

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

Tundra Times



Owned, controlled and edited by Eskimo, Indian, Aleut Publishing Company, a corporation of Alaska natives. Published at Fairbanks, Alaska, weekly, on Wednesdays.

Address all mail to Box 1287, Fairbanks, Alaska, 99707. Telephone 542-2244.

Entered at the Post Office at Fairbanks, Alaska, as second class matter under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Eskimo, Indian, Aleut Publishing Co., Inc. Board of Directors Executive Committee: Howard Rock, president; Thomas Richards, vice president; Mrs. Ralph Perdue, secretary; Jimmy Bedfore, comptroller; Mary Jane Fale, corresponding secretary. HOWARD ROCK, editor.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Regular Mail (including Alaska, Canada and other states)	1 Year \$ 8.00	6 Months \$ 4.50
Air Mail (including Alaska, Canada and other states)	1 Year \$19.00	6 Months \$10.00

Editorial—

The ASNA Pull-out From AFN

What could be called a partial pull-out of the Arctic Slope Native Association from the Alaska Federation of Natives although disturbing may not be as final as it might seem if the Board of Directors of the statewide group sits down in a truly serious consideration of the meaning and causes of the split.

Although ASNA withdrew from the AFN, its officials made it clear that they would, along with the AFN, stand pat on the demand of the native groups for the land claims award of 40 million acres of land, \$500 million for extinguishment of land rights along with 2 per cent overriding royalty of \$500 million.

The main cause of the rift is the provision the AFN set down for the distribution of land awards among regional groups. Under the plan, the land would be awarded on per capita basis, which means the regional areas with more native populations will be awarded more land. This concept is a logical one, of course, but it also seems a bit short-sighted to us. It does not take into consideration unique land uses of different regional native areas of the state. We also seem to detect that no long range plans for investments, or reserves, for future development of resources were provided. This concept, if taken into consideration, and accepted, could prove to be a good provision—a breadbasket, we might say, for future native populations.

The Arctic area of Alaska can be singled out as one of the most unique ecological systems in the world. The very nature of the system forced its inhabitants—the Eskimos—to utilize huge areas of land for subsistence—a fact that is still under heavy utilization today. The Eskimos wander far and wide along the coast and deep into the interior for vitally needed supplies for sustenance and for a way of life. This manner of sustaining life is a deep-rooted one. Although it is being supplemented by some cash economy, it is still being pursued a great deal more than people realize. This manner of sustenance is not going to change overnight. It must be expected to continue for a long, long time in the future.

The reasons for ASNA pull-out must be considered in depth. The AFN and its board can NOT be expected to act as if it was another governmental agency that wants to think for the people it serves without full consideration and participation of the people—in this case, the Arctic Slope Native Association. The AFN must deliberate on the basis of fairness in seeking solution.

The basis for action along these lines is there but first the pangs of selfishness, if there should be any, must be set aside so the basis for decision will spring from a sense of fairness.

A good decision could bring the Arctic Slope group back in a hurry and a real and sustained push for claims settlement can once again be implemented without too much loss of motion. A considered decision could also become a valuable source of resource reserves for the good of all natives in Alaska in the future taking into consideration the vast resources in the Arctic.

Other Voices—

Native Land Claims-Significant Issue

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The editor of The Pioneer-All-Alaska Weekly, Thomas A. Snapp, last Friday wrote an editorial entitled, "Native Land Claims-Significant Issue". In it, Snapp penned a succession of events that led up to the "Native Rights Assertions", as Bureau of Land Management labeled the land claims that began in northern Alaska in early 1960's. Tom Snapp is speaking from practical experience as he was the assistant editor of the Tundra Times during those years. The Editorial is a timely one and we are printing it in its entirety in this issue of the newspaper.)

In our opinion the most significant issue in the present political campaign is that of Native land claims. The issue had been around for a long time, in fact, it has cropped up in Alaska at election time for about three decades.

Unlike the Indians of Southeast Alaska and the lower states who went to the courts to validate their claims, most of the Natives of Alaska have sought settlement of their claims through political means. Their patience is now beginning to wear thin and they are wondering if a court settlement might be quicker and less painful.

After all, it's no picnic to live in hell for a hundred years waiting on Congress to fulfill its promise. And politicians seem adept at making promises shortly before elections and adept at forgetting those promises as soon as the votes are counted.

The Native land claims issue has intensified greatly since statehood. The Statehood Act contained two provisions which set up a collision course. One required protection of the rights of Alaska natives to the land they used and occupied. The other provision allowed the state to select 107 million acres from the public domain.

The Natives did not have written title to the land they claimed and their claims were not recorded on Bureau of Land Management records. Instead they were embodied in petitions gathering dust in the Department of Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs archives.

For the above reasons, the state had a heyday for a decade selecting the best and most valuable land in Alaska, first around the big population centers, then on both sides of the Alaska Railroad, both sides of rivers, both sides of roads and highways. Check the records and you'll find that except for privately owned homesteads the University of Alaska has selected all the land on both sides of the Alaska Highway. The state also moved in to select all the land it could find rich in minerals.

Then the state really began to get greedy. It began to move in on the villages and select the land out from under the Natives. If the land freeze had not been imposed and the state had continued, it seems almost certain the only areas left would have been valueless muskeg, volcanoes, or mountaintops.

It was actually the quest of oil that caused the land freeze to be imposed. In the fall of 1961 five major oil companies filed for several thousand acres in oil and gas leases between Minto and Nenana. They announced plans for bringing in a rig to drill for gas or oil. That touched off a rash of private oil lease filings. About 50 Fairbanks and Anchorage businessmen filed for leases around those of the oil companies. The state also moved in to make tentative selection of land around the filings of the businessmen and in a short time practically all of the land between Nenana and Minto had been filed for. The state was selecting land right up to the Minto village. The villagers of Nenana and Minto could stand it no longer seeing the land base on which they depended for a livelihood snatched out from under them. They sought legal aid through the Tundra Times and filed protests which the BLM termed "Native Rights Assertions." Locally, the protests were denied, but those decisions were appealed and when the appeals reached Secretary of Interior Stewart L. Udall, he ordered land entry stopped in the assertion areas. Taking cue from Nenana and Minto, the villages of Tanacross and Northway filed huge blanket claims. And soon native groups all over the state were doing the same.

Then came the Prudhoe Bay oil strike. That set off a frenzy of oil and gas filings the likes of which Alaskans had never seen. And Udall had little choice: he imposed a super land freeze covering almost the entire state.

In 1966 Wally Hickel running for governor made an all-out pitch to Natives of Alaska if he were elected, the

Letter to Editor

Nenana, Alaska
Oct. 19, 1970

Dear Friend Howard Rock:

A lot of people asked me why I didn't run for Representative. The best way to answer that is this way. It's easy with a paper and pencil. Lot of people fight with a pencil and paper through the News-Miner editor.

There were five running from down around home. That's No. 1. Then at my home town, 2½ months after they elected me for President, they tried to vote me out with 65 voters. That's No. 2.

Letter came from Juneau to Nulato saying I was a drunk. That's No. 3.

That's when I started to lock my door and put heavy curtains on the window. Now I had to move down here to Nenana for the winter. Watchman for Polar Lumber Supplies, south end of town. You can't miss it. Come down and stop to visit if you got time. The coffee pot is on. I'll tell you all about it.

This how I was forced to turn Democrat. During depression when the Republicans were in, even though the fur was high and the grub cheap. I worked as a foreman for \$2.50 a day. And there was always somebody in jail year round. I mean the jail was full. People from all over because there's just one place there was jail at Nulato.

After Republicans was in for 20 years, I bet 20 dollars Democrat was going to win and I won. I thought something had to change and it did. Nobody in jail, a lot of work. My guess is right.

Since my friend passed away, Sen. Bob Bartlett, I have had hard time to stay on the job for the United States Air Force. The President is cutting the budget. They always tell me they have no more money, but they have money to hire dishwashers at the base. I can't understand it. They take \$5,000 a year out of my wages, they should keep me on the job, but they don't, now they have to give me \$60 a week unemployment.

I want to retire at 63 but I don't know what to do. I might go nuts.

Be sure and vote Democrat before we have depression again.

I worked 12 years for the Air Force and I worked as carpenter for about 40 years. I'm qualified, that's what they tell me, but they let me go. I hate to be pushed around like that. It's because I'm Indian maybe, my age, or physical, or my conduct.

I try every way I know. I have to shave every day, get my haircut like a "GI", etc.

Looks to me like the haircut is too high, maybe that's how we have too many Hippie type school kids. Every village school should have a barber paid by the government.

I can't get used to it. It gives me the shakes. So be sure and vote Democrat. Things is bound to change then.

I hope.

FRED STICKMAN

CLASSIFIED

The Alaska Federation of Natives seeks applicants for a HEALTH PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVE to provide program support to all AFN sponsored health programs. Familiarity with rural Alaska, experience in management, proven ability to relate easily and effectively with community and professional groups as well as government agencies are characteristics that applicants should possess. Extensive in-state travel will be required. Salary is negotiable and will be based on background and prior experience. Submit resume and salary requirements to: Mr. Eben Hopson, Executive Director, Alaska Federation of Natives, 1675 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska.