

*"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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## Editorial— Organization Hirelings Have Too Much Leeway

The leaders of the Alaska Federation of Natives have made many fine decisions during its effort to resolve the Alaska Native land claims.

The AFN has also made some mistakes, but the greatest mistakes probably have been made not by the leaders themselves, but rather by their hired consultants and lawyers.

The most alarming development in the land claims fight is the increasing role that these hired consultants and lawyers play in determining matters of policy. Their function should be solely limited to the implementation of policy decisions made by the Native people who hired them.

During a meeting of consultants and lawyers in Washington last Friday, these non-Native hired personnel moved to exclude Mr. Eben Hopson from the proceedings.

Eben Hopson, an Eskimo from Barrow, has served the cause of the Natives of Alaska in the land claims fight as a state legislator, as executive director of the Arctic Slope Native Association, as executive director of the Alaska Federation of Natives, and, most recently, as Governor Egan's liaison on Native Affairs.

Mr. Hopson was excluded from the session, designed to consider amendments to the AFN bill, on the grounds that he was an official of the State of Alaska.

During the administration of former Governor Miller, AFN leaders and attorneys complained bitterly of having little input into decision made by the state concerning land claims.

Because of his excellent past record as a Native spokesman, and because of his important position with the state, Mr. Hopson should have been not merely allowed, but respectfully requested to attend that Washington session.

AFN president Don Wright has done an admirable job during recent months in representing Alaska Native in Washington, but he and all other Native leaders must retain the independence and ability required to make decisions in matters of policy.

The question comes up again whether the AFN will make its own policy decisions, and not delegate this authority to hired consultants and lobbyists.

If Natives were to be excluded from meetings because they have other interests, this could result in exclusion of many Natives from decision making positions because of their private business interests, their ties with the media, or another other reason convenient to non-Native consultants and attorneys who have inflated ideas of their self-importance. —THOMAS RICHARDS, JR.

## Food and Drug Administration Rescinds Ban

Commissioner Frederick McGinnis, Department of Health and Welfare, announced today that the Food and Drug Administration has rescinded its ban on Abbott Laboratories Intravenous Fluids.

The ban was instituted earlier this year when contamination was found in caps used to close the fluid bottles, resulting in patient infections.

FDA inspectors and scientists have established testing protocols and control procedures over the past several months to ensure the safety of all intravenous fluids.

## T-H Central Council Backs Alaska Plan

The Executive Committee of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska, meeting June 15, 1971 in Juneau, unanimously endorsed the concept of the "Alaska Plan" for including minority groups in Alaska's labor force.

The Central Council represents 18 Tlingit and Haida communities.

In the motion endorsing the plan, the Council stated that the action is "an official response to the hearings now being held in Southeastern Alaska" on the "Alaska Plan".

## Greatest Since 1927- New Minto Holds Great Potlatch

By WALLY OLSON

The new village of Minto was the scene of one of the largest potlatches held in this area since the one sponsored by Chief Thomas in Nenana in 1927. An estimated 500 people were in the new village.

Guests came from Copper Center, Northway Tanacross, Fairbanks, Nenana, Fort Yukon, Chalkyitisik, Ruby, Stevens Village, Anchorage and Huslia.

The term "potlatch" is often used to refer to two entirely different types of celebrations. There is the frequent "gathering" which is celebrated at various times of the year, especially over the holidays.

But the potlatch at new Minto was the traditional ceremony to memorialize the residents who have died within the past year.

This potlatch was to commemorate the deaths of Moses Charlie, Timothy Charlie, Louis Silas and Catherine Jimmy, all of whom passed away during the preceding year.

The emphasis at Minto was on the traditions of the Athabaskan way of life. Most of the speeches were given in Athabaskan. The singing was entirely in the native tongue.

Some men such as Peter John,



**MINTO POTLATCH**—Three elderly men are happily drumming and singing at the recent potlatch held at new Minto village. The potlatch is said to be the greatest since the one in 1927 held at Nenana. About 500 people attended from many villages.

Melvin Charlie, Andrew Isaac, and Walter Northway spoke to they young people both in their native tongue and in English to remind the young not to forget their past, but to also live in the modern world.

Even the making of Indian Ice Cream was carried out in the traditional manner with the young men stirring while the old women sang songs of encouragement.

Every morning the people gathered to sing mourning songs for the deceased. Following the evening meal, the mourning songs were sung again, but this time they were followed by joyful dances to show that the mourning period was over.

The singing and dancing continued through the night and the teenagers often danced until breakfast time.

(Continued on page 6)

## Letters from Here and There

### Wants Standard Alaskan Textbook

June 23, 1971

Dear Editor:

I have often wanted to submit an idea to native leaders but things are so hectic on other issues that it's hard to find a respective ear. Would it be possible in the next few years (if not too late) for Native organizations, the Human Rights Commission or some faculty in that area to get together with the blessings of our State (no doubt) and construct a standard textbook of the State of Alaska.

My concern is that there are so many books on Alaska which are inaccurate and tend to go off on the deep end in flowery language, etc., etc. Also I believe above all that fair treatment of Alaska Natives must be in THIS textbook which WILL treat us as PEOPLE, human beings with faculties, gifts, ideas EQUAL to ANY human beings in this country and on this earth.

I believe that it should be constructed by historians\* both native and non-native and that wherever necessary interpreters should be used.

The reason I stressed historians is because we as people are not some species or sub-species to be studied by other people. We are people and not anything else in any other anthropological term!

By such a textbook we may yet lead other states into doing what is fair and just and lasting to our future and our children. There are other things of which I may ask about in the future.

Thank you for your consideration in putting out news for us all. I enjoy reading this paper whenever I purchase one.

Sincerely,  
Al Judson  
Box 924

Hoonah, Alaska

for example, has been a village for 2,800 years.

I hear a lot about Alaska here in New York City. I see many film clips about Alaska on T.V. The central theme is always, what a wonderful valuable land it is and how stupid were the Russians to sell it to the U.S.

What are the Alaskans doing to counteract this idea of ownership? I only hear one lone voice—that of Joseph Upicksoun. Are there other Alaskans ready to fight by his side? Are there clubs and frequent meetings where plans and ideas are discussed to prevent your children from being "trespassers in the land of their nativity?" Are you trying to preserve your languages? Are you proud of your heritage? Do you learn your history from the old ones; have they told you of your heroes? When you learn U.S. history in school, do you also learn the American Indian version of American history and learn of the countless and proud Indian heroes? Are you aware of the devious means used to take Indian lands in the past so that the U.S.A. could stretch from sea to sea? Will it one day stretch from pole to pole?

The important answers to these questions are in the hand of a few leaders and a few students. Each of you must ACT and show interest. Each must also be aware that it was not a 'paleface' who struck down Chief Crazy Horse, after he had wiped out the invincible General Custer and his troops.

You saw what just happened to the Indians exercising their treaty rights at Alcatraz. They say the government broke its word to them by suddenly physically forcing them off the island after solemnly saying they would not do so.

Time is running out. Need I say more?

Sincerely yours,  
K. M. Young, M.D.

\*P.S. Those picked in writing or being on the staff may be appointed by the State and native organizations which may eliminate a lot of "paper" qualifications.

### Backs Upicksoun

Box 285, Baychester St.  
Bronx, N.Y. 10469  
June 15, 1971

Dear Sirs:

Whose Land is Alaska?

I have read Joseph Upicksoun's statement to the House Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs May 3-4, 1971.

I have asked the above question in N.Y.C. at random among my patients (ordinary people) and among my highly educated acquaintances (Drs., Lawyers, Bankers, Politicians, Professors, etc.). Almost all of them gave me variations of the same answer "The USA owns Alaska." A few, who know of my Cherokee Indian blood, have smiled and replied "Maybe it does belong to the Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts and other native peoples who have always lived there."

One friend of mine laughed out loud after thinking about my question, then asked me "Do you think it's possible that the Russians pulled a fast one and sold the USA something that was not theirs? Did they fool the USA just like the 'city slicker' has time and again sold the Brooklyn Bridge (owned by the City of N.Y.) to some unknown country bumpkin for a few hundred dollars?"

The question in my mind is: What does the Native Alaskan think? Has he been brainwashed to accept the story put out by the 'pale-faces' in the lower 48; or does he know that "there is evidence that his ancestors lived in Alaska as long ago as 6000 yrs. B.C. (7,971 yrs. ago)?" Does he know that "Barrow,