

"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—

Deplorable Stevens Village Confusion

The tiny Athabascan Indian community of Stevens Village is settling down to a comparatively serene composure after going through what can be called the sorriest riot of confusion a village can be made to go through. When it came to brass tacks, all Stevens Village wanted was the protection of its rights and fair compensation for the taking of the village's land.

The village, along with four other villages, Rampart, Bettles, Allakaket and Minto, early in February this year filed a suit against Trans Alaska Pipeline System and rescinded its earlier agreement with the oil combine for a right-of-way through the land under claims by the villages. In securing the right-of-way, TAPS promised the Tanana Chiefs Conference, of which the villages are members, and the DNH Development Corporation that it (TAPS) would contract jobs the DNH can handle on the pipeline project. DNH is a corporation of interior Indians set up to handle the contracts.

The promise turned out to be an empty one. Being a duly organized Indian village under the Indian Reorganization Administration, Stevens Village filed an injunction against the oil combine recently so the pipeline would not go through lands under claims without the village's consent. The suit was upheld by the U.S. District Judge George L. Hart, Jr. who imposed a temporary injunction against permits for pipeline construction.

As a result of the suit, Stevens Village and its people became villains overnight who were holding up the construction of the huge project. It is now a common knowledge that the village was not the real obstructionist but it was TAPS itself. The huge combine found, in all probability, that it had not done a thorough research effort on the permafrost filled Alaska terrain upon which a 160-180 degree heated pipe would go through. Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel is now saying that the villages were not the ones that were delaying the construction. It was the environment and lack of plans of engineering on the part of TAPS.

Tiny Stevens Village did become a scapegoat along with its lawyers from the Alaska Legal Services Corporation under its director William Jacobs. A legislator in Juneau, who represents the village, became involved asking why the people were in the act of stopping the pipeline construction. The State Attorney General's office got into the act and influenced the villagers to sign an affidavit to have the suit thrown out of court.

The action by the Attorney General's office in the Stevens Village affair is now being viewed as a breach of legal ethics because the Governor had been sued by the village. The state's top legal office represents the Governor and its officers are not supposed to be in line to confer directly to the villagers without consulting the attorneys for the village.

From here on in, we hope the people of Alaska will not view the people of Stevens Village as villains. All they have done was protecting their rights under the circumstances. Surely their suit against TAPS is not really a formidable one but one which could be settled with fairness exhibited by both sides, and with no meddling from the outside.

How Did Tremendous Oil Deposits Get Under Prudhoe Bay?

Part Two

By GEORGE UTERMÖHLE, JR.

A LONG, LONG time ago—before the first mammal lived on the earth all of northern Alaska was beneath a huge sea. Through millions and millions of years this northern Alaskan ocean was filled by material being carried in from the highlands around its shore.

COUNTLESS sea animals and plants abounded in these not too cold northern waters. A special group of geologists with the name of Paleontologists tell us that during this era shelled sea creatures like clams and corals, air breathing fish, sharks, marine reptiles, and marine plant life abounded in the oceans of the world.

IT IS THE billions and trillions of animals and plants that thrived in the sea for tens of millions of years to which Alaska owes its new found oil wealth. As these creatures and plants lived and died they provided the material which scientists believe was converted into oil.

THE FORMATIONS where this matter was deposited were called source beds in discussion two weeks ago. The source beds and the reservoirs of the Prudhoe Field were most likely deposited during the times which geologists call the Devonian, Carboniferous, Triassic, Jurassic and early Cretaceous periods. These ages are thought to cover a span of time

of about 200 million years—give or take fifty million.

ABOUT THE TIME the last of the reservoir rocks of the Prudhoe field were being laid down, the Brooks Range was slowly being pushed upward. These northern Alaska mountains were built by the forces of nature at the same time as the Rockies of Colorado. The "Range" is the result of gradual and continuing forces deep within the earth which pushed the mountains upward and at the same time depressed the area beneath what we now call the North Slope. The depressed area lying north of the Brooks Range is now known to geologists as the Colville Geosyncline.

A GEOSYNCLINE is a huge depression or downward bending of the surface. Often, as in the case in northern Alaska this depression area is many hundred miles across. One of the interesting and most important things to happen during the bending of the surface formations which caused the Colville geosyncline was that as the basin was being formed other smaller wrinkles were being forced into the rocks that now underlie the North Slope.

IT IS THESE smaller bends which geologists call anticlines that are so important as reser-

voirs for petroleum. When the layers of the earth are bent upward in the shape of a long arch geologists call this an anticline. One of these buried ridges is a major feature in the accumulation of oil in the Prudhoe Bay sands.

IN THE TENS of millions of years following the formation of the source beds and reservoirs at Prudhoe the countless and ageless forces of nature buried the fabulous oil deposits which were discovered in 1968. Through a period of millions of years the sea was pushed slowly northward from the foothills of the Brooks Range and the north slope home of the Eskimos was formed.

SOMETIME WITHIN the past million years the world became very cold, but by this time the myriads of sea animals that had thrived in the warm seas to produce the Prudhoe oil were buried many thousands of feet below the surface of the frozen tundra.

AS AN ALMOST final stage in the evolving drama of the world as we know it today, the Eskimo moved into the Arctic wasteland. Little did the Eskimo who just a few years ago hunted and fished around his Prudhoe Bay village on the Arctic coast realize that thousands of feet beneath his hunting ground was one of the richest mineral deposits ever discovered in the very short history of man.

Letters to the Editor

Tyrsova 731
Nove Mesto na Morave
Czechoslovakia

Dear Sirs,

Let me introduce myself. I am 26 years old and employed as an electrician.

I collect the photos, folklore souvenirs and informative material of Alaska.

I should be very glad if you could help find me friends in your country. I should want to be in correspondence with them and exchange photos, souvenirs, etc.

Thank you very much,
Yours sincerely
F. Janeba

ALASKA—our great land
April, 1970

Dear Editor:

Enclosed you will find a copy of resolution No. 112 from the Legislature. Also, a contradictory report taken from the widely read Reader's Digest, in reference to the best selling and exciting book, "Our Brother's Keepers."

First of all, let me say, I agree the BIA is to be commended for the WONDERFUL job they are doing. But—for who? Themselves, (non-Natives) of course.

Incidentally, doesn't the Legislature have anything more significant to spend their time on other than wasting their time lying to us and trying to convince us BIA is really doing a great job taking care of us and educating us?

Let me tell you something, "WE AIN'T THAT STUPID!" They claim to be educating us for the past—over one-hundred years.

Then—

Why—Are key positions in BIA offices, schools, etc. not filled by Natives?

Answer:

You failed to teach us what you claim to have.
or You are discriminating against us.

You—yourself, keep telling us, "You are not qualified" (you are telling on yourself)

Why—Are there very few Natives entering college?

—Are there so many Native student "drop-out"?

—Are BIA High School graduates not employed or furthering their education?

OBVIOUSLY—they did not earn their high school diploma.

Recommendation—

STOP sending "rejects" to teach our Native children. Your people don't want them—WE DON'T EITHER!

Respectfully,
Indian

Not so stupid, and—as a BIA product—Not too smart INDIAN

P.S. You are also to be commended for giving yourselves "fast" promotions, the more stupid you are—the longer your title gets...

McGrath, Alaska
10 April 1970

Gentlemen:

I have just returned from spending three weeks visiting Russian Orthodox villages on the Kuskokwim, and this is my first chance to write to you about the letter of Father Michael Irvin. I should thank Fr. Irvin for making clear that I have nothing to do with the present administration in Sitka.

The reasons why neither I, nor the late Fr. Gerasim Schmalz of Spruce Island, can recognize the present administration is that it is illegal according to both

church and civil law. I enclose several documents. I hope that you will study them and make known the contents to your readers. The decision of the federal courts that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia alone has legal title to Russian Orthodox property has never been contested, since it was handed down in Los Angeles.

The "Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church" (usually called the "American Metropolia") broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia and declared itself independent. Even since Fr. Irvin's letter his church has reached an agreement with the Communist-controlled Soviet Church and for mutual recognition has changed its name to "the Orthodox Church of America." By this it gives up all claim to being part of the Russian Orthodox Church.

This leaves me as the only priest presently in Alaska who has any legal right to be called "Russian Orthodox." The nearest Russian Orthodox bishop is our Bishop Nectary of Seattle.

All these illegal actions have been taken without either the knowledge or the consent of the Russian Orthodox people of Alaska, although the facts are well known in the lower states, and have been mentioned recently in Time and Newsweek. It is the belief of the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia that the people of Alaska wish to remain Russian Orthodox, and have no desire to break the laws of the Church, or form part of this independent American Orthodox Church. At least they should be consulted and given a choice.

During the last three years the education of the Russian (Continued on page 7)