

"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—

Paternalistic Attitude

There is far too much paternalistic attitude toward the native people of Alaska and it is not only the Bureau of Indian Affairs brand either we have heard about. This sickening attitude crops up from any non-native whether he be in Alaska, the Lower 48, or from any European country.

"Lo, the poor Indian, the Eskimo, the Aleut, he doesn't know my kind of civilization so I must lead him by the hand" approach is not only an insult to the intelligence of the native people, but a deterrent on their efforts to develop.

Constantly leading the native people by the nose is not the shortest route toward their development into any semblance of the mainstream, as some people say, if they wished to take that route. Lot of our people do wish to take that route but they are hampered by too much hand-leading. They are not given enough chance to use their own strength—their own courage—their own responsibility in the process.

We now have quite a few native people who have successfully bridged the gap and they didn't arrive there by being nose-led. They got there because they had courage of their own—strength of their own. They were the ones, for all intents and purposes, who rebelled against the nose leaders. They had the gumption to hold on to some of their values even though those values were discouraged. They knew they could never become complete white people.

There are, of course, some of our own people who thought they have attained the white status and having attained it, began to look down on their own people. There is no more despicable a person than that type and their own people can do well without them.

This writing is not meant to say that all non-natives are paternalistic. Not by a long shot. There are some who respect the native people for what they are—who respect their cultures and traditions for they, too, know that the spirit of a people—their strength, lies in the pristine establishment of their heritages. This should have profound respect of all no matter where they might have sprung.

There is something wrong in the efforts to change—to assimilate the native people. Breaking the sinews of their own spirits is not going to do it.

Perhaps it would be better to give the native people a free hand to solve the problem in their own way. Who knows, they might come up with the best answer because they are known to have solved some of the most formidable obstacles in Alaska.

Presidential Library for Mt. Edgecumbe

Mt. Edgecumbe school is one of 1,000 schools in the U.S. and its territories to receive a gift of a "Presidential Reference Library" donated by the Encyclopedia Britannica on the occasion of its 200th Anniversary during 1968.

Encyclopedia Britannica announced the bicentennial gift program recently in a ceremony at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington attended by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The gifts were presented in the name of President Johnson by William Benton, Publisher and Chairman of Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., and U.S. Ambassador to UNESCO, for the Chief Executive's "leadership and continuing contributions to education for all Americans."

In accepting the gifts, President Johnson called the donation a "very generous and farsighted act...placing these Presidential Reference Libraries in these poor schools attended by our poor children." It would help the children, said the President, by giving them "power—power to rise above the arbitrary 'station' in life they were born to."

The books are being distributed to 665 elementary and 335 high school systems, public and private, selected by the U.S. Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education & Welfare, with the advice of a committee of leading American educators.

They are being distributed "according to the needs of each school district, parish or unit, including state institutions for the handicapped, neglected delinquent children, migratory worker schools and Indian schools."

Each library contains between 62 and 57 volumes, depending upon the age level, with a formal imprint citing President Johnson's contributions to education.

It is dedicated to "The School Children of the U.S.A." Retail value of the 1,000 libraries is estimated at \$750,000.

A letter from U.S. Commissioner of Education, Harold Howe II announcing the gift of the library to Mt. Edgecumbe school said: "This should be an inspiration to your community to supplement these volumes and to build a reference library that will provide children in the area with these most necessary aids to further their education."

Included among the books are the 24-volume Encyclopedia Britannica, the 15-volume Britannica Junior Encyclopedia, the 10-volume Gateway to the Great Books, the 24-volume Compton's Encyclopedia, G. & C. Merriam Company's Webster's Third New International Dictionary and other works on science and literature.

Women are wiser than men because they know less and understand more.

—JAMES STEPHENS

From birth to age eighteen, a girl needs good parents. From eighteen to thirty-five, she needs good looks. From thirty-five to fifty-five, she needs a good personality. From fifty-five on, she needs good cash.

Letters to the Editor

June 20, 1968

Dear Friend the Editor:

1931, the postmaster died here in his sleep. He was a white man. Not long after that, two elderly men died and almost everybody got sick all of a sudden.

After 36 got sick, Father Mac and Mrs. Brady the nurse, came to the store for me where I was laying down on the bench behind the long six-foot stove. They asked me if I was sick, I said, "No, just lazy."

They asked me if I could help. I said yes. Some family had no wood and no water and if they did have, I had to start the fire.

Father Mac and the nurse was giving out Aspirins for 48 hours, in which time eight died, four grownups and four children.

About the third or fourth day, the mail carrier woke me up early and said I have to take the mail to Ruby, 100 miles with 500 pounds of fur. It's a bulky load, I said. I have to, he said, there was no one in town could take it.

The first 18 miles was Koyukuk. Stop for lunch but couldn't eat. Next stop was Bishop Mountain, old cabin with tank stove, no dry wood. Anyway, I just went to bed. No eat.

Next morning, I opened a can of cherries. I ate six or seven frozen ones for breakfast.

Eighteen miles to Galena where everyone was sick except Mrs. Meagan the teacher. She cooked steak for me and I couldn't eat it, so she wrapped it up and gave it to me.

The postmaster was about passed out, so she took care of the mail.

Next stop was Whiskey Creek. That's where the boss lived, Ben Durich. I told him, "Don't cook for me. I think I have the influenza." But I said I'll make it, I don't care if I die on the way.

Next morning, I just looked at the sourdough hotcakes which I been eating the year before when I carried the mail. I used to get away with half dozen.

He asked me if I could make it. I said, "Ben, call Ruby, four hours from now I'll be there."

Twenty-eight miles more. When I got to Ruby, everyone was laying down and drinking White Mule and quinine. Just the two mail carriers helped me. They had two in case one got sick or drop dead, I guess.

This will be part one. The next one will give you the reason why I'm writing this and, of course, it will have to be the mail service now.

—FRED STICKMAN, SR.

517 West 2nd Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska

June 17, 1968

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

This is an open letter in regard to the salmon controversy between the Fishermen's Cooperative in Bethel and the State. The key question to ponder in this controversy is this—When the chips are down, is the State, as you so often hear, trying to assist in the development of the Natives of rural Alaska?

From November of 1965 until November of 1966 I lived and worked in the Eskimo village of Nunapit-chuk, thirty (30) miles west of Bethel. From November of 1966 until November of 1967 I lived and worked in Bethel. Both summers I fished with a Native for King Salmon on the Kuskokwim River. Both summers our boat registered in the top 10 for total catch and cash value. Therefore, I feel I speak with some authority and knowledge regarding the effect the Fishermen's Cooperative has had on the Native fishermen in that area.

In 1966 there were only two fish businesses (Kuskokwim Packers and Shank) where 95% of the fishermen could

sell their fish. In 1967 there were three fish businesses where they could sell their fish—the third being the Fishermen's Cooperative. Naturally, the Native I fished with sold his fish to the buyer that paid the best price—the Fishermen's Cooperative. Given the same amount of fish caught, he made a considerable amount more selling to the Cooperative. This year the same Native I fished with is fishing on the river and reliable reports are that he and others would have made considerably more selling to the Cooperative than to the other two fish buyers; that is, if the Japanese would have continued to buy the fish at the agreed upon price. But such is not the case. Because of State involvement, the Japanese refuse to buy more fish. As a result of their refusal, "8,875" pounds of quality King Salmon have

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WANTED: Chilkot Blankets; tottem poles; ivory pipes and carvings; argillite carvings; petalatch 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 Dr. Los Angeles, California 90028.