

STATEMENT OF PHIL M. TUTIAKOFF

Unalaska, Alaska

July 11, 1981

The concerns of the Aleuts are easily understood by us and others who learned from viable sources of our W.W. II experience; unfortunately they constitute a minority. Be that as it may, certain proven facts cannot be ignored.

Firstly our constitutional rights were taken away in a very unseemly manner. That this was done by our own countrys government compounds that unforgivable act.

Secondly, why were only the Aleuts singled out? We committed no overt or covert acts to justify the authorities entire treatment of us at that time, nor at any time of our existence.

Thirdly, the treatment we received from environs of two separate U.S. federal agencies was grossly impersonal and would allude to the impression that we were incapable of any ordinary human functions.

Fourthly and equally important as the foregoing is that the Aleut culture was halted for 2 1/2 years. That a peoples lifestyle ceased to exist through no fault of their own is an old part of the American history but certainly does nothing to distract from the vileness therein when one considers the date in the history of the U.S. One cannot appreciate as deeply nor honestly relate to this situation unless one has lived the experience.

The Aleuts in Unalaska had been advised by the U.S. military that they may have to be evacuated, after they encircled our village with barbed wire and martial law was declared. Unalaska and Amakanak (Dutch Harbor) Islands were the hub of military activity in the Aleutians. We sustained three bombing raids before we were forced to leave our homes. The tides of war in the chain went in favor of the United States after that. Except for Attu Island no enemy action affected our home islands. Had we known the manner in which our evacuation, stay from home and the losses we incurred and found in our home upon our return, no Aleut would have agreed to the idea of evacuation.

The Attuans watched their chief and male caucasian school teacher shot and killed on the beach in front of their village. They watched their village destroyed without a trace by the enemy and late were transported to a prisoner of war camp in another country. To add insult to injury they were not returned to their home islands but were forced by the U.S. authorities to encroach upon the traditional domain of the Atkans. Each group suffered a culture Crash due to the differences in the language. Subsequent efforts by the Attuans to return to their home island were thwarted by the U.S. authorities and/or U.S. military.

The Atkans introduction to the national emergency was to see U.S. naval personnel with amphibious aircraft establish themselves on Atka. Those planes were destroyed by enemy action and prior to their removal from their

home island they had to stand, uncomprehending and helpless while U.S. military personnel destroyed their villages except for two homes.

The Pribilovians from St. Paul and St. George with other Aleuts from Atka, Nikolsski, Unalaska and Akutan were given 24 hours notice before they were taken away for their own safety.

We submit that the subsequent treatment we received, the inestimable loss of personal pride, property, our future growth as an integral part of the society of the United States of America cannot be fully measured or expressed. One facet of our overall loss is the horrendous psychological damage incurred which naturally was transferred to our heirs. Considering the Aleuts who have passed away since, the total is incalculable. The ultimate affect is detrimental to our peace of mind.

To learn our stay in Southeastern Alaska could have been shortened but wasn't, simply because the U.S. military did not want to construct facilities to house their people so the use of our homes could continue convinces us not to turn the other cheek.

Lengthening the time we had to live with the daily inadequacies in a foreign environment so as to allow total strangers to use our homes or because our presence would detract from the military activities taking place in a theater of the war where the Continental United States was not endangered is exceedingly difficult to accept.

After being forced to leave our homes, forced to exist in a subhuman atmosphere, our return to our homes was indelibly marred when we found the irraparable damage done to our communities and homes in our absence by our fellow citizens was the ultimate in the long list of human indignities we had to sustain.

An Aleut train of being obedient to authority was, in this case, very unfortunate.

That the same government has seen fit to seek fair reparation will be difficult to reconcile by the overlying fact that man is a creature of habit and, habits die hard.

We will cooperate to the best of our ability to right a wrong, assist future citizens so they do not suffer as we did and hope the history books in our schools reflect a factual account of the Japanese and Aleut World War Two experience.

Thank you,

/s/ Phil M. Tutiakoff

Chairman: Aleutian/Pribilof Island Corporation, Incorporated.