

Paying for our Cosmetic Surgery

Frank Murkowski, family man, unfortunately has no daughter named Mary Kay Murkowski. Too bad, really. She could be the obvious recipient of our desperately needed cosmetic surgery contract for the state's image campaign. Frank has a plan to cleanse our soiled name among the hazy minds of the lower forty-eight. Seems they have been scowling at us with accusations of greed and self-serving arrogance. So what to do?

Well first we might ask why they view us so poorly. Why do the fellow countrymen and women of say Alabama, or South Dakota, think we are grasping avaricious Nordic oil sultans? Are they just filled with envy? We, who do all we can to build a better world through Permanent Fund dividends! How could our friends and relatives think ill of us? Not only us, but of our Great Land too. For shame. How have we come to this?

Let me count the ways. We spend money every year in the legislature for the "Arctic Power" lobby. Wow, now there's an investment, which has paid off, not? Even our oil ally, Conoco Phillips bailed on that one. Arctic Power is supposed to give us the opening of ANWR. It's been failing in congress for 20 years at least, and we still keep pouring money down that hole. Nuff said. Make us look like vigilant protectors of the National Interest, does it? There might be some reason to doubt that when viewed from Pittsburgh.

Perhaps nothing is as unhelpful to our swell image as that unequaled pork butcher, Senator Ted. The great bridge billionaire sweepstakes was a huge loss for our "image outside". There just aren't enough cups of rouge and sticks of deodorant to make that all smell sweet. Perhaps most damaging of all to our sacred political countenance is the Anti-Ballistic Missile defense system. Shouldn't we be more offended at this lack of "defense?" Tens of billions of dollars sunk into holes at the former Ft. Greely, and nothing about it has ever worked as promised. But do we cease and desist? Not on your bulging, Boeing stock margin account we don't.

So, is Frank going to use the outside advertising wizardry to give us a makeover? Can he spin ad propaganda to turn the disgruntled masses of real taxpayers into a whole nation of fawning, forgiving dupes? Make them feel like we really are deserving of the huge largess we receive from federal tax dollars? Can Frank really pull this off? Isn't it just a propaganda disinformation program? Propaganda is a word originally used by the Catholic Church, which has a ministry to "propagate the faith—bring on new believers". Bring 'em on, Frank.

I happen to think people aren't nearly gullible enough to swallow an Alaska-sponsored ad deluge to show them what great folks we are and how well we manage our oil revenue. Shall we demonstrate how we quietly remove dissenters from the gas line negotiations seven at a time because we are trustworthy, loyal, kind and generous? What could be more obvious? Next thing you know, Frank will be buying us all Ronald Reagan rubber Halloween masks and have us sing out that it is not only "morning in America", but it is also a new dawn in Alaska. If you're not gagging yet, you're not a real Alaskan.

So Frank, my heart isn't in this, but give me enough mouthwash, dress me in furs, flash me some gold, and show me smiling oil company workers volunteering as Little League coaches, and I might soften up. I'm a bit stiff after this latest January anyway.

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