

An Alaska Native's take on his Governor

By Matt Gilbert

Hello. My name is Matt Gilbert. I am originally from Arctic Village , Alaska . I am Alaska Native: Gwich'in Athabaskan. I visited Sarah's campaign office and spoke with her before she became Governor. We talked about the hunting & fishing rights of Alaska Natives. We didn't get anywhere. She sided with sport & commercial interests, so I walked out on her and never looked back. In general, I believe Sarah Palin is another version of Bush, just as inexperienced, but more impulsive. She is very dangerous and scary. People are continuing to support her because she's beautiful, and this should be a Red Alert for the world. Her purposed policies is to include Georgia into NATO and that would mean all the European countries with all their armed forces will have to go to war with Russia. So she's willing to ruffle the feathers of a country right next door to her home. Is this who you want as President? You know the scene in the movies when a car or stage coach is about to go over a cliff and you see yourself sliding over? Scary image isn't it? That's' what I'm seeing if Palin gets elected Vice President. Wake up America ! Send her back to Alaska . She has plenty of un-finished work here. She hasn't even gotten funding to move the town of Shishmeraf . It's falling into the ocean from an eroding coast due to Global Warming, which she wants to fuel more by encourage more coal and oil development. She fuels the fire, and now they want her to do it on a national level.

Palin has done a lot of irrational things up here as Governor. In the summer of 07', she Line Item Vetoed a lot of infrastructure projects in rural Alaska . The small town of Eagle spent years trying to get a community center built when they finally got funding, Palin shut it down by her Veto. Even Lawmakers are baffled by her Vetoes. They've had Bills well-debated on both sides of the aisle, yet she cuts, cuts, cuts. She supported \$15 million to Anchorage 's University's Sport Complex and cut \$1.5 million to an expansion of the runaway teen center. How do you justify that? She supports drilling Off-Shore which would utterly destroy the livelihood of the Inupiaq people on the North Slope . They rely on Whale for subsistence and the development would detrimentally impact those whales. She supports drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. My people, the Gwich'in have kept this area closed from development for 30 years. No other American Indian tribe has ever accomplished such a feat. If she drills in the Arctic Refuge, it'll be the end of my culture. We rely on the Porcupine Caribou Herd and if drilling takes place in the Arctic Refuge, our caribou goes and so does our culture. We Gwich'in Athabascans are the last American Indian Tribe in the US that hasn't been majorly disturbed, heavily impacted, and assimilated. We are the last pure Native American tribe left. We are the last stand for Indian Country. We are the last chapter in American Indian/Anglo American relations. The prior chapters were bad, so make this last chapter a good one and vote for Obama.

Alaska Natives in general are the last group of Native Americans in the United States still depended on a hunting & fishing-based lifestyle where kids and grown-ups go out to fish and hunt to supplement their western diets. It's crucial we have food off our land because the western foods, processed foods, give us diabetes if we eat them alone. The subsistence foods not only feed our bodies, but our culture, spirit, social lives, and minds. The Western World calls it Subsistence, but we call it our Way of Life. I'm using the word against my well. It gives our lives meaning and keeps us busy. With God's help, hopefully everyone can understand. Our way of life off the land is everything to us. If we don't have that we're nobody, just another group living off the grid, consuming McDonalds, and buying Brand-Named items. We add diversity and richness to the world. Sarah Palin doesn't care about this. She wouldn't care if our culture eroded before her eyes. She's like Nero, sitting in Juneau putting on lip-gloss as Alaskan villages suffer. We're suffering from fuel costs. We're suffering from strangulating Fish & wildlife regulations that keep us from surviving off the

already scarce wildlife. She has done some things, but not enough. She can ease the Fish & wildlife regulations in order to improve food security in the villages. She can subsidize the villages with the rising fuel costs. The US Government has a Trust Responsibility with its First Americans, the TR requires the Federal/State Governments to ensure we, Alaska Natives, have everything we need to survive. Mrs. Palin has failed miserably at this task. She has a lot more work to do back home.

Her hometown Wasillia, has been a hot-bed for racist and Anti-Native attitudes. Anchorage is worse. Alaska Natives fight discrimination on a daily basis there. Palin isn't there for them. I read in the Anchorage papers once that a homeless native man froze to death in downtown and some man called it in sounding all casual about it. It's like the South before the 60s up here. It's bad. This is the Alaska Sarah Palin maintains and waters for growth. She's never bothered to change anything because she thinks nothing is broken. As Mayor, she didn't think anything was wrong with an atmosphere where a native woman had beer bottles thrown at her as she walked down Wasillia. So you have to ask yourself, if she's willing to ignore the plights and issues of an ethnic group within her town and state, than how much more horrible do you think it's going to be when she ignores the issues of the same ethnic group or another on a national level?

I believe her popularity comes from her beauty. This society has got to shift itself away from a National Inquirer-based lifestyle to an NPR or New York Times-based lifestyle. Our very world may depend on it. Our hurricanes and disasters are getting worse due to Global Warming, our Stock Market is dangerously shaky, our healthcare is getting so bad it may cause a revolution soon, and the War in Iraq is draining our resources and working families to depression-levels. We need a Change! We need Barack Obama. Not somebody whose reputation is based mainly on image and charm. As an Alaska Native, I see that she doesn't support our way of life, as a Gwich'in I see that she is willing to end my culture and people for only six more months of oil, and as a Global citizen I see that she is impulsive and inexperienced. Do you want someone like that in charge of a nuclear arsenal? It's probably already going to take our lifetimes to recover from Bush, if you elect Palin, the consequence are too scary for me to even think about. Please vote for change. Vote for Obama. Vote for Obama.