

"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—

Slim Randles and The Rejected Dogs

A fumbling, stumbling dogsled adventure took place last week from Mt. McKinley National Park to Anchorage—a distance of 300 miles. Although the dogmusher, Slim Randles of the Anchorage Daily News traversed the distance only halfway, he more than accomplished what he set out to do—capturing the hearts of thousands of people for the dogs he mushed for 150 miles and for himself, of course.

Slim Randles, a complete novice in the dogmushing arts, took eight rejected curs from the Anchorage dog pound, harnessed them and took them to the famous park. Some of the dogs were to be "put to sleep" in a few days because they were unclaimed and no longer wanted. Contending that they can still be useful dogs, Randles set out to mush them even though the dogs were as untrained as he was in the dogmushing procedures.

To try to mush an untrained team is one of the most difficult undertakings even for an experienced dogmusher. Untrained dogs can be frustrating. They can be laggards, unresponsive to commands, even playful or just stubborn. Above all, they can be short tempered against their kind—a trait Slim found when "Scarface" was killed by his fellow team members. This was an unfortunate tragedy but one that has happened numerous times in the dogmushing world.

In spite of being mutually untrained for mushing, Slim and his motley team achieved a working basis in two days of frustrating and tiring work—a usual and happy achievement for man and his animals.

The novice dogmusher beautifully dramatized the plight of unwanted and rejected animals. Some of them, we can strongly assume, may have been victims of desertion by their masters when those masters moved away from a city or town—a cruel fate. There are heart tugging scenes in human experiences and one of them is to see an obviously homeless dog vainly sniffing for a familiar scent on sidewalks or establishment entrances. Scenting none, the animal wanders elsewhere sad and dejected as only a dog can be.

At any rate, Slim's homely, yet poignant adventure pointed the need for better treatment of dogs or other domestic pets. He has found homes for the rejected animals—a heartwarming reward for himself and his team.

There will always be abandoned pets, we are sorry to say, but Slim's stumbling, fumbling dogsled venture moved us. We hope others have been moved likewise and make a lot of us become more aware of one of man's baser faults—the cruel treatment and abandonment of his animals.

Priest Takes Issue with Emil Notti

Russian Orthodox Mission
McGrath, Alaska 99627
February 7, 1970

Tundra Times
Box 1287
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Gentlemen:

I read with interest the text of Mr. Emil Notti's speech at Tacoma and the accompanying article headlined "General Agreement Among Native Leaders With Emil Notti." Whatever may be said for his general idea of a separate Indian Nation, the comparison with the State of Israel was the worst possible. Since I was for three years a resident of Jerusalem and am now a priest of what is called "The Native Church" here in Southwest Alaska, I am in a position to know.

Israel is a European state taken by force from the native people of Palestine. Just as the early American colonists fled from religious persecution to Indian lands which they often took by force, people from Germany, Poland, Rumania, and Russia who had been persecuted for their revenge on innocent Arabs. A small but powerful Jewish minority drove out the simple Arab farmers and shepherds who had been in possession of the land for at least 2,000 years. Even though the United Nations has called on Israel for justice at least nineteen times, the Arab people who were formerly the vast majority have never been paid anything for the homes, farms and businesses taken from them nor have they been allowed

to resettle. A million and a quarter Arabs are forced to live in refugee camps on 7½¢ per day.

The only way to apply the Israeli solution to Alaska would be to dispossess all the Eskimos on the Yukon and Kuskokwim on the ground that they have been here 2,000 years, and give the land to whatever Indians scientist say were here before that—Navajoes perhaps! I don't think this would be a good idea.

However, the very suggestion of an Indian nation opens this question: Is Mr. Notti and the AFN leadership trying to segregate the native people, or is he trying to integrate them into the American community? Let's get this quite clear. The Alaskan natives have a right to know exactly what Mr. Notti stands for and where he is leading them. I am sure that everyone would welcome a direct statement from Mr. Notti about this. Perhaps he has been misunderstood.

Sincerely yours,
Elias J. Armistead, priest

High Schooler Writes Miller

P.O. Box 23
Nenana, Alaska 99760
February 11, 1970

Office of the Governor
Pouch AB
Juneau, Alaska

Governor Miller:

I am a freshman attending Nenana Public School.

I am writing about the raise in the Alaskan budget for 1970. I am glad that the state is going to build an eight-story building at the University of Alaska and doing some other things that does not help the people much.

I think this is stupid! You should use this money to create an industry or some economy base, which will give unemployed people jobs.

I know education is important but setting up jobs for the unemployed is not only important but urgent. It is very important to me because I live in a small town in which many men and woman are unemployed. I know most of the hardships these people have.

Alaska is now the richest state in the union and has the most poverty stricken people in the entire fifty states. The 900 million is our money, the people born and raised in the state. Not the transient workers brought up from Texas and California.

The employment situation is very bad. The unions won't let the Native Alaskans join until they get a job and the employees won't give them jobs unless they join a union. If a native person is lucky enough to acquire a good job he has to be better than his co-workers. On the North Slope, other than the 2.10 an hour jobs, the out of state workers bug him until he quits.

Clear missile detection base is a good example, the contract states 10 per cent local hire, but where did they hire locally out of, Seattle. The only jobs available to Alaskans is dishwashers, and janitors.

As number one priority must be jobs for the unemployed.

Education is a very important thing but where are the people going to get the money to send their kids to colleges?

—By TUKTU
Ontario, Canada

The only bill I have heard about that will help the people to some degree is the one to give the old folks \$250 a month. Maybe they will help their struggling grandchildren to live a half way decent life.

Respectively,
Edna Ketzler II

Potter Material Plentiful In Alaska

763 La Para Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306
January 28, 1970

Dear Sir:

This last summer I was in Alaska for a visit. As a potter I could not help but be impressed by the huge amounts of glacial clay, tundra and trees. It seemed to me that the clay might be used for pottery making, and the trees or tundra for fuel to fire the pottery. With this in mind I brought a small sample of clay back with me and was delighted to find it very usable, firing to a deep and very beautiful brown color.

As a potter I could also not help noticing the lack of active pottery making in Alaska. I believe that at this time there is a real demand for and appreciation of native American art. In our area the very finest art galleries carry the Eskimo stone carvings and prints. As you probably know the stone carving was a native art, but the print making was introduced in recent years to Cape Dorset, Canada. In addition, when in Alaska we were told to go to the Alaska State prison outside of Anchorage to obtain nice craft work. Knowledge of this work seems to be spread mainly by word of mouth, yet we found the prison could not keep up with the demand for this work. All of this suggests to me that there just might be a real future for native persons in Alaska in pottery making. The advantage of this sort of activity is that it can be done at the artists own pace and can be done in areas away from main towns.

The object of my writing this letter is this: You have contact with native Alaskans and I do not. Through you I can perhaps reach an individual, group or agency that would be interested in exploring the possibilities of pottery making. I would be willing to try to get technical information to any interested persons. I know a number of potters through my professional work and I am sure these potters in turn know other potters who be willing to supply information. I would be willing to act as a clearing house for information and could supply by mail such things as plans for wood or peat fired kilns, glaze formulas using natural materials, etc. I would do this because I really like pottery making and I feel that there are tremendous possibilities both for economic and personal satisfaction were potters to be developed in Alaska.

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) Weston Anderson

WANTED: Chilkat Blankets; totem poles; ivory pipes and carvings; argillite carvings; potlatch bowls; fish hooks; spoons and all N.W. items 50 years of age or older. Send photo or sketch and prices to: Albert T. Miller, 2235 West Live Oak Drive, Los Angeles, California 90028.