

ERNEST GRUENING - last public
discussion in Fairbanks
Dec. 18, 1973

NOTE: Ernest Gruening came to Fairbanks in mid December of 1973 to attend autograph sessions for his new book "Many Battles". The book had come out months before December, but Gruening had not been back to this town. Hence, his appearance on radio show Bee Line hosted by Larry Carpenter of KFRB, KTVF-TV. Present during the interview are Joe LaRocca, editor of "CounterMedia" magazine; Dick Greuel, candidate for the United States Senate (Democrat). Greuel is long time friend of Sen. Gruening's.

Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton's withdrawal of 83 million acres causes concern with Gruening. "Outrageous" he calls it. "It means one fourth of Alaska" he says. He believes Morton has violated the law in making such a massive withdrawal.

Secretaries of the Interior, he says, by and large have been conspicuous enemies of Alaskan interests. There are a couple exceptions: Oscar Chapman and Walter Hickel. Gruening believes Harold Ickes, Fred Seaton, Stewart Udall were no good for Alaska. They all set aside large areas of Alaska without consulting the people of Alaska. Morton is repeating the land grabs by the feds.

Gruening talks about Ickes setting aside the Kenai Moose Range. Seaton went against Congress and set aside 10 million acres in the Arctic Wildlife Range. ^{Refuge} Udall fought Rampart Dam. Talks about wildlife displaced in Rampart Dam area. Moose are doing alright in the moose range despite drilling operations.

Talks about his book "Many Battles" La Rocca says it's a first rate writing job. Talks about Gruening's first day on the job as a reporter (he was reporter, editor in New York).

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He gets into "integrity" in government. Problems in government arise because of the lack of people involved, Gruening believes. He says Agnew and Nixon lacked integrity and pointed their fingers at the Press. Those two are "shocking examples" of the lack of integrity in government, he says.

Carpenter observes that Gruening has been looked at as a "visionary" person; birth control many years ago when it was taboo to discuss it openly. Carpenter also observes Gruening is consistently inconsistent". Gruening says that is "a poor diagnosis of me."

Ickes, Gruening says, was completely untrustworthy.

Hickel...he did a superb job. Oscar Chapman excellent job. Seaton...arbitrarily set aside 10 million acres in the Arctic.

Carpenter asks Gruening to describe himself. Gruening says (among other things) that he always tried to take the humanistic approach keeping in mind that the good of the people is supreme. Has always tried to fight injustice and discrimination and racial prejudice in the United States.