

**"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—

# Land Selection Priorities

The Alaska Federation of Natives Board of Directors and the Governor of the State of Alaska, William A. Egan, came face to face last weekend in Anchorage. The meeting was quietly dramatic. It was part of the guts work in the effort to resolve the mechanics of the Alaska native land claims solution. This one involved land selection priorities. Each entity—the AFN and the State—wants to be first in selecting lands after the claims is settled, the State to continue its selections after it has already selected some 17 million acres of prime land before the land freeze. The AFN hopes to have the first selection rights with the settlement of the claims—and, we think, rightly so.

The AFN is toiling with the unenviable job of relinquishing its rights to some 300 million acres of land the native people have been accustomed to using in the habitation of this northern land. In return for extinguishing of land rights, the statewide group is asking in return of land it deems is not even enough.

The powerful forces that are working for the right of the state to select lands first should also think back that the state already has had the privilege of having the first choice in selecting the initial prime 17 million acres of land. The AFN, we think, is actually not asking too much while relinquishing its rights to million and millions of acres of land. It is also a fact that the greatest portion of land selected will be around the immediate areas of villages, much of which the state would not want anyway.

We do not think the Alaska Federation of Natives is unreasonable in asking for the right to select lands first for its people. AFN is asking for greatest justice possible under the dire circumstances—the relinquishment and extinguishment of rights to lands.

## Other Voices—

# What Will Happen To the Settlement

All indications are that the land rights battle which has been waged by the Alaska Federation of Natives in Washington, D.C. may finally be drawing to a close. The U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate have already passed a Land Rights Bill. It is therefore quite conceivable that by the end of the year, there will be a Land Rights Settlement.

From information available at this time, it seems the final settlement will allow the Native people, through a number of regional Native corporations in the state, to retain title to 40 million acres or more of land and will also give them cash and royalties equal to the sum of approximately one billion dollars.

In this editorial, I would like to express my concern regarding some of the potential problems in a one billion dollar cash and royalty settlement.

One billion dollars is a sizeable sum and if used properly, the money could help alleviate many of the severe problems of poverty presently found in rural villages, but if it is spent unwisely, it could disappear in 10 to 15 years. It seems to me that the base capital of a billion dollars must remain and cannot be spent on projects or programs, unless such expenditures can increase the billion dollars. For instance, if the money is used for loans for businesses, the capital can be returned and the amount of money could grow from one billion to many billions of dollars.

The money could also be invested in banks, stocks and municipal bonds. These are all words foreign to most Alaska Natives, but are words they must learn the meaning of if they are to protect their Land Rights Settlement.

It is very discouraging to me to see the number of people, especially non-Natives, who have hypothetically

# Letters from Here and There

White Mountain City Council  
White Mountain  
Alaska 99784

Robert E. Mclean  
Administrative Officer  
BIA-United Pacific Building  
2nd Avenue  
Seattle, Washington

Dear Mr. Mclean:

There are rumors circulating to the effect that the services of the North Star III will be discontinued, and may be replaced either by the military or private enterprise.

The village of White Mountain has not received any written word of this, whatsoever, and this is nearly as bad as an insult. Why has White Mountain, or any

of the villages for that matter not heard from whomever is bringing this about? We think since North Star III is servicing us, we should at least have a voiced opinion in this matter. The Native village of White Mountain as a whole are thoroughly satisfied with what North Star III has done and is still doing. They have done us service, although ours is a very small village. They have made sure we get all of our groceries. Can we be sure anybody else would and could do as much?

We would appreciate hearing from somebody what really is going on.

Thank you.

George Ashenfelter, President

Sincerely,  
George Ashenfelter, President  
White Mountain City Council  
White Mountain, Alaska

IRA Council  
Native Village of Stebbins  
Stebbins, Alaska  
October 24, 1971

The Honorable Ted Stevens  
United States Senator  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

We the people of the native village of Stebbins are concerned that the North Star service to our village might be discontinued.

We have heard rumors that the government is doing a study to determine the cost of operating the North Star compared to the cost of shipping by commercial carriers.

How come no one has asked us what we think about it?

We would like to have a say in any studies or changes that affect our village.

We have been very satisfied with the service provided by the North Star and we would like to see those services continued.

We would appreciate it if you tell us what is planned for the North Star service and give us an opportunity to express your opinions.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,  
IRA Sec. Treas.  
Mr. Peter Martin

Barter Island, Alaska

Dear Rock:

We have a problem in this village. The people are having trouble in the post office. We have to look out the window to see if the Post Office is open. When we are so busy playing we don't see the postmaster go to the post office.

I hope we have a better postmaster someday and the other villages too.

Good-by.

Sincerely yours,  
Roy Akootchook, Jr.  
7th Grade

Barter Island, Alaska

Dear Rock:

We have some same trouble as your people have. We have sore necks cause our post master do not go to post office on time. We have to look out the school window and we look and we look and he did go in time.

And have some trouble looking out from our house too. So many people have trouble looking in their window to see the post master go to the post office. The post master name is Jimmy and he don't go in time. I am six grade and 13 years old and I born in 1958 and my dad's name is Tommy O. Gordon and my mom's name is Evelyn Gordon.

Sincerely,  
Mickey Gordon

Barter Island, Alaska

Dear Rockie:

We do have problems with our post office. When we are not in school we have to sit and look out the window. When we are playing out we have to look if our postmaster will open. Sometimes we get to busy playing and don't see the postman go there. I hope we have a better postmaster. We hope the other villages have better postmaster too.

Yours Sincerely,  
Nathan Gordon  
7th Grade

Barter Island, Alaska

Dear Rocky:

We do have problem with out post office too. The postmaster slip in the post office without the people seeing him. Sometimes we don't mail our letters, but today we caught the post master and went to the post office. We do hope you help our village with our post office.

Yours sincerely,  
Charles Brower  
6th Grade

Barter Island, Alaska

Dear Rock:

We read in your paper a while back were someone was having problems, with their post office. Mr. Rock, we too have problems. When we are at home we have to sit and look out the window of our homes, so we may see the post man going to work. It would really help us too, if we had regular hours, in which to watch for the postman. Its really tough watching for something that may not happen.

Yours Sincerely,  
Edward Rexford, 7th Grade

## Book Review— Indian, White Man: Friends

"A STORY ABOUT AN INDIAN, A WHITEMAN, AND A LONG STRETCH OF RIVER."

That's the sub-title of Alan Fry's new book COME A LONG JOURNEY. It's set in the Yukon Territory today—and it's about an Indian and a Whiteman slowly becoming friends. As their canoe travels down the wild Yukon River, along the deserted Klondike Gold Rush trail, the white narrator gets along well with Dave, his Indian guide—but always on a white-Indian basis. Despite their jokes about it, the racial barrier is always there.

Then slowly the barrier begins to crumble. After many days of shooting rapids, camping, stalking grizzlies and fishing together, Dave begins to open up. By a flickering campfire he tells stories of his people. The stories, like the deserted Indian villages they drift by in the canoe, show what it is to be an Indian in a whiteman's world. The whiteman understands—and with that understanding comes a deep friendship that is soon to be tested.

While the main story deals with Dave and the narrator slowly becoming friends, more than half of the book is taken up by Dave's stories about Indian life. The first—the story of K'Anta, paints a striking picture of an Indian boy growing up in the days before the whiteman arrived in force, when K'Anta's people traded with the Tlingit who in turn took furs to the coast to sell to the whitemen.

The second story describes how Dave kept two cheechako whitemen alive in the bush through a bitter winter only to become "a goddamned Indian" when they returned to whiteman's civilization.

Last year, British Columbia's Alan Fry hit the Canadian best-seller lists with his tough angry portrayal of Indian misery on reservations in HOW A PEOPLE DIE.

already spent the Native Land Claims Settlement. Many people in the state feel that once the settlement is made, Native people should install their own sewer systems, pay for all their health care, support the education system and supplement existing housing programs. If the money is spent in this way, the children and grandchildren of the Native people will truly wonder what happened to the Land Claims Settlement of 1971.

—JOHN SHIVELY

