

ADJUT.
GEN.
DESIG.

JACK

LESTEN-
KOFF



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senate Community & Regional Affairs Committee

State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801-1182

(907) 465-4589

February 13, 1995

The Honorable Drue Pearce
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

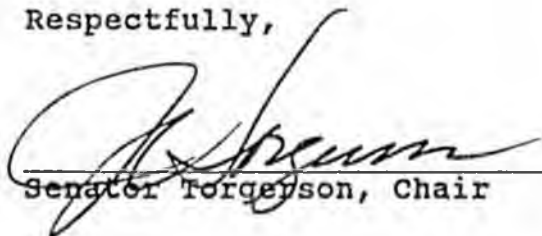
Dear Madam President:

The Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee reviewed the following with regard to confirmation of the Governor's appointment:

Major General Jake Lestenkof, Adjutant General Designee
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

There were no stated objections to the confirmation of the named individual by committee members. This does not reflect an intent by any of the members to vote for or against him during any further sessions.

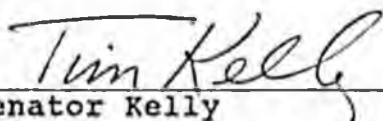
Respectfully,



Senator Forgeron, Chair

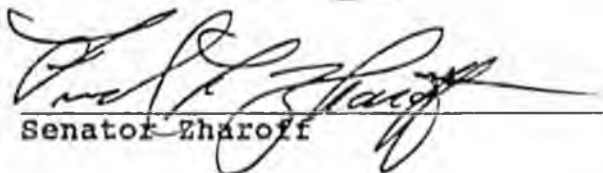


Senator Phillips, Vice Chair



Senator Kelly

Senator Hoffman



Senator Zharoff



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February 9, 1995

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Torgerson, Chair
Community and Regional Affairs Committee

FROM: Nancy Quinto *NQ*
Secretary of the Senate

SUBJECT: Governor's Confirmations

President Pearce has referred the following names (no resumes attached) for legislative confirmation to your committee for a hearing, recommendation and report:

Department of Community and Regional Affairs
Commissioner designee Mike Irwin

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Adjutant General designee Jake Lestenkof

NQ/hv

Edition 1, 1995

DMVA News

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

General Lestenkof assumes command



Major General Jake Lestenkof officially took the reigns as Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and Adjutant General of the Alaska National Guard during formal military change of command ceremonies held January 20 at the Camp Denali Armory on Fort Richardson.

Governor Tony Knowles said that during Lestenkof's thirty plus years of public service he has always put Alaska and his country first.

"Jake Lestenkof is a man of unquestionable integrity and no one knows better than he the mission of the Alaska National Guard, its contribution to the military presence in the state and its vital importance to all communities across Alaska."

Prior to his appointment last month to lead the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Lestenkof was the administrator for the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Restitution Trust.

Jake Lestenkof was born sixty-two years ago on Saint George Island, Alaska. He was part of a group of Aleuts from the Aleutians and Pribilof Islands evacuated and interned during World War II in Southeastern Alaska.

He began his military career in 1951 as an infantryman in the Marine Corps. Upon release from active duty in 1954, Lestenkof promptly entered the Marine Corps Reserves. Two years later he joined the Alaska Army National Guard in Sitka.

He left full-time service in 1974 to assist the Alaska Federation of Natives with a variety of issues including the Trans Alaska pipeline and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

In 1988 Governor Steve Cowper appointed him Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. In 1987, he rejoined the Alaska Army National Guard as Assistant Adjutant General-Army. He served in that capacity until 1990.

State of Alaska
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
P.O. Box 5800, Camp Denali
Fort Richardson, Alaska 99505-5800

General Lestenkof's Change of Command Speech

I am honored and humbled, yet very excited, to be taking command of the Alaska National Guard today.

There is nothing quite like this ceremony and the act of accepting the colors that brings home the great responsibility that has been passed to me today.

Before I make my brief remarks, I also want to recognize and honor the spouses and families of those whose fathers and mothers—our fellow guard members and employees—have passed away during 1994. We appreciate your long-standing sacrifice, dedication and support.

Let me also recognize and honor the widows, and their families, of the C-12 crash who are here today. Our prayers still go with you.

I would like to thank the two women who are important in my life, and ask them to stand ... Mabel Pike, who was like a mother to me in my early days ... and Sherry Valentine, my wife, for your strong support and help.

When I met with Governor Knowles to discuss the position of Adjutant General, I appreciated his command guidance and direction for the department. You see, Tony Knowles is a former soldier who has been tested in combat, and he felt comfortable sharing with me the direction he wished to take

with this organization.

It is often the simple statements that stick with you. The one that I remember the Governor making is this:

"Jake, I want you to run a tight ship," and he added a caveat, which in and of itself is telling of this governor, : ... but please do not run an uptight ship."

You bet, Governor.

I hope to leave you, the men and women of this department, with two main points:

First, in assuming command, one must make an initial, quick assessment of the general health of the organization.

When I did that, I noticed the concussions from the C-12 crash over two years ago, and its aftermath, are still reverberating through this organization.

The single characteristic of military organizations, over their civilian counterparts, is that the military is organized, trained and psychologically prepared to quickly recover from major crises, even including the loss of key

personnel.

The crash, and the loss of our friends and comrades, has created a very difficult period that has tested us all. But to be a healthy organization we must move forward. It is time. It is time to let go, to begin a new

chapter today. Indeed, to build on the legacy of the past as we look forward to the future.

The values and traditions of our service to our fellow

Alaskans is well known and widely respected. That shouldn't be surprising

to anyone in this room, nor anyone who has taken the time and interest to get to know us.

In an era of worldly cynicism it is easy to tear at the fabric of who we are. Such efforts only work to bear bitter fruit.

So my second main point is that we must take the high road. I expect each man and woman in uniform, in this department, part-time or full-time, to adhere to the following code:

Duty and service to your country over personal interests.
Duty and service to your state over personal ambitions.
Duty and service to your department and unit over careerism.

In turn, you will get from me my full support, fair and honest treatment, and my total commitment to building the most effective, proficient and happy guard organization in the country.

There are others among us today, who also must hear of another of my commitments.

For Alaska's 68,000 veterans, I pledge a vigorous voice in support of veterans issues. We will keep the faith with you.

I am also impressed, as a result of the devastating earthquake in Japan this week, to express my unwavering support for energetic and enhanced emergency preparedness training for Alaska's communities. We have the dedicated professional staff to continue accomplishing this important mission.

In the coming months, I will be asking you to join me in developing our agenda for excellence which will spell out our near term goals. In this administration, your thoughts and ideas are important!

Our best days are not in our past—they are just ahead of us.

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL MAJOR GENERAL JAKE LESTENKOF

Major General Jake Lestenkof was born June 3, 1932 on Saint George Island, Alaska. He was part of the group of Aleuts from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands evacuated and subsequently interned during World War II in Southeastern Alaska. After returning to St. George Island from internment, he left the Pribilofs to attend high school at Mt. Edgecumbe in Sitka. He graduated in 1951.

General Lestenkof entered the Marine Corps as an enlisted man in 1951 and served in reconnaissance and infantry units, both in the United States and the Republic of Korea. He was released from active duty in 1954, and promptly entered the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. He joined the Alaska Army National Guard in 1956 in Sitka, and served as a rifle platoon leader and company executive officer. He entered full time service with the Army Guard in 1959 and served as a battle group and battalion training and operations officer. His military assignment during this period was as Assistant S-3, and S-3 for an infantry battle group; executive officer and commander of an infantry battalion; and as the operations and training staff officer at the Office of the Adjutant General, Alaska. He has completed the Infantry Basic and Advanced Courses and Command and General Staff College, and has attended the Army War College.

On leaving full time service in 1974, General Lestenkof was asked by the Alaska Federation of Natives to develop a program to insure that Alaska Natives be afforded the opportunity to work and participate in the construction of the Trans Alaska pipeline. The program was a success in which over 12,000 Alaska Natives were employed in the project. In 1975, he was appointed the Executive Vice President for the Alaska Federation of Natives where he oversaw the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. The passage of the Act culminated in the largest settlement ever made to a Native group. It consisted of 44 million acres of land and approximately \$1 billion dollars. He became the Executive Director of Cook Inlet Native Association in 1977, and managed the development of health and social programs for Alaskan Natives residing in the Anchorage bowl area.

In 1981, General Lestenkof re-entered Federal Service as a member of the Senior Executive Service when he was appointed Alaska's Regional Director for the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. A major event during this tour was the transfer of all BIA schools in Alaska to the State of Alaska. This major and sensitive undertaking was accomplished without incident and on schedule. He retired from the Federal Civil Service in 1988.

Later in 1988, he was appointed by Governor Cowper as the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. He served in that position until 1990. General Lestenkof rejoined the Alaska National Guard in 1987 when he was appointed Assistant Adjutant General, Army. He served in that position until June, 1990.

In 1992, General Lestenkof was recruited to become the first administrator for the newly established Aleutian & Pribilof Islands Restitution Trust, an entity established by Congress to redress the suffering and damage done to Aleuts during their internment in World War II. A major task of the Trust is the repair of Russian Orthodox churches in the Aleutian and Pribilofs which were damaged during World War II.

General Lestenkof was appointed the Alaska Adjutant General and Commissioner of Military and Veterans Affairs by Governor Tony Knowles on December 21, 1994.

During his military career, he has been awarded the Legion of Merit, Army Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Alaska Distinguished Service Medal, Alaska State Commendation Medal, South Korean Presidential Citation, and the Alaska State Legislature - Legislative Citation.

General Lestenkof is married to Sherry Valentine of Anchorage. They have five children and reside in Anchorage, Alaska.