems, alcohol abuse, violence and suicide on a large scale.

Now my point. In 1969, the social problems in Bush villages were the same as today. The land claims act did not cure alcohol abuse, violence and suicide. In fact, it's worse now than ever.

AFN successfully took the Natives land base away with the passage of the 1991 amendments. This has had a tremendous psychological effect on the Native people.

Now the Natives have no choice. If they vote to unrestrict their shares in the corporations, they will lose their land.

So they must vote NO when the time comes, to let the regional corporations hold their lands in trust for who knows how long. It is easy now after the land is taken away, that AFN is all "gung ho" to heal the Native people's social ills, which they should have done long ago, beginning in 1969.

Well, AFN, you're rich on the Native people's ANCSA funds, and 20 years too late with your banners on sovereignty and social reform.

Where were you from 1969 to 1989 when we needed you the most?

Sincerely,
Gene A. George
Fairbanks

Wait to develop ANWR

To Secretary Lujan:

I've been in Alaska for just about 28 years now, so I'm no babe-in-the-woods-city-tree-hugger.

But I can't for the life of me see why you have to accept the flawed Reagan administration's report regarding the development of the 1002 Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

I've got a petroleum geologist neighbor who has worked the ANWR since 1972. He says, sure, there's oil up there, but in such uncommercial amounts — at today's prices and those

of many, many years to come — that it is not worth developing the area.

So I say, let's just leave it alone in all of what's left of its pristine wilderness.

At the very least, Secretary Lujan, why not commission the National Academy of Sciences to review the highly deficient 1002 report and redraft the report to Congress based on the academy's findings? Thanks.

Sincerely,
Frank Keim
Emmonak



Letters to the Editor

• Aid to those in need in Haiti

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and Creole, so the interpreters became very important very soon.

We actually helped about 400 people in two remote villages: Zeetait (Zeetwah) and Perla (Paylah). We had a doctor, a dental assistant, nurses and other helpers.

It's very beautiful there. Like watching people starving in Paradise. In the U.S.A., we're rich. And in Alaska we're rich and free, and as Natives we kept the land.

Well, we had a small part in extending a helping hand, even for a short time.

And those who helped me without

whose help I couldn't have gone: Carolyn Hogan, Tiny Devlin, Satch MacArthur, Sam Kalkins, Eva Merrifield, June Degnan, Vicki Drussell and Randy Kalkins Jr. And the Bishop's Attic in Palmer who sent baby clothes, Gene's Pawn Shop who donated a camera for pictures and Christina Joy Hogan who sent about 500 barrettes for the little girls.

So thanks from all those folks in Haiti who are also now praying for you.

Sincerely submitted,
Caroline J. Demientieff
Wasilla