

OPEN LETTER

An open letter to Representative Ralph Rivers:

I would like to ask you Mr. Rivers if you also advocate extinguishing the inheritances of the Rockefellers, the Morgans and the Vanderbilts. Or do you make a distinction between the inheritance right of a citizen and of a native citizen? It is indeed unfortunate that a people must be penalized for being so honest they didn't need a piece of paper called a "title" to protect them from their neighbor . . . how were they to know the kind of neighbor that would someday arrive?

May I ask also that you take a new look at your opinion as stated regarding large areas of land, quote . . . "what would they do with it . . . they wouldn't use it."

For more than 5000 years the natives of Alaska have used and harvested the crops placed here by a generous Creator. For the most part it was done according to the best conservation practices. As long as land is providing the major part of a living for some 43,000 people, how can you say it isn't "being used?" Wouldn't a better word have been, "being exploited?"

What is so different between harvesting moose, caribou or berries and in raising cows, chickens or cabbage? The main difference as I see it is that the former takes advantage of the kind of crop and animal life that is adapted to the environment. The other tears up the land in what is more often than not a futile attempt to force foreign crops to grow where natural ones thrive.

Take a look at the land records, Mr. Rivers; at the hundreds of thousands of acres that have been patented as homesteads in Alaska, and then at the mere pittance now being farmed. Then tell us who is "using" the land.

It is my opinion, however, that the land itself is not the real issue. It is the possibility of oil and gas; of gold and other minerals that might show up on land owned by native people. And what would be so terrible about that? Because they wouldn't mine it or drill oil wells? How many land owners do you know who have drilled their own oil wells? Isn't it true they usually lease it to someone with the equipment and know-how? There is no reason why a native com-

(Continued on Page 4)

(Continued from Page 1)

munity corporation with title to the land couldn't do the same. The money they would receive would be spent right here in Alaska to improve their standard of living just as Tyonek is planning to do with theirs. It wouldn't be carted out to California or Florida as soon as enough was accumulated that the recipient could afford to kiss Alaska goodbye.

The inherited lands of Indians all over the U. S. have been paid for at its value at the time the white man took over, not at its worth at the time of payment. The amount of money each native would receive might last him a year or two with good management. Then what? Add the rest of the 43,000 native people to the welfare rolls who thus far have managed to remain self-sufficient. And contrary to the popular opinion, this would be a majority.

Now, before certain people jump up and yell "boo" with the old boogey word "reservation," I want to inform them I am speaking of land ownership, not reservations. I'm speaking of corporate ownership by a village; a corporation similar to the Utah Land and Cattle, The General Motors Corp. or thousands of other corporations that are the backbone of our economy. I'm saying this while not condemning reservations as they are today. Metlakatla and Tyonek aren't doing so bad for themselves. But I see no reason why these people need a nursemaid any more than you or I. True, they may need advice on how to proceed, but they would have no trouble getting this from a number of reputable sources.

It seems to me we should do what we can to help the most stable part of our population get on its feet—not jerk their only means for development and survival right out from under them.

The State wants Minto Flats for a recreational area as well as for the potential oil deposits that are believed possible there. I suggest that if the people of Minto owned the land outright and could reap the benefit of such a project, they might be interested in developing such a place, especially if they received some oil-lease money to do it with.

Let's not lose sight of the fact that Indians and Eskimos are people. And people who have money, spend money for food and clothing and appliances or countless other items. These people will spend it in Alaska, not in California, or Arizona or New York.

Being so much a part of the land they have inherited from their fathers, they might just be able to develop it without stripping and destroying it.

Yes, I think "exploit" would have been a better word, Mr. Rivers. The native people haven't polluted the streams with industrial wastes and fouled the air with smokestacks. They haven't stripped the timber, destroyed the watersheds and eroded the stream banks into the spawning waters of our greatest resource. They haven't become intoxicated by the "Myth of Superabundance" that Secretary Udall so magnificently describes in "The Quiet Crisis." There would probably be no Rampart Dams or other get-me-rich-quick schemes; Their development would be an orderly growing from the ground up, slow but solid; the kind of growth that Dr. George Rogers has advocated for Alaska.

No, Mr. Rivers, your proposition would be in the worst possible interest of the Native people of Alaska . . . all that is except those like the ones referred to in the November 19 issue of Tundra Times and excerpted from a publication by the National Indian Youth Council.

Let's get our head out of the sand and look around. What we see might be far better than what we anticipated.

Sandy Jensen
Box 241
College, Alaska

Times Board Meets Soon

The Executive Board of the Eskimo, Indian, Aleut, Publishing Company, the new firm that will publish the Tundra Times effective January 1, will meet very soon to map out plans for the sale of stock.

The Board members are Howard Rock, Albert Kaloo, Thomas A. Snapp, Mrs. Laura Bergt, and Thomas Richards. Three members of the group are a quorum for doing business.

Somewhat less than \$2,000 in stock was sold at the recent anniversary banquet and first stockholders meeting of the new corporation. However, much interest has been expressed by individuals of wanting to purchase stock.

Stock may be purchased at the Tundra Times Office, 226 Chena Building. Information can be obtained by phoning the office at 452-2244.

The smallest amount that can be purchased by one person or organization is five shares at \$5 each or a total of \$25.

The Executive Board will also discuss at its forthcoming meeting how shares of stock can be purchased on the installment plan.



For the FASTEST Photo Finishing in Alaska

We will return the processed order immediately and bill you

Send your exposed film to

CO-OP PHOTO
Box 1390
Fairbanks, Alaska



ONLY ONE DAY LEFT TO ORDER YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS FROM SEARS

Two locations for your convenience

Northward Building
3rd and Lacey
also

South Fairbanks
549 12th Street



WIEN AIRLINES Christmas Shopping Special

EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 10 THROUGH 24

Reservations Phone 452-3355 or 452-3115, 3rd & Lacey

ROUND TRIP SHORT-LIMIT EXCURSION FARES FROM THE FOLLOWING VILLAGES TO FAIRBANKS:

BARROW	\$73.32
BARTER ISLAND	80.00
BETTLES FIELD	40.00
BORNITE	60.00
FORT YUKON	30.67
GALENA	46.67
HUGHES	40.00
KOTZEBUE	66.70
NOME	66.70
TANANA	26.70

ANCHORAGE FUR TRADING COMPANY
Box 6151, Airport Annex
Anchorage, Alaska

WE OFFER THE HIGHEST PRICES
FOR

LYNX, FOX, OTTER, MINK AND SQUIRREL

SEND YOUR PACKAGES INSURED
TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS

First Federal! Savings

- ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY! Dec. 15 - Jan. 10!
- FREE Door Prizes: 7-piece Rogers Bros. silver-plated coffee set, 76-piece Rogers Bros. table dinner set with chest!
- FREE Premiums - Souvenirs - Refreshments!

4.75% Anticipated Earnings Beginning Jan. 1, 1966, compounded quarterly

.05% Additional Bonus on fixed balance accounts beginning Jan. 1, 1966 (See us for details)

1ST. FEDERAL
SAVINGS AND LOAN
ASSOCIATION OF FAIRBANKS
2nd & Lacey Streets
Cushman & Gaffney Bldg.

