

Reply of the Alaska Commercial Co to the charges of
Governor Alfred P. Swineford, of Alaska.

copy sent to lawyers Donald Mac

Against the Company in his Annual Report for the year 1887.

S. W. Raveley, Printer

Heading page 1
San Fran. Dec. 13, 1887

page 11, after citing being cleared of charges by house committee,
Elliott ^{whose} ~~man~~ " great reputation for profound research and scientific
attainments in connection with the Smithsonian Institute, gives to all that he
asserts the position of established fact." ; other agents from Bryant to
Tingle , in office at the time, as upholders of Co's probity, says
that at the termination of the lease:- " The number of seals existing in 1870
at the commencement of the lease, will have been increased. The great
primary object of the Government will have been fully conserved to its
great advantage as the possessor of the finest seal-rookeries of the
world, with the promise of its perpetuity for all time - the same policy/
and good management being pursued."

page 13 quote from Gne. Miller's '76 testimony. R^d houses cont. pl 14
" We charge them no rent for those houses at all; we make no charge
for keeping them in repair. We have taught these people all we could of the
benefits of civilization; have tried to enlighten them; we have maintained
schools on the islands regularly; we have hired teachers. " have kept a
physician on each island, a regular graduate of a medical college, all the time
with medicines free of charge ; no charge for medical attendance upon the people.
we ~~forbid~~ forbid the doctors receiving any gratuity from the people whatever
They have surgical instruments of all kinds there, so that if a man is sick or
hurt or injured he can have the best kind of medical attention at once.
We.....We make nothing at all out of the goods that we sell them.
Flour we sell actually on St George cheaper than we buy it in San Fran.
The reason of that is that the price was established there along time
ago, and those people would think it was a sort of imposition if we
changed the price. The price was established when flour was low and we
used to give them that black flour. "e give them now excellent wheat
flour, of good enough quality for anybody; as good as I want. The cloth,
all that we send there, is of good quality. "e have done this because it
was to our ~~int~~ interest to do ~~it~~ it. They are our laborers, and we want
them to be in a condition to labor. We desire to improve their condition in
every way. They make better laborers and they are better satisfied. It is
our interest in every respect to do this and we have done it; and all these
stories about their being maltreated in any way are all false ; there is not
a word of truth in them. I challenge the whole world to show an
example equal to this corporation in its humane treatment of its laborers."
No 4, p 55 Tingle's whitewash. p. 56. " As to the first part of the charge,
I have to say that in conversation with old Kerick Buterin, the most
intelligent native on the Island of St Paul, and Antone Melovedove, abright,

*Reu 7 1887 above to Louis Sless
mess of Co*

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intelligent, young man, son of the old Governor of the island under Russian rule, I learned that before the lease of the island to the Alaska Commercial Company, the natives lived in miserable huts half underground, some of which are still standing unoccupied. They received from the Russians 10¢ a day for their labor in taking and curing seal skins, and packing them on their backs was the only mode of collecting the skins and delivering them to the boats. Old Kerick has frequently told me he was the highest salaried man among the natives, being head-carpenter, and the most he ever received from the Russians was \$60.00 per annum. The books in the Treasury Agent's office on the island show his annual pay for sealing alone since the Alaska Commercial co. took charge to be over \$500 per annum, and in addition the company pay him a monthly salary of Ten Dollars for looking after the small boats, etc; they also made him a present of a frame cottage in which he has for years lived with his family. If this dependence and slavery, then the charge is true. This man's case fairly represents the condition of the whole population on the two islands. "... for which they receive in cash from your company over \$500.00 to the man; (*italics* MI^Ne-Tingle omitting all reference to class payment and shares to church, priest, widows, etc. Who got \$500? Did even Buterin? With extra bribes as chief in addition to sending his son to school.) p 57

" I have never known an instance of abuse of natives by your agents or employees, and when the Treasury agent has ~~xxx~~ occasion to reprimand a native, no greater punishment can be held over them than to threaten them with transportation to Sitka where they could not get your company to work for." R charge of false or defaced coinage used by co." ~~The xxxxxx xxxxx white xxxxxxxx xxxxxx~~ u the usual punching and marking of coins is indulged in by natives and white people as well in Alaska as elsewhere. I saw a collection of such coins this summer in the hands of your agent, Dr. H.H. McIntyre, which was the accumulation of years at your various stations. The amount, though not large, was shipped to the city for sale as mutilated coin. I have never known your agents in Alaska to deface coin in any way."