

*"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." - Voltaire***TESTIMONIES FOR, AGAINST AT HEARING****LETTERS TO EDITOR**

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"Yet, though they spoke of sad and tragic things, they are not possessed by despair or bitterness. There is dignity, reasonableness and strength. Through it all we hear the constant insistence: 'Give us this chance. We can do it—we want to do it.'"

"I believe these people should not be asking alone. I believe you—and they—should know that others recognize their strength and urgency of their desire to choose their lives; to change in their own good time; to make and learn from their own mistakes."

"...I believe this bill, however imperfect, is the answer to the needs of now. Now with its help the Native people can move into changing patterns according to their regional—and even village—demands. The bill permits traditional ways and yet sets the foundation for changing the undesirable."

"By enacting this legislation soon, the old ways which so many of us treasure can be saved. This sounds

paradoxical, but it is not. "Now, to escape the evils of their poverty, the people must move or depart from the old ways. Under the bill's provisions I believe they can combine the cultures, taking according to their own view the best of each..."

CHARLES FRANZ of Port Moller in his testimony said that back in 1908, a trader convinced the U.S. government that it would be a humanitarian move to bring destitute Eskimos from northern part of Alaska to the Port Moller area.

There was coal and plenty of fish and the trader thought that these could be utilized and subsequently established a couple trading posts. Franz testified in part:

"...Then fate took a hand. Tragedy struck in 1918 and 1919. This was the influenza epidemic that followed World War I. Whole families and villages were wiped out completely and when it was finally over, there remained only parts of four families. "By 1930, these people

had either died or moved away. There was only one Eskimo of all those heroic people who had put so much faith in our government. That Eskimo was me, for my mother was one of those who made that historic trip."

"You may ask how this affects the native claims bill that we are trying so hard to resolve, for so many of these people are gone. I would submit that it is the moral duty of every Aleut, Indian and Eskimo in the State of Alaska to fight for legislation that would guarantee our children and their children an opportunity to become strong enough in the future so that what has happened in the past will never again be possible."

"I believe that the great legacy that we can leave our children is an opportunity to seek higher education. Therefore, our first obligation in using any monies that we would receive through this legislation should go to the development of high schools near the areas that the children are familiar with. Scholarships should go to those who desire education of a higher level..."

LUM LOVELY, a geologist testified in part in the following manner:

"...It is a well documented and accepted fact that none of the currently pending Native land claims has any legal basis in fact, and that Congress is obligated in no way whatsoever either to recognize title to any of the lands now being claimed by Alaska's Natives, or to pay any compensation for extinguishment of title in the event title to said lands is indeed recognized."

"...At first blush, a vote for S.2906 may seem like a vote for Motherhood. On close examination of the facts, however, one must conclude that this bill stands to be biggest threat to Alaska's economic well being to come along since Statehood..."

GOVERNOR WALTER J. HICKEL of Alaska:

"...We are unanimously agreed, among Federal, State and native leaders, that a fair, equitable and generous settlement of native land claims in Alaska is long overdue. And we concur in the concept that such a settlement must partake of two essential major parts:

"A generous grant of title to lands on which native communities may prosper and grow, and develop their economic resources for the good of all Alaskans, and, indeed, of all Americans; and, a fair monetary settlement of claims to lands which are irretrievably gone..."

"...The bill which is before you is the result of many minds blending and accommodating their respective viewpoints. It represents a wholesome convergence of what were considered as possible irreconcilable positions just one year ago. Further compromise is still possible and should be encouraged, but let us remember the 'positive approach.'"

"Fair and equitable legislation to settle native land claims in Alaska must be enacted, and enacted soon,

if we are to redeem the pledge made to the forebearers of our native citizens..."

WILLIAM ZAEGEL, a geologist, said in part:

"...The claims presented in this bill have absolutely no legal basis. These claims are based on 'aboriginal use and occupancy of lands in Alaska.' Aboriginal rights don't exist. The courts have ruled that walking over the land does not constitute use and occupancy..."

JEROME TRIGG of Nome testified in part:

"...We love our lands and we will sacrifice to protect them. That is why we have such strong feeling that THIS IS OUR LAND we are talking about here. Sometimes I think that the wrong people are running this hearing and taking our testimony. It seems that we should be on the bench and you people should be the ones giving the testimony..."

GEORGE KING of Nunivak Island:

"...We have, according to the government, absolutely no rights in Nunivak Island because it was declared a national wild life refuge in the 1930's. The Island has apparently been set aside for ducks, musk ox and reindeer."

"We have not even been able to get a townsite on the island and, according to the executive order establishing the reservation, we are not even there."

"There are approximately ten thousand reindeer and six hundred musk ox on the Island. Those animals have eaten up most of the vegetation on the Island and deprived our people."

"We are allowed to take five reindeer per year per family. It is hard for us to understand why the government reserves all of Nunivak Island for the animals and left none of it for the people. In other words, the birds, reindeer and musk ox have preference rights."

"The government has said time and again that they will not disturb the native people of Alaska in the use of their lands. In our case they have completely deprived us of our land..."

WARING BRADLEY, geologist:

"Your committee is considering legislation to solve a problem which has been created by the collusion of a small group of greedy attorneys representing the Alaskan natives and the Department of the Interior which has imposed upon Alaska an illegal freeze on land patent leases and claims of all kinds."

"The Alaska natives have no legal right to the public land in Alaska. Any moral claim was more than satisfied long ago; they have been supported and educated by the government for a hundred years. This is a factor which should be considered in whatever settlement is finally arrived at..."

ROGER G. CONNOR, one of the land claims attorneys and an attorney for the Aleuts:

"...It would be more just to provide a settlement which compensates for the total impact of our modern life

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Shungnak, Alaska
February 5, 1968

Dear Editor:

First of all, I want to say thanks for of being American and have all the freedom to say anything what I believe.

We have visitor here last week from Washington, D. C. that I sure proud of. She is secretary of our great Sen. Ernest Gruening, her name is Brenda Itta from Pt. Barrow. She was here and called up City Council and I am one of them and we told her what we want and need in Shungnak village. What I'm proud of her about when we don't understand long words of English she explains it in Eskimo. That's the kind of leaders we should have able to speak English and Eskimo and we told her some white men against our city rules.

And about this what I read in Tundra Times the Justice Dept. says Aleuts not identifiable Indian group for claims purposes; blames link to Eskimos.

Well, I want to say this. Aleuts are natives just like me they was there long before white man come even long before Mr. C. Columbus discovered North America. Aleuts are full citizens of United States. I know they have been drafted too for the U.S. Army in 1941-1942.

This morning little cold—62 below zero.

Elmer Armstrong was here too with Miss Itta they both speak English and Eskimo Elmer from Kotzebue, ASCAP worker.

Council of Shungnak City for 1968: James Commack, president; Charles A Sheldon; vice president; secretary, Rosaline Barr; treasurer, Napolen Black; Stanley Custer, member; Delbert Jackson, member; and Wesley Wood, member.

Sincerely,
Charles A. Sheldon
Vice. Pres., Shungnak City Council

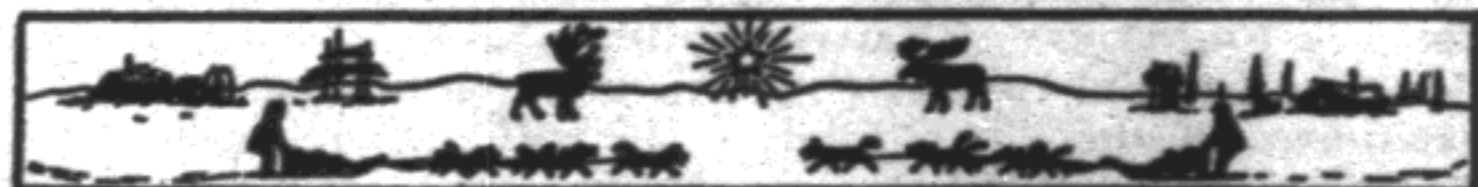
Dear Editor:

I am an Eskimo. I was inspired to write this down.

I came from the past forgotten and unknown to me now. I am but a guest here on earth, a temporary stopover one of the two destinies, one of place of no ending and remorse, and a place of satisfaction and a home full of bliss. During this brief stopover, dawn of my life have gone by.

The noon time is upon me with all its environment, both good and evil. Soon the twilight, my short visit will be upon me. I will depart on the night train and wake up in another place.

Respectfully yours,
Isaac Eben

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The Most Critical Need

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the compromise land bill—a measure that can spell a brighter future for our native people.

Finance committee chairmen in regional native areas have been appointed to help raise funds for the above purpose and our people, everyone, should give them all the support they need. The amount of \$72,000 has been set as a goal and it must be raised as soon as possible. The women in villages can do a great deal to help. Great many of them are good at conducting bake sales and other means of raising money. Villagers who can afford two dollars (\$2.00) should give that amount toward the fund. Some of them can afford to give more that would offset those who cannot afford to donate.

The money raised will be used to give necessary contacts with people of influence on behalf of the native people of Alaska. These contacts, or appearances before appropriate committees in Washington, D. C., and appearances within our State of Alaska, will be critical needs. They will be made all in the cause of our people. They will have to be made to counteract whatever opposition the natives will meet and this opposition could be a strong one as well as a well monied one.

We appeal to all the native people to help raise the money and we appeal to the friends of theirs anywhere to help the cause that can benefit all of Alaska.