

"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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Bethel and Barrow have serious trash disposal problems

Alaska State Legislature
House
March 16, 1976
Honorable Jay S. Hammond
Governor
Pouch A
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Francis S. L. Williamson
Commissioner
Dept. of Health and Social Services
Pouch H-01
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Gentlemen:

It is public knowledge that the cities of Barrow and Bethel, Alaska, have been having sewer and trash disposal problems in previous years and today. Following are summaries of this situation for these Alaska communities.

BETHEL

This winter Bethel's housing project water and sewer system became frozen creating on-site and on-ground human waste pollution—a public hazard which should not be left unattended. The City of Bethel should be provided some assistance by making available necessary funding for repair or purchase of sewage trucks, and personnel in form of health expertise.

There have been reported cases of hepatitis in Bethel which may have occurred because of the present health hazard situation.

BARROW

The City of Barrow is presently in the midst of a critical problem with sewage and trash. With a population of approximately 2,300 and over 400 homes, the usual methods of dealing with these problems is no longer adequate.

Until February of 1976 a systematic sewage pick-up for every home was operated but had to be curtailed due to the tremendous costs involved... approximately \$55,000 monthly. This money was not budgeted and caused a severe drain on borough resources. Originally a customer charge had been anticipated but problems with equipment, personnel and access to homes kept the service from functioning at a level adequate for that purpose.

At present one sewage truck only is operating with only one operator. This allows only for pumping sewage from these few places with large holding tanks. There is also one truck operative for dry trash. The procedure for disposal on human waste has become a problem. People must place waste in plastic lined

cardboard boxes outside their homes allowing it to freeze. Barrels have reappeared at many houses. The dry trash crew attempts to pick up frozen waste along with dry trash but it is very difficult to keep up with both.

This problem coupled with our ever present water problems produces a serious health hazard to community residents. Robert Worl, North Slope Borough health director, states that the largest single medical problem seen in Barrow is the gastro-intestinal area. The usual reports state these problems are due to unsanitary conditions. The lack of water and a disposal system for trash and waste form that unsanitary condition. Even though most people are quite careful there is spillage. Organisms in the waste are dormant when frozen but upon entering the home on shoes, dog's feet, etc. they become active in the warmer air. Once upon the ground these organisms are dormant until break-up, a period during which they are spread even further by melting ice and snow. These same organisms are capable of vectoring (transmission) up to 90 feet through the ground! The northern region has experienced a drastic rise in cases of hepatitis in the last two years. The conditions in Barrow have been termed disastrous by the state sanitarian for our area, Philip Nicpon. He has warned that careful and drastic measures must be taken in order to avert a tremendous threat from hepatitis and other waste borne illnesses in the spring.

The Public Health Service estimates that Phase III of a water-sewer program for Barrow would cost \$25 million dollars. This project is not funded. Phases I and II provided for development of a water shed reservoir and a centrally located distribution point for treated water. These are presently under construction and should be on-line within the next two years.

The alleviation of our present problem remains an elusive goal. The technology for a suitable system exists but would be very costly to construct and to maintain. Alternatives would need to include some type of pick up system that insured ready access to the honey bucket (perhaps a servidor of some type), or a more suitable, easily dumped container for wastes that could stand in front

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Letters from Here and There

Nature provides interesting contrasts

4330 Bradner Rd.,
Aldergrove, B.C.,
Canada
February 30, 1976

The Editor
Tundra Times
Box 1287,
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a young man of 25, born in British Columbia, Canada, and am presently living at 4330 Bradner Rd., Aldergrove, B.C. While I was growing up I had the opportunity of living in many of the smaller towns of this province. This being the case, I met many different people who I later realized had a great influence on my life. Some of them were Indian, and it is in appreciation of what they offer that I am writing this letter. Their expression of gentle nobility and integrity in living was a source of inspiration to me in my earlier years. It became clear to that such qualities of true character rightly should have the highest value in the world.

Could it be because man (male or female) has ignored these qualities that he finds himself with the problems he has today. All of which seems to be a reflection of his own inner state of conflict. Nature on the other hand, provides an interesting contrast. Here there is evidence of a beautiful harmony, a reflection of an inner state of peace and oneness. I've considered these things in my heart and I feel that it is up to each of us to provide the necessary ingredients that would cause the same reflection of harmony and beauty in our world. These ingredients relate to such qualities of character as patience, honesty, kindness, humility, courage, wisdom and integrity. When these are expressed consistently in our individual lives, here is real basis for change on a world wide scale!

I would be happy to hear from your readers on this question.

Yours sincerely,
Marvin Schmunk

Disappointed in Coffey's editorial

Box 1701
Kodiak, Alaska 99615
March 10, 1976

National Fisherman

Dear Mr. Coffey:

Your March editorial on Alaska's Limited Entry Law was extremely disappointing, not mainly because you tried to take a middle course on a hot, polarized issue, but because you misled your readers on an already complicated subject.

You say that those opposed to Limited Entry "don't want government involvement," or are "totally against bureaucratic management." That's absolutely false.

Kodiak fisherman work more harmoniously and closely with our Dept. of Fish and Game biologists in managing our Fish

than probably any other group of fisherman in Alaska or even the Pacific Northwest. It is absolutely necessary that the government closely manage the Fish so that fisherman and the fish both have a future, however that management should consist of setting catch quotas and escapement goals based on the best possible research, and regulating the fishing period and gear size, etc., so as to allow the proper harvest, all backed up by adequate enforcement.

Many of us opposed to Limited Entry believe the government has no business regulating the economics of the fishing industry by limiting the number of boats so fisherman guaranteed a good income. There are guarantees in the fishing business—if a fisherman wants a guarantee, he's ready for a job and a time clock.

If there is a poor run of fish, then we all probably have to rely on another fishery or alternate job, but if there is a fair season then the good fisherman and the average fisherman who works hard will make a living, and the poor fisherman will drop out, just like in most other business. That's where the free enterprise must remain.

We fish year-round in Kodiak, and we need the freedom and flexibility to move from fishery to fishery—that's our security. We don't want to get boxed in by expensive permits and red tape. This summer in Alaska, for instance, some areas are facing poor salmon predictions, but those fisherman no longer have the option of shifting to productive areas.

There are a lot of sound, rational, level-headed reasons why the majority of fisherman in Kodiak, and a lot of other fisherman around the state, want to repeal LE. It sounded appealing at first, but it turned into a can of worms. We want to make our living catching fish, not wheeling and dealing in permits and this system will just cost us money in the long run.

If you're not a fisherman, you probably can't understand the details of our problems, but I'm sure that in the newspaper or other businesses you've run into government regulations that drove you up the wall. Well, a lot of us just got so fed up with the LE program that we tied up our boats and spent the time and money gathering the signatures to get it on the ballot so the voters can repeal it.

To correct another point in your editorial, it was our politicians in the Alaska legislature who wrote the present LE law—the preceding constitutional amendment only approved the concept.

It's easy to portray both sides as extremists and say that "the preferred solution lies somewhere in between," as you did, but LE is not one of these subjects. Rather, it is more like being pregnant—either you are or you aren't, there's no inbetween.

Now is no time for our government—state or federal—to start regulating the economics of our fishing industry. Just recently the federal government has recognized the mistakes it has made in trying to regulate income and efficiencies in the railroad, trucking and airline industries over decades, and is now proposing large scale DE regulations to allow freer entry and competition. A little late for the railroads.

If the government will just do

a good job of managing our fish, our pocketbooks will take care of themselves.

Dave Herrnsteeen
F/V BONANZA

Concerned citizens eye alcoholism

Fairbanks Concerned Citizens on Alcoholism

Box 1030

Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Robert M. Cole, Coordinator
State of Alaska
Office of Alcoholism
P.O. Pouch H-05F
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Mr. Cole:

In the form of this letter, the Fairbanks Concerned Citizens on Alcoholism (FCCA) wishes to make known to the State Office of Alcoholism our intent to assume the responsibilities of management and administration of the Fairbanks Alcoholism Programs in their entirety. (This would include services from detoxification through rehabilitation and halfway houses on to follow-up care and after care).

The FCCA believes this organization is capable and has the necessary expertise to operate the Fairbanks Alcoholism Programs in a manner best benefiting the suffering alcoholic which in time will return to the advantage of the City of Fairbanks, the Tanana region and the State of Alaska.

By a correct, complete and a total treatment concept the FCCA believes we can and will become a total service delivery system designed to meet the needs of all the people and not just special interest groups.

To enable the FCCA Board of Directors to discuss the budget and to make a realistic proposal to operate Fairbanks Alcoholism programs within its budget limitations, we respectfully request a complete copy of the Fairbanks Comprehensive Alcoholism budget and expenditures for the past three (3) years and the projected budgetary information on the CAP's operational costs and expenditures for the coming three (3) years.

The Fairbanks Concerned Citizens on Alcoholism are aware of the extreme need to make vast and drastic changes in the management, consulting and financial operations now present in the Fairbanks Alcoholism programs. Because of an apparent lack of concern or simply inadequate expertise, there is an ever-expanding gap between existing programs and those to whom the programs intend to serve who are the suffering alcoholics.

Thank you for your cooperation in this vital matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Fairbanks Concerned Citizens on Alcoholism

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