

**HOUSE JOURNAL
SUPPLEMENT**

January 13, 1997

Monday

No. 1

**Speaker Phillips' Opening Remarks
to the Twentieth Legislature**

Tribute In Memoriam - Robert B. Atwood

Juneau, Alaska

**OPENING REMARKS
TO THE TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE
BY SPEAKER PHILLIPS**

"Thank you all very much for your vote.

You are about to begin one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs you will ever undertake as an Alaskan. It is no small feat that you are sitting here today -- it took a great amount of commitment and dedication -- not only on your part, but on the part of your family, friends and constituents. You are recognized as one of Alaska's leaders. Wear that mantle with pride.

I also want to thank my family and my friends who have steadfastly stayed behind me and worked for me over the years. Without the support of your family and friends I don't think you could do this job. I would like to thank also our legislative staffs who have worked so hard for us, preparing us to be here today, and the floor staff who will be our main support group during this coming session.

As we outline our goals for the coming session there is much work to be done. We will continue making progress to create jobs for Alaskan families whether it be on the gas line project, international trade project, a mine in interior Alaska, a forest project and forest jobs in Southeast, we will concentrate on creating jobs for Alaskan families. We hope to close the fiscal gap by the year 2001. We hope to create a smaller and smarter government. We hope to find a long-term solution to our maintenance problems.

We will be unveiling the majority's commitment to Alaska later in the week. It is most important though that the job that we do here during the next session, that the lives of every Alaskan, regardless of where they are, will be better because of the job we do during the twentieth Alaska legislative session.

We can accomplish so much by working together. We may not always agree. Members of families don't always agree. We won't always agree in our caucuses. We won't always agree as a body, but if we keep the big picture in mind -- that being working together

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for what's best for Alaska -- I think we will have an excellent session.

Think about your oath of office every once in awhile. With God's help, the help of our families, our friends, each other, and the people of Alaska we will make this the most productive session ever.

On your desk this morning when you came in you all have received the Alaska House of Representatives' pin. Only a few Alaskans will ever have the privilege to wear this badge of honor. Wear it with pride -- and for those of you who don't have your buttons on yet, please put them on. You are a select group of Alaskans. Good luck to you. My door is always open. My staff is ready to help you with whatever your needs are.

Now, let's get to work and go to work for what's best for our state. Thank you."

EULOGY FOR ROBERT ATWOOD BY REPRESENTATIVE COWDERY

"A poet's prayer inscribed at the foot of the Pioneer Statue in Sitka implores, 'Bring me men to match my mountains.' In 1935, that prayer was answered with the arrival in Alaska of, Robert Bruce Atwood.

'BRING ME MEN TO MATCH MY MOUNTAINS'
Bob Atwood was a big man, big in many ways.

He was blessed with height and breadth greater than most men.

Yet, his size was never imposing, for Bob was a graceful man. He was a gentle man and a gentleman.

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His size, intellect and personality gave him a commanding presence. He used them for all of Alaska, especially Anchorage.

He stood above the crowd, not to be superior, rather to be a guardian, and be the first to withstand whatever pains were inflicted by man or nature against his beloved Alaska.

Be they earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, wind storms, of either natural or political derivation, Bob was first to rally the people of Anchorage.

His newspaper informed us. His editorials inspired us, all of us, to match our mountains.

Bob had a deep mane of hair, streaked white in his winter years like the tops of the Chugach Mountains. His spirit was expansive and bright as the sunlit mountains on a clear March morning. A gleam in his eyes reflected the adventure in his soul.

Anyone who had occasion to chat with Bob in recent years will tell you they departed his company with a feeling of peace and refreshment. He reflected the tranquility of the mountains that he personified.

'BRING ME MEN TO MATCH MY MOUNTAINS'

Just as the mountains around Anchorage span a great stretch of geologic history, Bob Atwood's life spans a great stretch of Alaska's history.

Few, too few, Alaskans can recall an Alaska without Bob Atwood. His life and times are the history of modern Alaska as we know it.

In the grand sweep of Alaska history, he more than any one else, held the broom.

In his life, Bob saw many changes. He adapted to newfangled technology as naturally as the mountain tops adapt to the seasons.

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He saw changes from one-room school houses, three-cent stamps, twelve-party hand-cranked telephones, hand-cranked washing machines, log cabins, outhouses and horse drawn buggies -- to a cure for polio, nuclear energy, computers, man walking on the moon and cell telephones.

He nurtured our fledgling community when World War II threatened Alaska's civility.

He dedicated himself to civic development in the postwar years.

He became the 'civilian general' in the great fight for Alaska statehood.

He stood foursquare for economic prosperity for all Alaskans by championing:

the Native Land Claims Settlement,

Prudhoe Bay and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline,

the fight against the D2 land impoundment,

development of Cook Inlet and the Navy Petroleum Reserve,

and most recently the fight to open ANWR.

Bob Atwood never shrank from a fight to do good for Alaska.

Not long ago, Bob told me that his advancing age caused his eyes to water and he always seemed to have a teardrop on the edge of his eye.

He recognized that physically he was slowing down but he delighted that his spirit still soared.

To my way of thinking, Bob improved with age. That glint in his eye was proof that his body could no longer contain his spirit.

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'BRING ME MEN TO MATCH MY MOUNTAINS'

Bob was as romantic as the pink, golden sunset on the Sleeping Lady Mountain. He fell in love with Alaska before he got here. He spied a great daughter of Alaska, Evangeline Rasmuson, when he was a reporter in Springfield, Illinois and had the good sense to marry her, and they moved to Alaska. Theirs was one of Alaska's great love affairs.

Next to Evangeline and his family, Bob's most ardent love was for Alaskan history. He and Evangeline contributed much to Alaska's chronicle.

Always making jokes at his own expense, he told me once that he was getting hard of hearing. But he didn't mind it because he's heard it all before anyway.

He remembered the time when a dollar was worth a dollar and the service charge included the service.

On more than one time I heard him remark that he might have been better off if he never rented his printing press to the competing newspaper.

But he said of himself, 'I'm an opinionated sonofagun.'

He really believed that the town was better off with two newspapers...so that people would get someone else's opinion.

That illustrated how Bob Atwood was in his own dedication to democratic principles.

He welcomed the fray of diversity in first amendment freedoms.

'BRING ME MEN TO MATCH MY MOUNTAINS'

Bob was a friend to any and all Alaskans who could be his friend.

He was my friend.

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When he called me before the election day to wish me good luck we agreed we'd get together to talk about some history of mutual interest.

We didn't get to do it.

I'll miss my friend.

But, I guess that sometimes God needs a friend, too.

He's got a good one in Bob Atwood."

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT ATWOOD BY REPRESENTATIVE BARNES

"Although I have not lived in Alaska as long as the Representative from the Hillside or the Southern part of Anchorage, I was privileged to know the Atwood family.

Madame Speaker there are lyrics of a song that say 'there walks the giant of a man' and I believe those lyrics perhaps in some way measure the man of Robert Atwood, because indeed he was a giant of a man, in deed, thought and philanthropy. He endowed the university with the Atwood Chair of Journalism. He gave in each and every fight in our state the best of himself. But not only did he give, Madame Speaker, but so did his wife and his two daughters and I think some tribute need to be paid to them as well.

Evangeline Atwood was instrumental in the humanities and the arts in Anchorage. Their two daughters, Marilyn and Elaine -- Marilyn was a journalist in Washington, D.C. She contributed to her father's newspaper on a regular basis. She stood with other Alaskans in Washington, D.C., when we fought D2. She was a fellow at the Aspen Institute, which tells you that the lady had intelligence beyond measure. She was a good friend of the Senior Senator from Alaska,

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and often worked closely with him. However, during the battle over the lock-up of Alaska lands under ANILCA when we Alaskans disagreed on whether or not ANILCA should be passed, she stayed with the old Alaskans in opposing ANILCA.

Elaine Atwood -- she has contributed much as the Associate Publisher of the Anchorage Times, and beyond that, when each and everyone of you arrived in Anchorage on a dark wintery night, behold the City of Lights. The City of Lights was created by Elaine Atwood when she was the president of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce. This whole family has given so very, very much to Alaska, and only one remains -- Elaine.

So, I ask that all of you bear in mind that from time to time we are fortunate to have a giant of a man walk among us, and that was Bob Atwood. Thank you."