

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

## Editorial—

# Shrill Cry of Dispute

The Alaska Federation of Natives, in general is a pretty good organization. It is in the process of molding itself, although painfully, into attaining its stated goal—the cohesion it needs with its regional membership. Along with this, its influence potential has already begun to bear fruit. This is a continuing process. If external influences do not weaken it, this will continue to grow.

At the moment, the statewide federation is being beset by the strident and hysterical attorney dispute stemming from the AFN's wish to retain Justice Arthur J. Goldberg to be the general counsel for the organization during the land claims legislation in Congress. This has been hurting the federation a great deal.

The AFN is a native organization meant to serve the people. It means just that. It has a potent potential if the native leaders within it keep in control without outside influences. There also becomes apparent at times that there are some elements of ambitious individuals who might wish to use the organization to further themselves. This element is also a prime material for use by outside influences. It can be used to aggravate the inner workings of the AFN. This is the element that should never be allowed to leach itself into strategic positions within the organization. By being the way it is, this element is a weakness within the structure of the AFN.

To date, we believe, the AFN regional member groups have been too dependent on their attorneys to the extent of having their policy decisions influenced by their counsels. Some of the lawyers are gifted orators who can sway decisions by the officers of the associations. True, the lawyers' knowledge of proper legal moves can be instituted into policies but when they influence them by impassioned orations, they are actually doing a disservice. Attorneys are not members of the associations they represent but are mechanics and technicians hired for technical purposes.

As for the dispute between the Alaska faction of the regional attorneys and the Goldberg firm, both sides can afford to give ground instead of alienating one another.

Justice Goldberg has the prestigious stature borne of service in three of the country's highest offices. The Alaska lawyers have extensive knowledge of the wishes of the native people they represent concerning land matters. The Goldberg faction should be cognizant of this valuable backlog. It is an intimate knowledge that should be respected and used in effort to affect an equitable solution to the land claims. Scorning what could be instrumental in the effort can be taken as a slight toward the native people. Pooling of skills and knowledge on both sides on a more cooperative basis can best serve the cause—the much needed, fair resolution of the land question.

And then there is Edward Weinberg, former solicitor for the Department of the Interior whose services Justice Goldberg has acquired. This was strenuously objected to by the Alaska lawyers because Weinberg has worked on Alaska land matters under the then Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall. Alaska attorneys say this would be in violation of Title 18, Section 207, of the United States Criminal Code that prohibits a former government employee from working on similar matters in which the government has had prior interest.

Justice Goldberg has asked for a ruling on Weinberg from the Interior Department. Early ruling on the matter could expedite matters. The decision could clear up some air in the AFN, Alaska regional counsel and the Goldberg lawyer relationship. Clearing the air on this could perhaps be a positive step toward a calmer working effort for all concerned. There should not be any clouds, should it mean that, if the Weinberg situation is not cleared.

In the meantime, inroads by disputes on the time element have been hurting to work on land claims. A major effort is called for to calm the frayed nerves, otherwise little can be accomplished in one of the most urgent matters Alaska has faced—the meaningful solution to the land situation.

## REFLECTIONS . . .

By HOWARD ROCK  
Times Editor

Well, what do you know. Our native leadership has matured. Right from the start, the infant leadership showed signs of being precocious but little did we dream that in the span of a little more than three years or so they would become targets by bigtime lawyers. Now that they have been initiated into the mark of leaders of men, they might as well sit back and expect more of the same.

Last week, a sprawling paper was published in a Fairbanks morning daily newspaper written by Edgar P. Boyko. In it, the eminent lawyer and former Attorney General of the State of Alaska, labeled Emil Notti, John Borbridge, William Hensley, Eben Hopson and Flore Lekanof as the "Foolish Five"

Attorney Boyko criticized the Alaska Federation of Natives officials along with Justice Arthur J. Goldberg.

## ANB Grand President Soboleff Urges Unity

Grand Camp  
ALASKA NATIVE BROTHERHOOD  
Inc.  
9 April 1969

TO: ALL ALASKA NATIVE BROTHERHOOD CAMPS  
ALASKA NATIVE SISTERHOOD CAMPS  
PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS  
TLINGIT AND HAIDA LAND SUIT MEMBERS

FROM: WALTER A. SOBOLEFF, GRAND PRESIDENT

A history of the Tlingit and Haida Land suit effort is fairly documented in the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Alaska Native Sisterhood records, a portion in the hearts of those unable to write and speak English, many are no longer with us.

The Alaska Native brotherhood was strongly supported by the Alaska Native Sisterhood, since 1929 and this land suit. At no time was this land suit ever left to face existence alone.

Due to technicalities it was voted during a convention to continue the effort under another name only, with the late Hon. Andrew P. Hope, serving as president, and meeting in between Grand Camp convention sessions. Without this fidelity the land suit in question may well have become a lost cause. Tribal and clan ties proved to be of value in keeping us together for strong support in not letting go.

Several problems have dared to divide us:

1. Advocacy of 100 per cent per capita
2. Planned use of judgement funds
3. Jurisdiction of Fund custody
4. Lack of communication, members to leaders and leaders to members

Many unfounded rumors tended to cloud the issue. Misunderstanding arose, relative, friends, organizational members divided and took sides. Our organizations weakened. New comers to the land suit rolls unknowingly created problems by not understanding the history of the land suit.

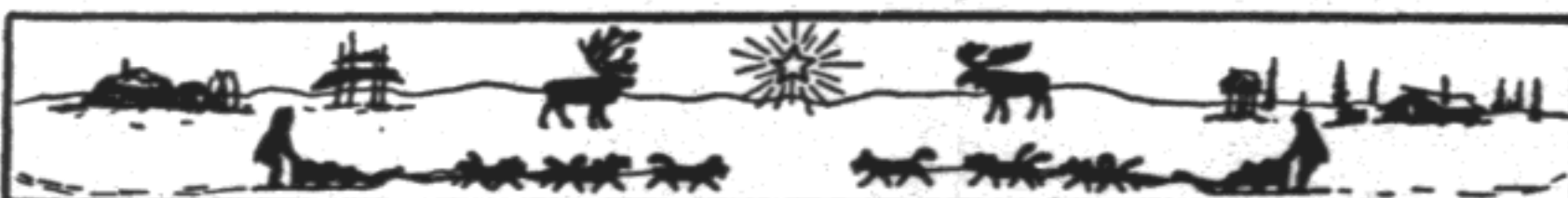
It is of prime importance to be well informed of the case and hear the lawyers interpretations. Among ourselves we have a right to agree and to disagree, but not to be disagreeable.

We have shared hand in hand in advancing the land suit, although the amount is not what we wished it to be here it stands. We have great hopes and take pride in progress made by the Tlingit and Haida group, how can we do otherwise when our membership is one and the same people.

Since the land issue was based on aboriginal rights it follows that Tribal philosophy meant continuous land ownership, never terminating with a generation, always inherited. Trespassers were dealt with and those not apprehended were honest to pay royalty. Our land money is an image of land and we must use every caution for adequate investment of funds for inheritors. A contrary idea would deny the rights of those in posterity.

Today, as never before we need a united front. We have burned many bridges including a rich heritage of ceremonies, art, legends, folklore, language, practically a total heritage. We call upon all to stand firmly together in support of what will serve our people the best. Our ancestors were noted for their ability to speak with the utmost in diplomacy, tact and wisdom. They won their point with—United we stand.

## Tundra Times



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

Address all mail to Box 1287, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701. Telephone 452-2244.

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 Bedford, comptroller; Mary Jane Fate, assistant 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

## LETTERS to EDITOR

May, 1969  
Kaltag, Alaska 99748

Dear Editor:

The true story I am about to write is about the lack of communication in the rural areas.

During the second week in May, we heard on Tundra Topics that there was to be a meeting of the Tanana Chiefs on the 16th and 17th of May in Fairbanks—and at least two delegates from each village should attend—and that if they needed transportation and place to stay to write to Ralph Perdue. So our village wrote for need of transportation and place to stay for two delegates.

Then again on Tundra Topics we heard that our transportation was to be paid for by the OEO. So, Leonard Silas (Vice Pres. of our village council) and I (M. Rose Semaken, secy. of our village) left Kaltag for Galena.

And in Galena, absolutely no one knew anything of transportation for two delegates to the meeting. So Leonard called up Ralph Perdue by phone. His wife answered and she said to contact a certain office by teletype. And—the answer we received on teletype was that there was no transportation for Leonard and me. So we talked to a representative of RurALCAP in Galena. She said that the "Action Worker" of our village was supposed to attend the meeting in Fairbanks.

Here in our village we'd never heard of that at all. So Leonard and I both paying our own round trip fare for all that nonsense, went back home to Kaltag.

Editor, things like "transportation by OEO" should have been written on paper—instead of sending messages over Tundra Topics. A PAPER we can show and use. A message can't be shown.

Thank you, Editor.

I hope to see this printed in OUR PAPER so people might get the message and WRITE things on paper instead of sending messages on the radio.

Yours truly,  
Margaret Rose Semaken  
Village Council Secretary

## ALASKA

Here in Alaska where I am from  
This great land of the  
midnight sun,  
Where here and there just only a  
trace of man's recent slur,  
his temporal pace.  
Many are they who came and  
died; Many more came  
and tried and tried;  
A few found gold, other riches  
to share. To them the land  
was dark, cold, bare.  
To me it is a land that's bright  
In summer the sun shines  
all night.  
The hills turn green the berries  
grow, fish in the streams the  
birds all know.  
From green to gold than white  
with snow, the bright  
moonlight a luminous glow.  
But fur clothes keep me warm  
and nice; my igloo too,  
not made of ice.  
The northern lights are static  
white, and multi-colors  
prance and fight.  
This land I love with sacred woe,  
for I am an Es-ki-mo.

—IDA ROSE

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