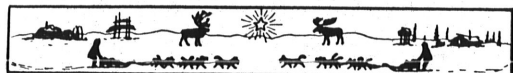


"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Editorial Comment—

Native Politics Come to the Fore

Ever since Tundra Times started publishing back in October 1962, we have been telling our native people about the importance of politics. At that time, native politics was almost nonexistent. Politicians who came to villages with knick-knacks, candies, gums and pens were almost cinches to be elected. This was a painful experience to watch. Real meaning of politics in the bush was nonexistent. We dispaired of this situation.

In 1972, we are seeing something spectacularly different. Native politics is coming to the fore, and in a correct and sophisticated manner. It took a while but we had felt it would be coming along eventually. It is now a reality and it is exciting. It is giving our native people a new direction — a new tool for benefits that can be gained by good politics.

The new-found tool of benefits must still be nurtured and developed for the better in the future. Our native politicians must look for new friends in the political arenas sympathetic to their own politics. This is a desirable direction to take because of the definite possibility of shrinkage of influence as the Caucasian population of Alaska increases in comparison to the percentage of native population. This is a serious thing to keep in mind.

Perhaps such things as summer jobs reportedly being given to out-of-state people instead of Alaska residents should be watched. It might be a device to speed up the Caucasian population. Some of the out-of-staters are sure to like Alaska and decide to stay.

At any rate, native politics has developed to a surprising degree and it should be jealously guarded. It is a precious achievement destined to reap good benefits for our native people.

Editorial Comment—

The Formation of Regional Corporations

It is becoming apparent that some of the native regional areas are dragging their feet in organizing their regional corporations. If they fail to do this job by the end of this month (June 30), they will not get the interim funding now available in the amount of \$500,000 for each regional corporation. This is a huge sum to lose if the reasons are ineptness, poor leadership or obstinacy.

Three regionals have so far qualified and in being so have access to the \$500,000 to establish their regional governments, pay their debts and do other things with the money. The three corporations are Calista Corporation of Southwest Alaska, the Northwest Area Native Association and Cook Inlet Native Association.

We hope that the rest of the 12 regionals will right down to work and qualify themselves so they can begin to speed their basic organizations so they can begin to work on efficient machineries to work with in the future. Time is very short and time is money.

ESKIMOS VS. WHITES

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the article written by Jane Pender, editor of Kotzebue News, for the Anchorage Daily News and for which we obtained permission to print from the News. The article is the subject matter of a letter to Stan Abbott, executive editor of the Daily News, printed elsewhere on the editorial page.)

(Courtesy of Anchorage Daily News)

By JANE PENDER

KOTZEBUE — It pains me that what I must write about this morning is not gain, but loss; not good, but evil in its most profound sense; and that in order to write about it, I must make some distinctions which I find deeply repellent.

What I must say is: here is Eskimo, and over here is white and between these two, over what has been a long, hard and very difficult winter, has grown a barrier. Our town, already deeply divided between Eskimo and Eskimo, is now further divided: this time between Eskimo and white. And none of us now can foresee the future.

Our trouble started, actually last summer, when certain gathering places went off-limits to whites: One of the bars, the RurAL CAP office and there

may have been a few more. Not that they were ever so declared, but because it was uncomfortable to have to parry racist dogma. If you have never thought of yourself or others primarily in terms of race rather than of individual achievement, or individual personality, it is hard to know how to deal with "white man, go home."

Some of this got worse, and by the time of the land claims settlement, Kotzebue was boiling. Those of us who had fought hard for an equitable settlement of the claims found ourselves torn, unable to share in the joy of victory; we were made to feed degraded and suspect.

And ambivalent, too. For many of us had lived long enough in the north to know that the impact area of these two cultures, the technological one and the land-based hunting culture, is destructive, ineffectually painful to almost every one caught up in it. We knew the heavy-handedness of the bureaucracies; some of us had fought hard to lessen some of these impacts.

Still, we learned that now nothing counted except race. You were either in or you were out and for reasons which had nothing to do with your own self, but only with — something intangible in many instances.

☆☆☆☆☆

Eskimo Mayor Answers Jane Pender

(Because of the controversial nature of the following letter (the original of which was directed to the Executive Editor of the Anchorage Daily News), we would welcome replies and comments from other persons familiar with the matters discussed, including Mrs. Pender. — Ed.)

KIKIKTUGRUK AREA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION, INC.

June 2, 1972

Mr. Stan Abbott
Executive Editor
2nd & Post Road
Anchorage, Alaska

Dear Mr. Abbott:

I would like very much to comment on an article written in your paper by Jane Pender titled, "Eskimo vs. White."

First off, she mentioned my office, RurAL CAP, as being off limits to Whites. This is the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. All the agency people in town are white. Because of the nature of my job, I must work very close with them. I have never felt any animosity between them and myself or vice versa. Our Headstart programs, an entity of RurAL CAP, has white people as well as Eskimo people working for it. The coordinator of the program works here in my office and he is white. Many of the students that make up the program are white. Our Parent Child Center, also an entity of RurAL CAP, has the same situation as Head Start. I, as well as being Mayor of Kotzebue, would like to know what bar it is she accuses of being racist towards whites. After all, it is the white people who own the bars and if it is true, that puts white against white.

She (Jane Pender) mentioned that this started some time last summer. "Sometimes last summer", I do recall. Jane walked into my office and stated her

interest in starting a local newspaper. Since I did have all the printing equipment for a newsletter my office printed in the past, I acknowledged and pledged full support as I knew a source of getting information to the people was badly needed. Especially with the Land Claims fight going on and, at the time, the land allotment push. I gave her my copy machine, stencils, ink, some paper, and assisted her in getting someone to work with her through the On The Job Training program under AFN. I also assisted her in getting distributors in the villages as I knew most of the people in the villages of this region in which I work. Jane came to my office or called during the week, asking for news to print for about three months, then she returned my copy machine. Soon after, she allowed other opinions and articles in her paper that meant racism. She ignored my office and the newly formed Northwest Alaska Native Association office. Instead of news going to the people, it was something to start tensions amongst us, who in the past have never expressed prejudice or racism.

I thought I was doing well for the people in starting such a newspaper, but I think I helped start a monster that is working to destroy us. I must apologize to my people for taking part.

She quotes, "Those of us who had fought hard for an equitable settlement of the claims found ourselves torn, unable to share in the joy of victory; we were made to feel degraded and suspicious."

The Board of Directors for both NANA and RurAL CAP, along with Senator Hensley and Representative Ferguson, fought strenuously, day after day, to give the people they serve, a JUST settlement. Shortly after the passage of the Claims Settlement, Jane analyzed what we, ignorant, savage, and uneducated natives, would do with all aspects of the Settlement. Jane

For color itself is not a distinguishing difference between Eskimo and White.

Much of what has been happening here is a positive good. It is good to see Eskimos assuming control of their own destinies. It is good that the political balance in our village has shifted into the hands of the people who are in the majority here. It is good to hear Eskimo spoken in public meetings. It is good to see Eskimo dancing in the schools, though many of the older people still have reservations about this.

But, it is not good that an integral part of the political power shift is racial hostility and anger; and that the few whites who live here: teachers, technicians, doctors, nurses, the small handful of business people, are being made to assume the collective burden of all the ills which the Eskimos have suffered over the years as a result of contact. It is understandable that these things would be so projected, but understandable does not mean desirable.

And elevation of race, in whatever cause, for its own sake, is a blind and evil force. It is as evil when a white in Anchorage despises his Native neighbor as it is when an Eskimo in Kotzebue despises his White neighbor.

has lived in Kotzebue for a few years and also in Barrow. During her time with the Eskimos, according to the article she writes, she has developed a knowledge about US that none of US can compare. She can analyze our social, economic, and educational needs, now, and in the future. I guess, we as natives, don't know our problems and therefore, cannot analyze ourselves. We must get someone who has studied us for a few years to do it for us. Bull!

Because of the passage of the Land Claim Legislation, the consequences we will have to face in the future are going to be many. We will be forced to care for our own needs. We will have to analyze, study, then compare ourselves and our priorities to what we will expect in the future.

Jane speaks of us putting the blame on the agency people who live here today for what happened in the past. This is not true. During the Kotzebue village hearings, the concerned teacher, social worker, administrators, doctors, nurses, expressed their concerns and were sympathetic to the task now before the Eskimo people. There was communication between them and the Eskimo people, not racism. There was a beautiful exchange of ideas.

Racism is in the mind of an individual. Here in Kotzebue, it is only in the minds of just several persons and those persons have expressed through the Kotzebue news. Now it is out in the open because of these few individuals. Granted my feelings were expressed inaccurate by the press but they went ahead and used our precious older people to sign something they never knew what they were signing. To me, taking advantage of our precious older people who are uneducated to the white man's ways, only educated to the Eskimo ways, is worse than any crime. Our older Eskimos, our true link to our Eskimo

(Continued on page 6)