

"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—

Two Big Claims Hurdles Overcome

The resolution of the Alaska native land claims seem definitely in sight after overcoming two giant steps—the passage of the House version of the bill and that of the Senate. Each bill passed with resounding "ayes" in both houses overwhelmingly defeating some opposition that was offered. The action was historically convincing and one that could become a brighter highlight in the history of the nation.

The next giant step is the process through the free conference committee of the Senate and the House. This will be watched with intense interest as differences will be weighed against one another and, we hope, those differences will be resolved for the good of the future of the Alaska native people. The convincing action of both houses should weigh heavily on the outcome of bill through the conference committee.

What will be sent to the White House out of that committee will be given a hard look by President Richard Nixon. The President is known to desire a good bill. Anything less than that could endanger the resolution of the land claims. This would be a bitter pill to swallow after the glittering performances of the Senate and the House.

At any rate, the action of both houses is being received with calm elation by Alaska's native people. They have not yet seen a true reason for rejoicing. Their anticipation for equitable solution to the claims is still intense in the final outcome of the bill. They are, also, thinking of the enormous job that will face them in the future should the bill be signed by the President. We hope that they will face this task calmly without rushing for quick results. After all, the great effort for the solution of the Alaska native land claims is for the good of the present generation and for the good of the native people far in the future.

Poem—

Darkness Song

We wait in the darkness!
Come, all ye who listen,
Help in our night journey:
Now no sun is shining;
Now no star is glowing;
Come show us the pathway:
The night is not friendly;
She closes her eyelids;
The moon has forgot us,
We wait in the darkness!

NOTE: The American Indian Cultural Group is composed mainly of American Indian prisoners at San Quentin prison.

Letters from Here and There

Advisory School Group
Allakaket, Alaska
October 19, 1971

Dear Sir:

We the people of Allakaket feel that we have been wronged by the State of Alaska as to the building of our new school not being built.

At the beginning, there were no ideas asked of our villagers concerning the location of the school, type of building and the types of material and facilities to be included in our school.

Since the construction started on the school, there has been little or no local people hired. Whereas, on the last school built, a good percentage of skilled workers and laborers hired were people of our village. This resulted in little or no communication between the outside construction people and our village. Because of this there has been some awkward situations between all construction workers and people of the village. There was also simultaneous construction of the new building and tearing down of the old classrooms, leaving no facilities for classroom instruction.

As to the storage of indispensable school supplies, such as books, desks, chairs and audio-visual equipment, there wasn't any. These were thrown in the mud, under buildings, dumped on the floor of the generator shed in grease and oil as well as some objects physically thrown out of doors by the "workers."

The disposal of usable scrap building materials was given to a few local "laborers" while the same was verbally promised by the contractor to be left for the school children. The materials were to be used as a craft work by the students.

The direct result of aforementioned "problems" was closed school on October 18 because of total lack of classroom facilities. The parents and villagers are understandably upset due to the fact that the children are not in school. We have a feeling of being left out, left behind and it is a sad feeling.

The school is promised to be ready on the 1st of November 1971, however, there is understandably some doubt about this. As of now (October 19, 1971) there is one local laborer and two outside construction people on the job.

We of the Allakaket School Advisory Group are expressing a firm desire to avoid having our problems being repeated in other villages.

The majority of these problems mentioned could have and might have been avoided by village involvement. We would like villages to be included on the planning, and the construction, and see good communications established which might avoid unforeseen problems that may arise.

Respectfully,

Allakaket Advisory
School Group

Point Hope City Council
Point Hope
Alaska 99766
October 6, 1971

The Honorable Ted Stevens
The United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Sir:

We, the undersigned Native

inhabitants of Point Hope, Alaska, wish to voice our opposition to H.R. 6558 and similar legislation, which would prohibit Alaska Natives from hunting ocean mammals, especially whales, for our own subsistence purposes.

Our reasons being that:

1. Whaling supplies us with many nutritional requirements, which we would otherwise, be hard pressed in obtaining. In the spring, whaling provides us, our most important food source. Let us point out, that little, if any of the whale, is ever wasted. Its meat, blubber and skin is eaten. The whale's oil is used in cooking, much the way shortening is used everywhere else. Its bones are used to construct caches (for the storage of meat, blubber and skin) and for local handicrafts. Even the skin of the liver is used in constructing drum heads for our native dances.

The Natives of Point Hope, due to our dependence on these animals, have always had a respect for them and have always taken just enough to sustain our families.

2. The present scarcity of such animals has certainly not been the result of native subsistence hunting, but rather by mass killing for commercial purposes.

3. If H.R. 6558 and/or similar legislation is passed, it would virtually bring an end to our whaling culture, a culture, which may well be one of the oldest and most tradition bound in all of North America.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours truly,
The People of Point Hope

Nulato, Alaska
October 28, 1971

Dear Friend:

It's been 8 days since your paper came out but I don't see any hair of it.

Things is pretty rough here. I haven't got a stick of wood in front of my house and I have a cold, cold house built before I was born. I'm getting ready for the pioneer home to be built here, besides building schools, I think we need that here the worst. That outdoor toilet is pretty rough, that is, after you get old.

I was trained to go out first thing in the morning and run around to get fresh air. No inside toilets them days, and I'm still the same.

I notice they're building all around the villages except my home, Nulato. I'm tired paying taxes and building new houses for GI's, etc. schools, and no building for me. I'm tired of begging so I'm going to have to build for myself. I'm not a beggar. All my life I wanted to be independent and I still am.

Fred Stickman, Sr.

Veralas Club—

Beaver 4-H Club Elects Officers

By ARLENE PITKA
Beaver, Alaska

The Beaver Veralas 4-H Club members met in September to plan another year of 4-H Club work. On October 14 we met and finished electing the officers for 1971-72.

The following officers are: Dorothea Billy, President; Alice

John Briggs
Box 54
Whiskeytown, California

(until Cannikin-at-Amchitka is settled) I'm a coward and you may quote me on it.

Senator Ted Stevens
U.S. Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ted:

Here is an excerpt of a wire I sent President Nixon:

"Is it true that three children of Anaktuvuk Pass died of radiation poisoning from caribou marrow and that news of it was held back? Or is it only a rumor? If a rumor there are reliable Alaskans who believe it happened. We are going on record informing you that such deaths may have occurred and requesting that the report be checked and the facts be reported. Please cancel Cannikin-at-Amchitka."

We entreat you to urge the President to halt the Cannikin nuclear test blast. The Wall Street Journal and others have asked if it is necessary (JE Bylin 24 Jun '71). Is it to test something practically obsolete?

If the world's worst polluter (AEC) is so knowledgeable about what Cannikin at Amchitka will NOT do, then why are they not smart enough to know what it WILL do and thus negate necessity for the very risky test shot? (This may not be empirically a fair question but it has its merits.)

At Glenallen on 24 September I wrote Mr. Nixon that as a former Naval Officer and advocate of peace....we are sure that you see the logic to less emphasis on greater Atomic overkillpower and more emphasis on an invincible Navy and Air Force, with an improvement in Army discipline and continuation of our U.S. Marines' strength." We have written him that cancellation of the test might put the reins of world peace leadership in his hands in spite of sincere complaints of getting too soft with Moscow and Peking.

Mr. Nixon is a good President, I believe. I voted for him (and for you) and I have to see him go down in history as the man who gave the OK for a Pacific Ocean full of radiation and "hot" fish.

In a letter which the ANCHORAGE TIMES used I said, "In making the nuclear race a thing of greater international magnitude he (Nixon) has already induced the Russians to send part of their war fleet to our very doorstep here in Alaska and with impunity. I predict that we will be seeing more of the Russian Navy."—or words to that effect.

We have written one of our esteemed co-workers Mrs. Smith, (Margaret Chase Smith) that on the threshold of an era when population seems to be turning us more and more to the resource-

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