

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

Tundra Times



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Other Voices—

The Crunch Is On

The past and present leaders of the Alaska state government have known for some time that Alaska would be facing some lean years. The \$900 million obtained in oil lease sales in 1969 couldn't last forever at the rate money is being spent.

Now the state is facing a money crunch. It will probably be 1979 before oil begins to flow through the pipeline and the state begins to realize some money from that resource.

Until then, how is the everyday operation of the state — public safety, welfare, education, management of fisheries, etc., let alone new programs the public demands — to be paid for?

Well, the state administration and most of the legislative leadership seem to be locked into the idea that the only way to raise revenue for the state is to tax oil and gas in place. This means that proven reserves will be taxed before the oil or gas leaves the ground. This type of tax has a tendency to discourage aggressive exploration and development by the oil industry. Already Arctic Slope Native Corporation has given testimony before the House and Senate Resource Committees in opposition to such a tax and other of the Regional Corporations support the testimony. It is noted here that although the Regional Corporations object to a tax on oil and gas reserves, they have stated clearly that they are not opposed to paying federal and state taxes that any other corporations formed under state laws have to pay.

In addition to opposition by the Regional Corporations to a tax on oil and gas in place, the state's own oil and gas consultant, Milton Lipton, has told the leadership that such a tax should be a last resort for raising revenue. However, the leadership, so far, has indicated no interest in considering any other alternatives. Why?

At the same time there is a bill which has been proposed by some members of the legislature which would establish a permanent fund for the state. Such a fund could not be touched for maintenance of statewide programs or everyday operations of the state. Money for this fund would come from all mineral lease sales including oil and gas. The idea is good, but if there isn't money for everyday operations, how can there be talk about a permanent fund at this point?

If this bill passes, it is stated it will go into effect immediately. If the state sells any leases on oil and gas the money from these sales will go into this permanent fund. The question is, what will the state use to meet her everyday operating expenses?

Taxing oil and gas reserves will produce the revenue needed for the everyday operation of the state is what the leadership seems to feel. But there is nothing to assure anyone at this point that such a bill will pass the legislature. And if it does, couldn't those in control of the potential oil fields just stop all exploration? Then what will there be to tax?

Arctic Slope has suggested as a revenue source the Beaufort Sea lease sale as one alternative to the tax on oil and gas reserves. The Governor has also suggested this as have others. And there are more alternatives such as raising the tax on alcohol and tobacco, plugging the tax loopholes on incomes made by "outsiders", advance sales of states royalty on oil and gas.

It may seem strange that the Alaskan natives would suddenly seem to be on the side of the big oil industry. But it just so happens that the Regional Corporations own and control vast areas of Alaska's potential oil fields. With this in mind we can then understand the Native Regional Corporations' deep concern when taxing oil and gas in place is seriously considered as a means of raising revenues. They are just starting out and can ill afford a tax that will interrupt a cash flow that they need to guarantee success.

We urge the State leadership to skip the "politics" and

Letters from Here and There

Women Workers On Pipeline

Alyeska Pipeline,
Green Construction
Galbraith, Alaska
April 1, 1975

Dear Friend Howard Rock, the News Editor:

Well Howard, all the camps are the same, all good camps. Lot of girls here. I heard 40. Man and wife here. Before, no women allowed. Anyway, I had a good job at Nulato school but I heard so much about the pipeline I have had to go and see it, especially how the camps are put up, etc. You know you have to see it to believe it. It's a big thing.

I just picked up your paper to see the "Heated Labor Hearing." That's what I've been trying to tell the world. As long as the union is involved in the pipeline there is not going to be much Native hire. That much I know for sure. I've been bucking the union for years. I remember the time Peter Kiewit and Sons wouldn't hire Indians at Galena, 1955. They wouldn't hire my son. He was in the Army for three years, twice as strong as me, twice as smarter than me, and couldn't get a job at Galena because he wasn't in the union.

But I called on Bob Bartlett, my friend in Washington and got hired as a carpenter. Then one morning I jumped on the labor foreman at breakfast. Frank, I said, we need some laborers. I'm tired packing 2 x 12 planks. That's not what I'm hired for. I'm supposed to be a carpenter.

He said: you know any Indians that are good workers. I said Jimmy Malemute because he needed a job to feed his family. So Jimmy was hired.

That evening after supper, labor foreman was looking for me. He said: Is there any more good workers down the village. I said yes. He said, I need three more. So I gave three names Walter William, Ramond Paul and Edgal Ismailka. This is how I put monkey wrench in the union at Galena. I joined the carpenters union at Beaver Creek 1952. That winter I went out trapping two and half months without getting mail. So when I come in with good catch of fur, I made a trip to Fairbanks and went to the carpenters local. The guy told me I'm out of the union because I didn't pay my dues for three months and that they sent my papers outside.

In other words, I was too late. So I've been bucking them for 23 years and now I had to join them to go to work on the pipeline. They let me work on a permit all them years whenever there was a job at Galena or some village.

That's one of the reasons I had to go to the U.S. Air Force in 1958 at Galena, no union, no monkey business. I worked 13 different bases for the Air Force. Send this letter also to News-Miner.

Fred Stickman, Sr.

Traditional Subsistence Uses

U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20240

Mr. Howard Rock

show themselves to be prudent men, looking out for the best interests of all peoples of the state by searching out every possibility for raising revenues before taxing oil and gas reserves.

—D.A.

Chairman
Village Art Upgrade Committee
1177 Coppet
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Mr. Rock:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary of the Interior Rogers C.B. Morton expressing your concern over potential changes in the subsistence use of wildlife and plant resources for producing Native arts and crafts items and for clothing needed for the Alaska climate.

The final environmental impact statements developed for the Secretary's proposals for the four national systems contain the following statement on subsistence:

"Except as may be otherwise prohibited by Federal or State law, existing traditional subsistence uses of renewable resources will be permitted until it is demonstrated by the Secretary that utilization of these resources is no longer economically nor physically necessary to maintain human life or necessary to provide opportunities for the survival of Alaskan cultures centering on subsistence as a way of life." (emphasis added)

We agree that handcrafted clothing such as you mention is a traditional part of survival in Alaska's arctic climate, and similarly that the sale of articles of handicraft and clothing is a much needed source of cash income for many villages. When combined with the principles of sound resource management, such traditional harvest and use of wildlife, fish and plantlife should not be detrimental and would constitute a definite benefit to Native Alaskans and their way of life. We, in fact, encourage the cultural aspects of these uses.

We must also recognize that throughout the continent in recent years there has been a steady population growth and an increasing standard of living, the latter being experienced in even the most remote Alaskan village. This has brought about an ever-increasing demand and strain upon our common environment, sometimes resulting in declines in the numbers of many species of wildlife and fish and in extreme cases, contributing to losses which threaten extinction.

People dependent upon dwindling resources may, in turn, be faced with the need to reduce resource utilization associated with their traditional way of life. A critical challenge in Alaska today, where the natural environment is largely unharmed but exceptionally vulnerable, is to develop sound and enlightened long-range programs to ensure sustained availability of the renewable resources for this and other purposes. This is not to say that any planning will guarantee that any and all consumers will be able to utilize the natural resources at an ever-increasing rate. We must try to differentiate between subsistence requirements and other uses, such as commercial fishing or sport hunting, to be able to give due attention to those whose needs are the most basic.

Planning for this resource use must be a joint effort of all concerned people, villages, and agencies. Compromise and adjustments will no doubt have to be made and alternative sources

chosen in some situations. Only in this way can we all guarantee the survival and availability of Alaska's wild bounty and thus help sustain customs and a way of life that have been linked to these resources over the ages.

To this end, I would encourage you to communicate with our task force offices in Anchorage to discuss the many elements of this issue of mutual concern. Together we can find a way.

Sincerely yours,
Douglas P. Wheelie
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior

ADL to Identify Alaskans for Work On Pipeline

State of Alaska
Dept. of Labor
Office of the Commissioner
March 27, 1975

Dear Mr. Rock:

The Alaska Department of Labor has undertaken a program to identify Alaskan residents who wish to work on the Trans-Alaska pipeline as required by the State's Local Hirelaw (AS 38.40)

Persons who wish consideration for pipeline employment should go to an Employment Center or write to the Director, Wage and Hour Division, P.O. Box 1149, Juneau, Alaska 99802 requesting an application for residency status.

When an application is returned to the Department of Labor and the applicant is determined to be an Alaskan resident, he will be mailed a Certificate of Residency. He may then use this Certificate as proof of residency on union hire lists. In addition to union hire lists, the Department of Labor is preparing lists from these applicants which will certify both residence and particular skills of the resident to the proper union. A similar list will also be supplied to each employer performing work on the pipeline.

It is our intention that, by identifying bona fide Alaskan residents, Alaskans will be given priority opportunities to be employed on the pipeline and related projects which are a part of the development of Alaska's oil and gas resources.

Sincerely,
Edmund N. Orbeck
Commissioner

Stickman on Girls, Unions on Pipeline

Alyeska Pipeline Camp
Galbraith, Alaska
April 2, 1975

Dear Friend Howard:

Well Buddy, I just have to tell you about the North Slope. The unions here are going crazy on the Slope. And as long as they're here, there can't be too much local hire. The teamsters here don't want you to drive a pickup to haul our tools to the job or material to work with, and half of the time you can't find them. They're working some other place. It looks crazy to me.

Down at Nulato, laborers do all the driving, fork lift, trucks, cats, back hoe, etc. You can't do it here.

Another thing that's strange here is all the girls are bull cooks. First day at Galbraith, I went out for a shower, naked, two girls in there. I said I'm sorry. They said,

(Continued on Page 11)