

ALASKA LEGISLATURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE / SUBJECT FILES 8672

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On one side, the extractive fossil fuel economy and its allies will continue to develop unless there is economic collapse nationally. As United States energy prices rise there will be attempts to create in Alaska a lifeboat ethic for the past systems. Alaska will be sought to be established as the last hold out of the energy rich American dream of the sixties. State owned reserves of fossil fuels will be diverted to local uses, if possible, and their consumption will be subsidized or made artificially cheap. This feature, and the development of resource extractive industries such as coal, timber, and bottomfish fit the familiar chamber of commerce prototype and will actually be designed to create "jobs" which is code for attracting people. More people will create increases in retail demand, land sales, tax-based public works construction and demand for services such as transportation, communications and financing. The elemental feature of this economy is that it will not actually produce anything, its economic activity coming from land speculators, middle men, bankers, airlines, communications companies, bureaucrats, lawyers, retailers, construction workers and so on.

The underlying support for such an economy will be resource extraction which, if properly managed, could provide at least for a time, a relatively stable platform for development. It is doubtful that the resources will be so managed however. If the United States economy solves its energy problems in the intervening years, the lifeboat theory will have worked. We can simply hop on to the new systems or technologies and live happily ever after. It is hard to see how any rural area will prosper in such an economy however.

The second economy, which might take place right under the noses of the first one, but which will not be noticed, because it is not grandiose, is what I will call the Neo-Capitalist-Buddhist-Bio-Bush-Trickle-Up economy. While everyone in Anchorage is washing each others' shirts, so to speak, a productive rural economy begins to sneak upon us. The primary situs for this economy will be almost everywhere but Anchorage, however, it will have substantial enclaves there. The consumer part of this economy is already in place. The Bush knows that even if someone does develop fusion that they will never get on the system (unless Doyon is holding the patents). There are a lot of others who just don't want to be on the grid.

The impetus for this development will be the still struggling, appropriate/alternative technology group whose values are self-sufficiency and independence rather than materialism and conspicuous consumption. This economy will be primarily productive, beginning initially with local food production, housing and renewable energy systems. Gardening, indoor and out, subsistence hunting and fishing (watch for a referendum which will seek to avoid race war by excluding all non-resident hunting) will expand into preservation, barter and eventually marketing. The businesses will be micro and vary in organization. This economy will be characterized primarily by a much more integrated relationship between the man-made and the natural environment, provision of many economic needs locally, less capital-intensive more labor-intensive systems of production which will have more personal involvement, decentralization of systems and less emphasis on jobs with more emphasis on livelihoods.

Life in such an economy would be much more complicated and difficult than it is today, where specialization and division of labor make things simpler (so long as the system as a whole produces). It will have rewards for a great number, however, in its element of self-sufficiency and pride of accomplishment.

Both of these scenarios are obviously polarities based upon different points of view. The impetus for activity in either situation will not be altruism (although one side will wave the flag and talk about our free enterprise system while the other adopts an air of moral superiority and mumbles about small being beautiful) but rather, simple self-interest. The primary differences here will be in individual perceptions of what is good for one based on a view of the future.

Either scenario could run away with it all depending upon the success or failure of the competing technologists. That is, if one group or the other showed remarkable success while the other failed miserably, the failing elites and technologists would fall into disrepute.

Alaska has a brilliant opportunity to lead the rest of the nation out of the wilderness. It could do this by combining the best elements of the two economies and creating a productive renewable resource economy based on individual enterprise. We have the resources,

the money and the talents. To accomplish this we need some very substantial attitudinal changes are needed.

In the bio-bush crowd we need to see some serious production oriented activity. There is already the sensibility about the geography and the biology, but how do we make it actually pay off for us? The 80's will demand actual solutions for consumers. It will not be possible to oppose a 15 mbf mill by saying an 8 mbf mill would be more acceptable. It is no longer our privilege to accept or reject abstract entities. To have the self-sustaining economy, people need locally produced lumber with which to build their homes, their boats, their barns and greenhouses and so on. Someone, some human being, has to sit down and develop a business plan and create an 8 mbf mill and successfully market the product. If the world is going to change favorably and appropriately we must change it personally. It's that simple. Small may indeed be beautiful, and if it is, it is a point in our favor, because as anyone in business will tell you, beauty is what sells.

For the extracto-fossil fuel folks we need to see some realism about the resources we rely upon. As noted, the other team could use some defectors with some technical and business skills, so think about putting something together. A windcharger in an urban setting may seem an unnecessary extravagance to you, but it expresses a legitimate and healthy attitude, and it is no more absurd than driving a forty pound child three blocks to school in a four thousand pound Lincoln. All the smugness is not on the other side either. There seems to be an attitude that just because someone else discovered oil which was accidentally on our property that somehow the "free enterprise" system has been smiled upon by the deities and Alaskans are the chosen people. In a way that's true, but the credit goes to the people who had the technical and business know-how to discover and produce the oil, not someone sitting around buying low and selling high and calling it productive.

In short, if we begin to come together, united in our respect for the geography we all say we love, and pool our talents to create some real self-reliance and independence by producing some basic wealth on a renewable basis, we can not only reaffirm the basic health of the great American experiment and show the world new patterns of self-sustaining synergy, but we can have one hell of a lot of fun doing it. I'm skeptical that this will happen but I'm not so cynical as to exclude its possibility or not do what I can to make it happen.

William Spear is an attorney and trustee of the Alaska Renewable Resources Corporation.

NOTES

A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION FOR ALASKA?

(Some interim thoughts)

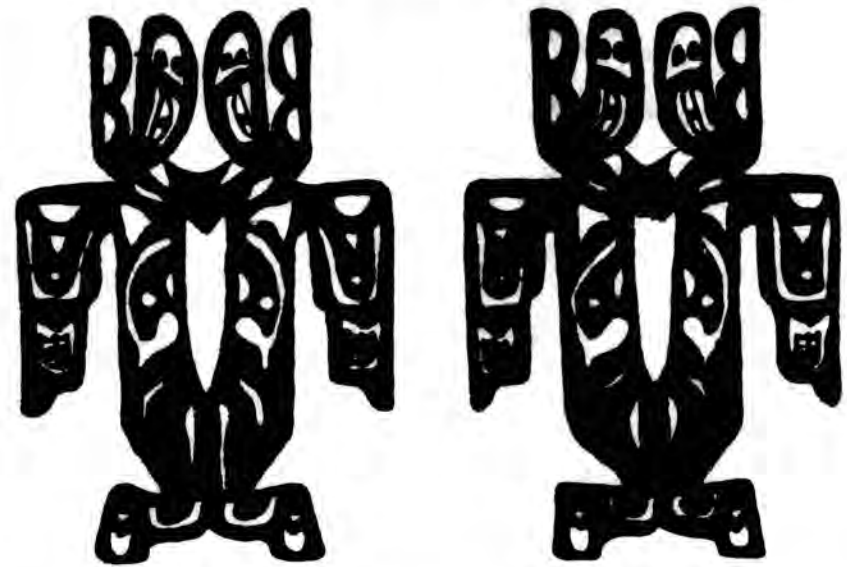
by
Victor Fischer

Alaska's constitution was written twenty-four years ago as part of the statehood movement. Since 1959, the constitution has functioned as the fundamental law of the State of Alaska. The question before us now is whether the guarantees of individual rights, the structure of government, and other parts of the constitution are still adequate to serve the state and the people today in the foreseeable future. Or should we consider revising the constitution in view of changed values and different conditions in Alaska?

This question is real, for in 1982 Alaskans are scheduled to ballot on whether or not to hold a new constitutional convention. Their answer may have far-reaching effects on Alaska's future. It is, therefore, none too early to consider the issues entailed in calling a convention and to evaluate alternative courses that we might pursue.

The Interim Committee on the Constitutional Convention was established by the 1979 legislature to explore the issues entailed in providing answers to these questions and to make recommendations to the legislature about the means of preparing for the forthcoming convention referendum; the committee is co-chaired by Senator George Hohman and Representative Brian Rogers. Part of the material in this paper is derived from my work for this committee.

Accomplishing an objective analysis of constitutional convention issues may not be easy. Alaska's life nowadays abounds with a multitude of issues of importance to significant numbers of people: the fiscal situation of the state — too much money now, not enough in the future, give it away, lower taxes, save it; oil and gas development vs. environmental protection; jobs, unemployment, local hire; right-to-life vs. abortion choice; economic development — petrochemicals, renewable resources, mining, etc.; loans, subsidies, incentives; land distribution; growth and development vs.



subsistence and protection of lifestyles; big government, lack of adequate services; federal domination of Alaska; capital move; etc., etc., endlessly.

Some of these issues existed in the 1950's, when the constitution was adopted and statehood came to Alaska. But the mood is quite different now from what it was then. The unity, spirit, idealism, and deep belief in democracy that characterized and sustained the statehood movement and motivated the constitutional convention do not exist in Alaska today. And nothing has taken their place, at least nothing positive or constructive. Rather, public dialogue and responsiveness to issues are characterized by dissension, divisiveness, anger, and extremism. Whereas twenty-plus years ago a common general philosophy and broad purpose underlay the striving for statehood, as the nation Alaska is now characterized by single or narrow issue campaigns that ignore everything else about them. And added to all that is a negativism and know-nothingism that characterizes the reaction of many media, groups, and individuals to any consideration of public issues or of the future of the state, its communities and neighborhoods.

This current climate is not particularly healthy for considering the basic philosophies and structures upon which the state's

democratic institutions are founded. And yet, it is possible that the very consideration of state goals and purposes that would accompany preparations for and the conduct of a constitutional convention might help overcome the "malaise" that is said to characterize our public spirit today. Above all, the choice doesn't exist: the constitution requires that we decide whether or not to have a convention, and our purpose should be to make the best of this requirement, to try and make a positive opportunity of it.

Toward that end, this paper reviews Alaska's only constitutional convention and the means it established to update the document, examines constitutional changes that have been suggested, and delves into possible ways of dealing with the gamut of questions entailed in accomplishing desirable revisions and judging whether or not to call a new constitutional convention.

1955-56 Constitutional Convention

Political scientists and constitutional experts consider Alaska's constitution the best in all the states, a true model. In discussing the results of the 1955-56 Alaska constitution writing process, the nation's top specialist on state constitution, John Bebout, stated:

The convention produced a document that was a rare blend of the classic principles embodied first and best in the U.S. constitution and of modern or innovative features altogether compatible with those principles which made the Alaska constitution more distinctly appropriate to its time and place than any other state constitution.

A number of factors helped determine the character and quality of the Alaska constitution. It was written as part of and in furtherance of statehood, and the idealism inherent in the statehood movement served to inspire convention delegates and Alaska's people. Statehood was the cause and goal of the constitutional convention, and those planning the document saw the necessity to draft a constitution that would clearly demonstrate to the nation and to the Congress that Alaska was politically mature and ready to assume the responsibilities of managing a state.

Once delegates met in convention, statehood was no longer their principal aim, although it provided the context for their work.

Rather, creating the best possible foundation for the future state became the overpowering and all-encompassing purpose. The enthusiasm, dedication, and idealism aroused by the statehood issue were thus turned toward drafting a constitution that would serve Alaska's future.

Another aspect of the Alaska convention that contributed to the success of its product was the fact that it took place before statehood was achieved. It functioned outside the realm of conventional political pressures and realities. The convention was future oriented and had little to do with current territorial affairs; it did not directly affect jobs, business, or allocation of power. Delegates were viewed as a group of idealists working for great cause and dealing with issues that generated, with few exceptions, no pressures from those lobbies and special interests that regularly pursue their particular objectives at legislative sessions. This kind of detachment could have been dangerous, but since it was carried out by men and women who were realists as well as idealists, it provided a milieu that engendered freedom and creativity.

Out of this environment emerged a stated intent that the constitution be a document of fundamental principles of basic government and contain only the framework for state government. Drafting the constitution was largely predicated on making each branch of state government effective and strong in its own right. The underlying purpose was to achieve not just an adequate system of checks and balances in the traditional sense, but also to bring about the establishment of executive, legislative, and judicial branches that each function effectively and adequately serve the needs of the state and its citizens. At the same time, personal rights and the individual liberties of the people were to be assured through a strong and liberal bill of rights. I believe these objectives were achieved quite successfully.

Amendment and Revision

Despite high-minded aims and the resultant well-regarded document, convention delegates never considered that the constitution they created was at all sacrosanct. Throughout, delegates strove to deal with general concepts, allowing for future flexibility and adjustment. The constitution itself was designed not to be static. Its vitality was to be achieved by designing a general structure of state

government adaptable to changing needs and conditions. And, in case these measures proved inadequate, they provided for an amendment and revision process to make possible changes in the constitution itself.

Amendments to the constitution are made by two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature and voter approval by majority vote. Since statehood, sixteen amendments have been so recommended by the legislature and ratified by Alaska voters. These amendments dealt with such basic issues as the right of privacy, non-discrimination on account of sex, voter qualifications, limited entry in fisheries, and establishment of the Alaska Permanent Fund. These and other changes demonstrate that updating of the constitution and meeting current needs can take place through the amendment process.

Individual amendments are, however, but one method of changing the constitution: It can also be revised by calling a constitutional convention. There are two ways of obtaining a state constitutional convention. The legislature may call a convention at any time by simple majority vote. Alternatively, Alaska voters can decide to hold a convention. If during any ten year period a convention has not been held, the question: "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?" is placed on the ballot at the next general election. A majority "yes" vote results in a convention. On the other hand, if a majority votes in the negative, the question is not placed on the ballot again until the end of the next ten year period.

The provision for convention call by referendum was principally in response to problems that generally don't exist anymore. When the constitution was written in 1955-56, most state legislatures were extremely malapportioned, with urban areas highly under-represented. As a result, legislatures avoided constitutional conventions and did not modernize their constitutions in fear that revision could result in reapportionment and loss of legislators' seats. Alaska convention delegates wanted to assure that the constitution would be responsive to the needs and the will of the people even if the legislature were unresponsive to them. Since the constitution was written, however, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Baker vs. Carr*, established the one-man one-vote rule, requiring state legislatures to be apportioned strictly in accordance with popula-

tion. In theory, at least, the legislature is fully representative of the people and will represent them both in enacting legislation and, as necessary, amending the constitution.

Even though we are now only in our twentieth year of statehood, Alaskans have already twice voted on the question of calling a constitutional convention. The first decennial referendum on the issue was held in 1970. The trouble then was that the question "as required by the Constitution of the State of Alaska", Article III, Section 3 was posed thus: "Shall there be a constitutional convention?" The convention call was narrowly approved by the voters. Upon a challenge, the Supreme Court held that by adding "As required by the Constitution..." to the constitutionally required language, the phrasing of the proposition was sufficiently biased to justify nullifying the referendum. When voters once more balloted on the question in November, 1972, the convention call was rejected.

Alaskans are once more faced with the decision of whether or not to call a convention. In November 1982, unless the legislature initiates a convention in the interim, the ten-year question will be on the ballot at the general election: "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?" The rest of this paper is devoted to considerations that should go into possible responses to this question.

Potential Subjects of Constitution Change

Alaska has so far utilized only the amendment process to make changes in the constitution; we have not yet had the experience of constitutional revision via the amendment process.

The difference between changing the constitution by amendment as against convention is great indeed. When the legislature recommends an amendment it deals with a specific item, such as the manner of selecting the chief justice of the Supreme Court. While the subject matter may be broader than that, it is certain to be confined to a specific topic.

A constitutional convention, on the other hand, has plenary powers, subject only to ratification by the people. This means that a convention, whether called by referendum or by the legislature, can amend or revise any and all parts of the constitution. In other words,

once called, a convention can rewrite every section and article and can add any new matter it desires, subject of course to ratification by the electorate.

In view of the tremendous power that a convention possesses, it is important to distinguish between the types of changes that may call for a convention as against those that can be effected through amendment. Concurrently, it is vital to have a clear understanding of the difference between constitutional and legislative matter, for the latter is, by definition, something that should be handled through legislation and not changing the constitution. (This distinction, by the way, was ever-present concern of the 1955 convention as it tried to restrict the constitution to fundamental law, excluding trivia and special interest provisions.)

Revision by Convention

The rationale for a convention needs to rest on a significant purpose beyond amendments that can be routinely handled by the legislative amendment route. Such a purpose can be (1) making changes that the legislature cannot or is not likely to accomplish, (2) dealing with major issues of philosophy and policy undergirding the fabric of state government, and (3) accommodating or defusing public pressures that are not being satisfied by the legislature. While from a constitutionalist or political science viewpoint only the first two reasons might be considered legitimate, popular pressure may be at least as important a factor as the other two in bringing about a convention.

There are few changes that the legislature cannot be expected to deal with through the amendment process other than those that affect the legislature itself and those that are too big or too complex to be dealt with as part of the legislative process. The prime example to the first category is the proposal to change the legislative structure from a two-house to a unicameral system. This suggested change has been repeatedly approved by the state house of representatives, but it has yet to see positive action by the senate. Even after voters approved of the concept in a statewide advisory referendum, the legislature has refused to act. And, it is highly unlikely that it will approve this basic change in the structure of the legislature, if for no other reason than the fact that it would lead to a

reallocation of legislative power and more than a few legislators would be jeopardized.

Other structural changes might be similarly difficult to obtain via legislative initiative, especially if they limit the powers of the legislature or restrict its ability to exercise its will. Among these is the oft-repeated proposal to limit the length of legislative sessions, another idea that has seen wide approval by the electorate. Yet, this generality needs to be approached with caution, for in 1976 the legislature did approve a constitutional amendment to establish the permanent fund. The effect of this action was to put a substantial portion of petroleum revenues beyond direct reach and disposal by the legislature. This proves that lawmakers can move to limit their own prerogatives when either purpose or popular will so require.

A more difficult area to define as a basis for potential constitutional revision is possible desire or need to change the fundamental philosophy or grounding of the constitution. Nothing of this sort has as yet clearly emerged, though one could speculate about attitudes that could lead to efforts for basic changes in the constitution. Ideas in that direction were initiated several years ago when proposals were made to revise the natural resources article to eliminate the existing pro-development bias and substitute therefor a policy of environmental protection. Another type of pressure may emerge as a result of increasing sentiment, in Alaska and the nation, against government in general and against taxes and government expenditures in particular. These examples deal with subject matter already in the constitution. Potential new areas of basic constitutional concern could be the preservation of Alaska lifestyles, Native culture, and the subsistence way of making a living off the land; or Alaskans may decide to try restructuring their concept of government and the state's relationship to the United States.

Whatever such fundamental issues might be, they are obviously not suited to resolution as part of the routine legislative process. This is not due to lawmaker's lack of concern for major policy. Rather, the hundreds of bills and financial management responsibilities are more than enough to occupy legislators' time both during sessions and during their interim. Therefore, if pressures for fundamental changes do arise, their resolution will almost certainly lie within a constitutional convention or some other vehicle established to deal with them.

These two categories — matters that affect the legislature and issues of underlying philosophy — are logical bases for calling a constitutional convention. However, given the fact that a convention opens the constitution to massive revision, routine and other changes are best handled through the legislative amendment process.

Constitutional Amendments

A plethora of amendments has been proposed to change specific parts of the state's constitution. A very few, such as unicameralism or limiting legislative sessions, may require a convention to resolve. Most others appropriately stand or fall through action or inaction by the legislature and confirmation or rejection by Alaska's voters. (Should a convention be held, such changes could, of course, be considered as part of comprehensive constitutional revision.)

A survey of specific amendments that have been proposed or might be considered is being undertaken as part of an analysis sponsored by the legislature's Interim Committee on the Constitutional Convention. The items are truly too numerous to enumerate here. Changes have been proposed, either formally in the legislature or informally in other media, to every article of the constitution. Some can be justified, but certainly not all.

Here is a small sampling. Suggestions have been made that the grand jury, provided for in Article I, is obsolete and should be superseded by methods that are more expeditious and fairer to defendants. But, while the change could be made by amending the constitution, it could far more simply be put into practice through a rule promulgated by the State Supreme Court.

Article II covers the legislature and has seen a number of proposals that might, as already mentioned, be difficult to get through the legislature, assuming they were worthy pursuit. These deal not only with a one-house legislature and time limit on annual sessions, but also with such matters as legislative pay, qualification of members, and the like.

The executive article covers such controversial proposal as election of the state attorney general and district attorneys/prosecutors, and establishing a single, six-year term for the governor. Sugges-

tions have also been made to elect judges and change the composition of the judicial council. There are those who want to authorize state funding of students in private schools. Changes in resources policy have been proposed. Suggested revisions of the finance and taxation article include establishment of tax and expenditure limits, extension of the permanent fund to cover more state revenues, and creation of a more responsible general obligation binding process. Other proposed amendments include allowing use of the initiative process to amend the constitution.

Any of these and other suggested amendments can be routinely handled by the legislature whenever sufficient justification exists for a specific proposal. The fact that many oft-suggested changes, such as selecting members of the judiciary, have not made it through the legislature is due exclusively to lack of support for the idea.

Special Issues

Since lawmakers do not necessarily endorse and act on all issues that come before them, many groups are dissatisfied with the legislative process and its responsiveness to their desires. A constitutional convention can potentially provide a medium through which such groups can try to achieve their objectives. And, in these days of single-issue politics, massive pressures can be marshalled. In Alaska, the lands issue provides a good example; nationally it is the support of environmental causes.

Principal Alaskan causes of the day include moving the state capital, outlawing abortions, repealing the income tax, and distributing state lands, though the latter issue appears dormant at this time. Frustrated by lack or inadequacy of legislative response, proponents of such cause might well try to obtain instant remedy and satisfaction by writing their cause into the constitution. Thus, those who have been trying for years to get the capital moved could mandate the change by a specific clause in the constitution. The same aims might be pursued by "right-to-life" proponents and advocates of other causes.

There are two prospective problems that could result from this situation. First, the subjects these interest groups are pursuing are

not bona fide constitutional matter, though they could make it such by marshalling sufficient votes. Second, and by far more serious, single-issue groups and candidates could well beget a constitutional convention that cared only about satisfying their specific wants and paid little attention to the fundamental purposes and concepts of the constitution itself. A convention dominated by narrow special interest is scary to contemplate, for the basic fabric and institutions of the state could thus be endangered and undermined. But the potentials for the happening do exist, and one needs to examine ways of approaching constitutional revision in a constructive and positive manner, particularly since the 1982 referendum looms not far away.

Alternative Approaches to Constitutional Revision

A review of Alaska's experience under the constitution and its adequacy to serve the state in the future was conducted in 1976, twenty years after the document was written and ratified. The review was sponsored by delegates to the 1955-56 convention. But the examination of the constitutional experience was carried out by individuals who had worked under it or observed it closely: legislators, state and local government officials, judges, newspaper editors, rural representatives, businessmen, and the like. With some exceptions, the general opinion was that the constitution had served the new state well and that no overall revisions were necessary for it to remain a viable document.

Today, people who have taken positions on the matter hold strong opinions on the need for a new constitutional convention, and they fall on both sides of the issue. Convention proponents generally base their stand on specific areas of change, such as establishment of a unicameral legislature, provisions for rural Alaska and subsistence, or changes in the finance article; a few want the whole constitutional structure of Alaska to be reviewed. The opposition to a convention is satisfied with the present state constitution and fears that a convention, with its plenary powers, could end up making extensive, unnecessary, undesirable and damaging revisions.

It is fair to assume that the vast majority of Alaskans is unaware of and unconcerned with the convention issue. That is the way it was in 1970, when the first convention referendum was voted on.

With the exception of information from League of Women Voters and some newspaper editorials, the general public had little basis for voting on the convention call. That was not a healthy state of affairs then. But lack of public understanding of the issues would be much more serious today in view of the general tenor of the times and the shrillness of recent single-issue campaigns.

Public education, information, and knowledge are keys to successful democratic governance. These factors together with the overriding statehood purpose provided the foundation for a successful convention twenty-five years ago. And they can do so again.

Striving for a knowledgeable electorate should be the goal of those convention proponents and opponents who are serious in their striving for a good constitution for the state. That is the surest way, in fact the only way, to insure that special interest groups will now sway the public and control a convention if called. Providing the basis for an intelligent response to the whole subject of constitutional revision is, of course, a principal purpose of the legislature's Interim Committee on the Constitutional Convention.

An essential ingredient in preparing the voting public as well as laying the groundwork for a convention is the establishment of an appropriate preparatory commission. In 1955, the Alaska Statehood Commission performed that task. In the future, a special constitutional convention commission could provide the vehicle for these purposes. Most states have used such commissions as an initial stage preceding a convention or even a decision on holding a convention. Commissions of this sort are usually composed either of a mixture of public officials and citizens appointees or appointed citizens only. Generally, their task is establishing two-way communication with the electorate and doing preparatory research for the contemplated convention.

A newly emerging device used by a number of states is the constitutional revision commission, which is charged with actually proposing changes to be made in the state constitution. This instrumentality has evolved since Alaska's constitution was written, but it may have applicability in Alaska. A commission of this sort undertakes a study of possible constitutional changes and proposes amendments or packages of revisions to the legislature, which can, in turn, recommend them for voter approval. In effect,

this method constitutes a process of comprehensive revision utilizing the regular amendment process without recourse to a constitutional convention. A disadvantage of this approach is that it does not in the first instance involve delegates elected by the people. However, proposed changes do go through the scrutiny of elected lawmakers, and recommended revisions are eventually voted on by the people of the state. The approach represents a compromise between holding a constitutional convention, which can propose wholesale revisions, and the legislative amendment process, which, as mentioned, does not lend itself well to major constitutional policy analyses and revisions.

The decision of how to initially approach constitutional revision is up to the state legislature. A preparatory commission would have to be established by law. So would a constitutional revision body. Also, the legislature can use the regular amendment process and it can initiate a constitutional convention of its own volition.

It is quite possible that the most practical course would be for the legislature to determine what changes are needed in the constitution, (possibly using a constitutional study commission), recommend a package of amendments to the people, and thus eliminate possible justifications for a convention. The legislature may still have to face head-on the special interest pressures that might develop for a convention, but these could be defused by legislative action, public information, or a combination of these.

Another alternative available under the constitution is for the legislature itself to issue a convention call. This course might be taken if either the case for a convention became extremely strong or public approval of a referendum appeared inevitable, or both. Under such circumstances, a legislative call might simply eliminate the need for a potentially divisive referendum campaign and help set a higher tone of unity for the constitutional convention than might otherwise be achieved. At the same time, such a course might cause a convention to be held when none might be called by vote of the people, had they a chance to express themselves on the matter.

At this juncture, the wisest course to pursue might just be to wait another year or two before taking firm steps in any of the above directions. Continuing exploratory work would be appropriate,

together with a broadening program of public information and involvement. And then, as the 1982 referendum time approached, the public and the legislature will be in a better situation for setting a constitutional revision course than we are today.

A Personal Postscript

Several months of looking at the constitutional revision question have not helped me decide what position to take about a new constitutional convention. The constitution is essentially sound; no critical changes appear necessary. At the same time, some issues will not be resolved without a convention being held, the unicameral legislative structure being a prime example. But, while issues such as that remain undecided, Alaska can certainly continue on its present course without great suffering. From this standpoint, again, constitutional revision is not vital to Alaska's welfare.

Yet a constitutional convention — including both the process leading to it and the actual proceedings — have the potential of providing the kind of uplifting experience and unity that Alaska so badly needs. Although there is a danger that special, single-issue interest might capture and derail a convention, I am not really afraid of that. First, voters generally do exercise good judgment in the people they elect. Second, I have time and again seen people, when challenged, rise to heights far greater than one might have expected. Thus, my intrinsic belief in democracy, together with an innate optimism, makes me unafraid of what a convention, even under the worst of circumstances, might do to Alaska's constitutions, the best in the nation.

And so, at least for the time being, I straddle the fence.

Biographical Sketch

Victor Fischer was a delegate to the 1956 Alaska Constitutional Convention and has written a book on the state constitution. Fischer was the director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) for many years and is now a private consultant, currently working with several legislative committees.

HOLISTIC ALASKA

By Glenn A. Olds, President
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Cheshire Puss," she began, rather timidly . . .

"Would you tell me, please, which way ought I go to from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat.

"I don't much care where —" said Alice.

"Then, it doesn't much matter which way you go," said the cat.

Lewis Carroll — *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

"If the human race is to survive, it will have to change its ways of thinking more in the next 25 years than in the last 25,000."

Kenneth Boulding

"I can't believe God plays dice with the cosmos."

Albert Einstein

"It shall be required of this generation."

Luke 11:50-51

Historical Perspective

Alaska, "the great land" stands as a fascinating and unique link in human history. Anchored as it is in a past and a culture that were historically holistic, integrated and whole, it has escaped much of that sweeping, scientific specialization of the modern day that has left our world fragmented and narrowly professionalized. Alaska, as a bridge between East and West, absorbs the best of both continents without adopting the extremes of either.¹

As technology continues to shrink our world, Alaska has the unique prospect of averting the dangerous dichotomies and narrow specializations that haunt and divide our time. Because of Alaska's holistic past not yet subverted, we can pursue a more vital holistic culture and development for the future.

Alaska's future may well celebrate T.S. Elliot's classic line, "And we may return to the beginning, and know it for the first time." This means that the remarkable holistic outlook and life style of the original Alaskan native may become the saving form and function against an overly specialized, segregated world.

Back in 1851 Seattle, Chief of the Suquamish and other tribes of the Northwest, wrote to the President of the United States. In beautiful simplicity, he expressed the holistic sense of the relationship of nature, human nature, and the Divine, the connectedness of all things, and the insight of his native culture containing 40 000 years of wisdom. He painted a picture² which mirrored in miniature in Alaska, reaches for a new unity.

The fact and graphic necessity of this whole new view was brought home to me on that eventful day, July 20, 1969, when our first astronaut landed on the moon. I was in the chair as Ambassador to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in Geneva representing the United States and was asked to say a word appropriate to that occasion. It seemed so obvious, and yet so prophetic, to acknowledge man was now able, for the first time to see the whole earth from beyond itself, from the moon; and know it for what it is, in its precious, precarious, finite wholeness to see it as our radically interdependent, *integrative, holistic* home.

The bankruptcy of our recent scientific legacy of specialization leads to dangerous dichotomies:

between	person	—	and	—	nature
between	mind	—	and	—	matter
between	subject	—	and	—	object
between	freedom	—	and	—	security
between	self	—	and	—	society
between	private	—	and	—	public
between	development	—	and	—	conservation
between	quality	—	and	—	quantity

Current Status

Much of the malaise of our time roots in the disruptive dualisms generated in a culture which has lost the "holistic" sense of the interconnection of all things. There is no time or place in so swift a sketch for review of this trend over the past four hundred years; how a limited scientific method, designed for measuring and mastering objects in space and time, becomes a misplaced Messiah when applied to persons, values and the cosmic setting and meaning for human existence. It is sufficient to note the successive forms of alienation and violence, ravaging of resources and limits of a fragile world such a perspective has left in its wake.¹ One might generalize to say, *the later the hour, the faster the time, the smaller the space, the more urgent the human problems to be solved.*

Alaska has an unparalleled opportunity to escape the perils of such perspectives and practices, and create new wholes for a healthy human culture. Alaska can properly address *and* integrate wholly —

- (1) Native and Caucasian culture
- (2) Eastern and Western cultures
- (3) Traditional and modern cultures
- (4) Natural and human environments
- (5) Conservation and development of resources
- (6) Specialization and integration of knowledge and professions
- (7) Science and values
- (8) Technology and humanity

Moreover, Alaska's unique situation mirrors in a marvelous way clues to that holistic world aborning, and may be replicated round the world.

- (1) *Geographically* it does link Asia and America, anchors the Pacific Rim around whose circumference clusters 2/3 of the population of the world, and heralds the dawning significance of the Pacific for the 21st Century.

(2) *Culturally* it does mirror the meeting of the four major powers who will shape decisively the coming century; — the U.S.S.R., the People's Republic of China, Japan, and the U.S. It embodies the holistic culture of native Alaskans with their life styles, their partnership with nature and neighbor as innovators of appropriate technology and as heroes of adversity. Alaska is producing a new native, full of competency and scientific sophistication. He is bent on joining the old in creation of a newer holistic world.

(3) *Economically*, Alaska represents an incomparable "whole" array of resources essential to the modern world's survival and enhancement.

a. Natural Resources

.Just two of Alaska's 20 oil fields contain 25% of America's oil reserves.⁴ The Alyeska pipeline at 8+ billion dollars represents private enterprise's most expensive undertaking in the world.

.60% of the coal reserves of the U.S. are in Alaska.

.30 of the 33 minerals essential to U.S. industry are found there.

.Devil's Canyon, alone, on the Susitna River, as now contemplated will be the largest hydro-electric dam system in the country; and other untapped river systems illustrate this powerful water resource.

.With a longer shoreline than continental United States, Alaska boasts fisheries that are a feeding ground of the whole North Pacific, and scientifically farmed, present a clue to the feeding of a hungry world.

.The timber resources of Southeastern Alaska, which first attracted Russian settlements and ship building, defy definition. Annual timber production is only 1/4 of 1% of the real farmable and renewable potential.

.With 20,000,000 acres of potentially farmable land, and a growing season North of the Arctic Circle in sunlight hours longer than Iowa's, and currently farming only 17,800 acres, this untapped resource of food sources for a hungry world and a self-supportive Alaska staggers the mind.

.The new capital, innovative potential, and renewable resources of the native corporations, with land and money, has already impacted dramatically and favorably on the new Alaska. Investments in tourist accommodations, banks, fisheries

and new technologies herald a hopeful and holistic development in this area.

A skilled labor force, growing population, economic diversity, and reversal of State deficit spending, add to an incomparable picture of promise.

Other Perspectives

The critical and comprehensive analysis of the Club of Rome's "Limits of Growth", has been sharply modified by subsequent factual and logical analysis. By retaining a linear, sequential form of projection trend, it ignored the renewable feature of the inventive human mind, the capacity to "do more with less" the recycled form of finite resources and the powerful impact of informed knowledge and plans. We now may take these ignored features into account. Ervin Laszlo, concentrating on the human and value dimensions of the future, in his second report points toward corrective holistic features of an emerging planetary perspective. And, the latest report about to be released is purported to exemplify this trend toward a systematic, restrained and retrained holistic understanding of controlled growth and integrative development.

R. Buckminster Fuller, who will be addressing this conference, has brought a refreshing optimism to his human assessment of perspectives on the future. His books⁸, his speeches and his writing testify to the possibility and advisability of the world's optimal functioning in this holistic model. His World Game strategies to show how in energy, food, education and global design, the world can work to larger fulfillment of all human needs are contemporary confirmation of Alaska's promise. Alaska is on Main Street!

The promising perspective is reinforced by Dr. Arthur Shaw's *Copionics* and computer confirmation that a new form of global barter, exchanging goods and services in a free economy, computerized in exchange as a global bank is in the works.

Futurists of as widely differing perspectives as Herman Kahn and Hazel Henderson, of the Princeton Center on the Future, Jean Houston and Jonas Salk provide still further embellishment of Alaska's holistic promise.

Key concepts from all these alternatives can guide Alaska's evolving strategies.

(1) *Relativity* — It is absolutely dependable to rely on the *invariance of interdependence* of every aspect of nature, human nature and earthly or cosmic development.

(2) *Synergy* — The whole is always more than the sum of its parts, unpredictable from the analysis of any of its parts; and meaning descends in planning, direction or life from the whole to part.

(3) *Symbiosis* — Interdependence is reciprocal and becomes responsive and responsible when lifted to the level of conscious intention and choice. It is the clue to trade, a sharing society, and the integrity of a barter economy at the root of self-reliant and self-directed units of any whole.

(4) *Syndetic* — Connecting structures that give order, strength and permanence to relationships that carry the health of any organism or society are essential. They mirror the essential infrastructure and institutional life adequate to carry a healthy circulation and strength of holistic development.

(5) *Entropic reversal* — Introduces the principle of conscious renewal and redirection of natural systems otherwise entropic, that is, running down. T.H. Huxley was right when he remarked "With the coming of consciousness, natural evolution is reversible." This is the inwardly decisive resource of renewal to be discovered, nurtured and liberated at all cost; conscious choice to change trends and events.

(6) *Presence* — This quasi-mystical, yet everywhere evident feature of omnipresent fullness of consciousness, totally integrated, holistic, presentment is not only a feature of personal life at its best, but social dynamism where vacuous and dangerous degrees of emptiness are missing. This is the full life, new life and whole life toward which Alaskan life styles bent on authenticity, spontaneity and newness are heading.

Directions

What prescriptions if not predictions can be drawn from all this. There is but space for the most sketchy of suggestions.

(1) Alaska should consciously lift to a state of comprehensive planning its unique role as holistic model for a deeply divided world. It should seize its delayed maturity as a grace and virtue, to escape earlier and debilitating dichotomies. New and novel approaches should be expected and demanded to escape the tired shiboleths of our so-called "older societies."

(2) Alaska should borrow a more apt metaphor for such planning and expectation than the conventional linear types. The metaphor of transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly is more apt for surprises and expectations of the future.

(3) In the field of energy, fossil fuel development, so critical to the nation, should be advanced and accelerated with income generated partially committed to come up with innovative research in alternative energy sources. Institutes or contracted research should be fostered in:

a. *Coal* gasification and slurry; link holistically coal, oil and water.

B. *Geothermal* research linked holistically with hydroponic farming and fisheries, and environmental modification of heat transfer systems yielded by the rhythmic renewal of geothermal energy.

c. *Tidal* harnessing the Cook Inlet tide and one of nature's largest non-polluting sources of energy — the gravitational pull of the moon on the surface of the sea.

D. *Wind* research in the incomparable wind vectors of the Matanuska Valley, and virtually every valley-mountain axis in Alaska.

e. *Hydro-electric and solar-powered* domestic mini-systems essential to modest personal or village needs.

(4) Institutes or contracted services for holistic innovation in:

a. *Agriculture* — using the long Arctic day through summer, alternating with dark frozen winter to generate disease-free, new strains of Arctic-enduring grains and vegetables — holistically linked with new forms of earth-related housing and storage.

b. *Housing* — Using Buckey Fuller's Dymaxion Geodesic dome model for Alaskan construction and export, where "more is done with less" and optimal strength achieved with minimal materials and cost.

c. *Fishery* development in seasonal holistic rhythm between ship building (winter) and ship sailing and fishing in summer to enhance this promising field; fish farming, fresh and salt, with

geothermal heated shrimp ponds and other adaptations to a total development.

d. *Satellite* — the maximizing of telecommunications systems for two-way educational delivery systems, full participatory democracy in government and development of Third World program models on audio-visual cassette for sharing, export and sale.

e. *Educational* innovation, using permanent funds, and excess income over taxes to develop Silber's Tuition Advance Plan (and/or other forms of student choice, public or private) for strengthening Alaskan options of high quality, low cost and fully funded education.

f. *Monetary*. Experimentation in developing a new monetary system substituting for gold or sterling, goods and services, real or potential as a basis for a new global economy.

g. *Institutes*. Develop new supranational institutes for intercultural exchange and cooperation — U.S. — U.S.S.R., U.S. — Peoples Republic of China with historic and thematic pursuit of new frontiers — sea, space and the self.

h. *Develop* an Alaskan modelled Battelle Institute, a profit-making non-profit corporation to nurture and support inventive human genius, pure and applied, whose ingenuity might be expected to release new insight, technologies or practices into a *holistic* life authentically Alaskan and thereby, in promise, planetary.

i. *Devise* new work and manpower models that maximize Alaska's unique climate, geography and economy; i.e. rhythmic, seasonal, rural-urban, and Pacific, which holistically and synergetically interface with Hawaii, Japan and the Pacific Rim; and invite new training programs linked to these models.

j. *Support*, liberate, and encourage the private sector in friendly competition, serving priority personal and social ends, with productivity economy and quality to swiftly balance the present heavily-governmentally dependent culture and economy.

k. *Transform* preoccupation with GNP — from Gross National Product to *Growing New People* who are whole, healthy, hopeful and helping.

Then, truly, our State will vindicate its name — and destiny
Alyeska — *THE GREAT LAND*.

Addendum:

CRITICAL ISSUES OR QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What investment from the permanent fund or current budget is committed to tend the most precarious and productive resource of the State, its creative, productive, inventive people? (note: the heavy investment in the non-productive — the investment in every residential youth offender is five times the real cost of any Alaska Pacific University student, for whom no direct support is given by the State.)

2. What provision is being made to direct pure and applied research, public and private toward the priorities and State goals explicitly required for our future?

3. What mechanisms are provided for holistic linkages in the State, communicative transportative, social and political? What should be provided?

4. What tax incentives or advantages are provided the private sector to contribute innovative leadership to the unresolved and promising directions for the future? What should be?

5. What linkages are being forged with the Pacific region, the world, to insure holistic integration of resources, people and programs essential for the future?

6. What policy and provision is being made to encourage the private sector in education to address the dramatic outmigration of Alaska's most valuable resource, its own bright young people?

7. What provision is being made to insure the permanent fund will be used to reinforce *renewable* resources, natural and human?

8. What initiative is the State prepared to take to provide swift and sustaining continuing education to upgrade its leadership, political and professional for the weighty 80's?

9. What prospect is there for an Alaskan "Fulbright or Truman" program of fellowships for outstanding leaders from other nations

to study/contribute through public and private higher education in the State (100 well chosen top scholars annually, fully subsidized in the school or research institute of their choice, would revolutionize the Pacific Rim and the place of Alaska in it in a decade).

10. What prospect is there for a holistic, socio-political synergy linking cooperatively the now divisive fractionalism of the State? A new and imaginative "capital sharing" resolution of the problem of a move; securing and disposition of State lands, and an integrated comprehensive educational system, public and private, would greatly enhance the prospect.

Footnotes

¹See Northrop's brilliant analysis, *The Meeting of East and West*.

²See His Letter as appended.

³See Bibliography

⁴These and other figures represent estimates from a variety of public and private sources. See the valuable paper by Doug Millar "The Future: Alaska"

⁵See Millar's graphic portrayal of this potential.

⁶See Bibliography

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NOTES



AN APPROACH TOWARD CONCEPTUALIZING "THE KIND OF ALASKA WE WANT TO SEE . . ."

by

Dr. Charles Konigsberg

This paper was delivered at
The 27th Alaska Science Conference
University of Alaska
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It Is Assumed:

That fulfillment of the functional responsibilities of the Alaska state government — which in our time includes the formulation of policy on growth, on cultural and environmental integrity and diversity, and the development of a rational and coherent land-use planning capability — requires the articulation of an explicit, comprehensive concept of the "whole" for which we plan; that is, of "The Kind of Alaska We Want to See".

That all such ultimates, or fundamental issues — and our inquiries thereinto — are, of course, "too broad and too complex", but that, nevertheless, the way to adequate understanding and appropriate articulation necessitates our learning to grasp and deal with the broad complexity, with the whole of it.

That this cannot be "simplified", for to simplify the complex, or to reduce the whole, is to distort it, thereby fundamentally changing the reality of the whole which we are trying to grasp and with which we must deal . . . Nor can the problem of the whole be evaded since it will come into being, it will "happen" — it is always there — in consequence of the incremental aggregation of seemingly unrelated policy decisions and actions, and the aggregated, rather the synergistic, result of which being, in all likelihood, far less than — certainly much different than — what is otherwise desired, or, to be desired.

That this is also another way of saying we always plan and act for the "long-run". No longer can escape from the responsibility inherent therein be sought in the supposed distinction between short- and long-run. This must now be recognized as a false and highly misleading dichotomy: There is no short-, no long-run without the other; each is inherent in the other; the two are one and the same.

That the implications of this point are more profound and compelling:

"The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created — created first in mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are not found but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination."

John Schaar

Therefore,

That in all — and granting whatever else may be said about the difficulty — such an effort as is being suggested here can no longer be evaded, however "human" to try to put it off. Let us not be like "the psychiatric patient who knows he must do something to help himself but can't or won't bring himself to act because he can't see how to solve the whole problem at once".

As in the psychiatric example so in the present case — as also in the proverbial journey of a thousand miles, or in the modern search for the way to the "end of the tunnel" — the appropriate course of action is to begin with the first step: to conceptualize and articulate the whole of it. This means, for our pressing purpose, an explicitly articulated vision of the Alaska we want to see.

In one sense, indeed, our concern and our task are really nothing new in the history of human affairs (though perhaps more compelling today than ever before). In all explicit, deliberately patterned societies — and in many lesser groupings of people organized for even more restricted purposes — their "constitutions" or charters constitute their "first step" toward achieving a grasp of and way of dealing with the whole: that is, politically, the "social contract" (or compact) which seeks to express the "general will" on behalf of the "common good".

Tacitly implied, therefore, is a vision of the cultural whole, of a way or ways of life desired. Constitutions, thus, are attempts at articulated conceptualizations of the whole.

To speak, then, of "the Alaska we want to see" is to ask that we build on the first step already taken, the Constitution of the State of Alaska . . . to ask that (in a socio-evolutionary sense) we take the next step, that of making explicit the tacitly implied concept of the cultural whole appropriate to life and place.

2

Perspective on the past strongly suggests that societal (Political) constitutions have heretofore been fashioned with a one-sided focus on people-to-people relationships, to the virtual exclusion of other relations and their interactions. Given, moreover, the history of the Twentieth Century, and the experiences of our own times in particular, it is now clear that human interrelationships and the societal systems which express or attempt to institutionalize them inescapably involve and impact all life forms and their common habitat, the biosphere, which sustains all. A change in, and expansion of the focus of, traditional constitutions is therefore needed to include the heretofore neglected elements.

It is in this perspective that at least the shape of a concept of a cultural whole appropriate to the Alaskan situation can be perceived, and a constitution to express it can be fashioned. Since earlier constitutions did not account for the all-encompassing web of interacting relationships — which may be viewed as the "ecological imperative" — and given our need to develop improved ways to decide policy, to plan and to act, it seems clear and urgent that we must build upon, add to, or revise our political constitutions with a "Constitution of Culture": hence, "The Kind of Alaska We Want to See".

It does seem especially appropriate that Alaska be the place to undertake the effort. It has taken us some time, but we have finally begun to understand that the ecological crisis of our times is the human dilemma raised to the species level:

" . . . It means we have arrived, after long journeying, at an historical vantage point from which we can at least see where the wasteland ends and where a culture of human wholeness and fulfillment begins. We can now recognize that the fate of the soul is the fate of the social order; that if the spirit within us withers, so will all the world we build about us. Literally so.

What, after all, is the ecological crisis but the inevitable extroversion of a blighted psyche? Like inside, like outside. In the eleventh hour, the very physical environment suddenly looms up before us as the outward mirror of our inner condition, for many the first discernible symptom of advance disease within."

Theodore Roszak

Here in Alaska, we are yet in a position, despite the pressures of recent events, to act on the understanding reflected above. This is our last chance as Americans to "civilize" a great natural region without disrupting its ecological integrity and without falling victim to the technological (urban-industrial) Leviathan in the process. Indeed, Alaska can be the new model for societal development, a reassuring pattern of a society in dynamic harmony with its natural environment, with all life and with our nature as the human species.

It seems clear that the best in Alaska's future derives from, or will be the extension of the best in the Alaskan past. Nature, we may say, has developed her own plan for Alaska: we would be wise to respect and learn from it.



The relationship between environmental integrity and the character of our lives is now understood to be direct and controlling one . . . Like outside, like inside . . . Disrespect for and abuse of the biosphere fashions a society disrespectful and destructive of itself. Indeed, it may be seen that concern for our environment is the tie that may finally bind us all together; and that, if, as in the past of human history, our common humanity was not enough to bring us all together as members of the family of man, perhaps the felt recognition of our inseparable relationship within the ecological community will help us to achieve that end: genuine respect for our environment being accompanied by increasing respect for each other, for all life.

There can be no more appropriate place than Alaska in which to begin. Indeed, in Alaska it should occasion no surprise to recognize, that an innovation such as the Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission (F-S/LUPC) is itself an explicit reflection of the foregoing, and of the attendant point discussed earlier of our need to transcend or to evolve into something broader — more comprehensive, more holistic — than the essentially "political", confined within relatively narrow parameters. The F-S/LUPC, like the cooperative management systems approach it is coming to rely upon — and which has its counterparts in increasing instances around the nation — similarly reflects or constitutes a step toward fashioning a better grasp on at least a larger portion of the whole.

Is this not an institutional groping toward the more organic, that cultural whole which, as this paper suggests, ought to be our central concern?

This is likewise true, and constitutes the underlying significance of, contemporary legislation epitomized by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), coastal zone management and land-use planning generally (in all their varied manifestations).

All of which reflects belated recognition of the need to build upon our political constitutions in the manner earlier suggested, to embody the "ecological imperative", explicitly recognizing the direct (shared) relationship of life to all life and their common habitat — the institutional and legislative acts noted above constituting elements in the evolution of a "Constitution of Culture", growing out of and building upon our experience with political and organizational constitutions.

What Kind of Alaska, then?

In my view, the following must be recognized as the touchstone values in all policy deliberations of Alaska state government:

*Alaska's potential as a model society-to-be is of far more significance to its people and to the nation than as a "storehouse of energy and minerals" or anything else material . . .

*Our focus must be on the protection and enhancement of Alaskan culture/lifestyles in all their diversities — which mandates maintenance of ecological integrity of the Great Land and relegates economic activity to its proper (instrumental, not dominant) role, as the basic elements necessary to achieving a life of quality for the Alaskan people.

These touchstones further reflect the following considerations at least:

*That the human creature is so much more than producer-consumer; so much more than "economic man" . . . We have learned that for us "more" and "bigger" are no longer "better" and that the optimum is always less than the maximum.

*That the human species shares this world with all the animate and the inanimate together in a system of mutual interdependence. As the "conscious" force in this system, the human role is therefore one of stewardship: responsible for the well-being of the other species as well as of our own and for the well-being of the common habitat which sustains us. We are responsible for the whole.

*This responsibility applies equally to our varieties of human culture. The maintenance of their integrity (a dynamic process), assuring diversity, enriches us all, is consistent with the larger natural patterns, and strengthens the social fabric of our common species by providing demonstrable standards for mutual evaluation toward improvement.

Much of this is my way of saying that: we must face the fact that as yet we do not know how to establish a society so that its social purposes are properly served, its environment protected, or its human values preserved. Yet it emerges from the foregoing pages

of discussion that in our times the key consideration for the policymaker, public or private, is the maintenance of cultural/environmental integrity:

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, the stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

Aldo Leopold

Efforts which seek to pursue this fundamental insight should be strongly encouraged and supported. There is, for example, a Natural Systems Study of the F-S/LUPC which seeks to establish a foundation for "Land Planning and Policy in Alaska" through analysis and systematization of landform/biota/climatological characteristics, and offers, I believe, a most promising approach to the stated end. The study is persuasive in supporting the dictum that ecological characteristics must guide human activities (and not the other way around, as at present). Indeed, at least the possibility exists that, for example, we may be able to determine an optimum population/economic structure and technological activity/appropriate culture for each distinguishable landform/biota "province".

Other proposed programs of SocioEconomic Studies offer an equally promising approach toward restoring the balance, or creating an optimal relationship, between economic and other human aspirations and activities within the controlling parameters of ecological integrity and the perspective of the cultural whole.

These studies are yet incomplete and, of course, inconclusive. Interim guidelines, or value judgments as guidelines, are needed for policy formulation. What may be suggested, then, on the basis of the general understanding of our situation reflected in this paper are the following:

1. **Focus on the Cultural Whole (holism)*; not on economic activity . . . under State-wide "Constitution of Culture".
2. **Land: "Bridge to Community"* — the tie that binds: Land use planning therefore a central function of contemporary socio-political system . . . toward protection of cultural/environmental integrity and diversity as "most precious resource" . . .

3. **Ruralization not Urbanization/Suburbanization*: Focus on renewable resources base, subsistence mode . . . preservation and maintenance of subsistence way of life for Native and non-Native, and for the semi-subsistence mode so vital to so many Alaskans . . .

4. **"Small is Beautiful"* — small-scale economic activity, not large-scale (note misleading notion of "economics of scale") . . . "Intermediate Technology" — not simply as to size and extent but as to character (and inclusive of transportation and communication, market/distribution and exchange systems as well as of "tools") . . .

5. **"Community" Perspective and Emphasis* (smaller population groupings) not Metropolis/Megalopolis . . . lesser centralization . . . importance of role of the elderly . . . diversity valued . . .

6. **Managing Growth* — Examples of Petulama case (and others) . . . including controlled rate of nonrenewable resources extraction . . . One major project at a time . . . Refocus from nonrenewable to renewable resource emphasis . . . More and bigger not better . . .

7. **The Still Natural Regions*: Our responsibility for their protection . . . need for beauty, silence, purity of air, water, land . . . Protection of wildlife/Habitat . . . their condition as "barometer" for human society . . . Stewardship: an end to the "tragedy of the commons", here and now, in Alaska . . . Natural systems as model for human society.

8. **Quality of Life (Social-Biospheric) Assessment Index* . . . by which to evaluate all relevant costs and to insure thereby that activities are approved only if proved beneficial in all major respects.

9. **Is there an "optimum population"?* . . . a question whose time has certainly come.

10. **The Role of Higher Education* . . . in the forefront of public questioning, exploring all dimensions, exposing hidden assumptions . . . source of future social and political leadership.

11. **The Role of Government* . . . government is a creative, integrating force . . . "politics is the architectonic science — the

(art and) science of the common good — and of mobilizing the community to achieve it."

4

These guidelines may be re-stated, perhaps, as follows:

Policy Focus on the Cultural Whole

On our ways of life and their quality . . . always asking how "Project X" or "Program Y" affects the kind of life we want to lead, the kind of Alaska we want to see . . .

And always in the awareness of the precious relationship between cultural and environmental integrity and diversity, which requires continued availability of the natural . . .

Emphasis on the value, the critical need for diversity in ways of life and lifestyles, with corresponding emphasis on countervailing pressures to the homogenizing influence of the dominant culture . . . importance of learning from other cultures and other species . . .

Policy on Governance of Growth and Population Size

Misconceived issue when posed in terms of "growth vs. no-growth / slow growth", "development vs. conservation / preservation", etc. Real question is: what kind of life do we want to lead? — and the relation thereto of growth and population size, of cultural and environmental integrity and diversity . . . of the management of change.

Basic problem of character and rate of change, of significant, rapid and continual change, fueled by disruptive forces of speculation and inflation and their attendant, highly intensified psychology of expectation and ambition . . . requires carefully governed types and rate of economic activity, especially infrastructure availability, and suggests policy of one major project at a time . . . and deliberate dampening of the highly destabilizing speculation and inflation.

Re-direction from "gigantism" to "small is beautiful", including "intermediate technology" and technology assessment systems . . . with land-use planning (planning understood as "process") and

biospheric protections, carefully governed rate of natural resources extraction and refocus on renewable resources, as primary determinants of economic activity, rather than "economic profitability".

Requiring, therefore, a

Socio-Biospheric Costs (Assessment) Index

By which to evaluate all relevant costs, quantifiable and non-quantifiable both . . . and to insure that major activities are approved only if proved beneficial on all counts, with burden of proof on the initiator.

Policy on Community and Regional Development

Policy focus on "community" not metropolitan . . . centralization, lesser concentrations of population . . . more respect for the aged, for tradition.

Minimizing settlement of still-natural regions . . . protection and encouragement of subsistence and semi-subsistence modes . . . decentralized settlement, ruralization not urbanization / suburbanization . . . protection and encouragement of agricultural / pastoral, and of the coastal-fisheries / lumbering communities.

Controlled infrastructure availability / non-availability . . . Special attention to evolving relationship between city and country.

Implied in the foregoing are, of course, more specifically delineated policies and plans with respect to:

- Natural Resources and Energy
- Land-Use Planning
- Environmental Protection
- Fish and Game
- Social Services
- Transportation and Communications Infrastructures
- Public Taxation/Revenues
- Others

All in the context of educational programs of genuine quality and government as an integrating, creative force — a role so especially crucial in time of rapid change — and requiring dynamic, creative leadership able and willing to seize the initiative, especially in

regard to the terms of discourse, as we discuss and create our future.

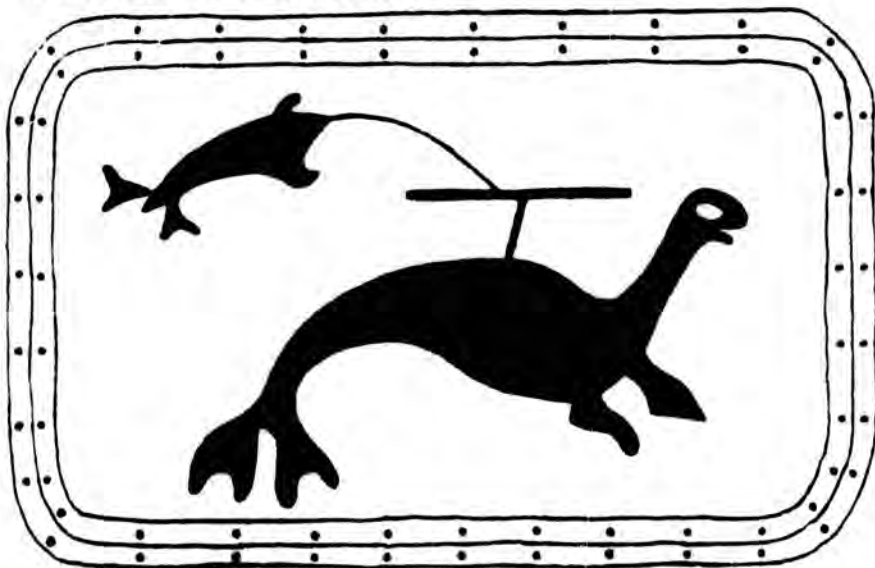
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A Summation:

Taken together, these policy guidelines may be seen as elements in a Constitution of Culture — of the Alaska We Want to See — urged throughout this brief paper.

The "Preamble" to this Constitution would argue that Alaska's great promise to her own people and to others, lies in the establishment of the proper relationship of people to life to land . . . that socio-political policy development and planning, both public and private, must therefore focus on biospheric policy development and planning, of which some essential elements have been suggested in the form of reflections and guidelines.

There is obviously much yet to be elaborated . . . It seems critical, therefore, to keep in mind that since we do not yet have such a constitution, that we do not yet "know" — and since current approaches are less than adequate, when not destructive — that we must "hold the line" in most sectors of activity, until we can have learned how better to proceed.



Appendix of Supporting Papers

- "The Proposed Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline" (1969)
- "An Ecological Declaration" (1969-1970)
- "Religion/Morality, Environment/Development" (1970)
- "Social Implications of Population Growth" (1971)
- "A Talk on Wilderness" (1971)
- "Land: Bridge to Community" (1971)
- "An Ecological Overview of Economic Development" (1971)
- "Eskimo Culture at the Crossroads" (1972)
- "Attitudinal Change in Alaska" (1972)
- "Alaska's Greatest Need: Time" (1972)
- "Environmental Quality and the Concept of Growth & Progress" (1972)
- "The Environmental Crisis in Global Perspective" (1972)
- "Responsibility of the Forester in Our Times of Crisis" (1972)
- "Responsibility of the Landscape Architect in Our Times of Crisis" (1973)
- "The D-2 Lands in Perspective" (1973)
- "The Mining Function in Unconventional Perspective" (1973)
- "Resource Extraction on the OCS" (1973, 1974, 1975)
- "Planning for Quality"; (1975)
- "Ode to the Dinosaur: Observations on 'Competing Uses' of Wildlife" (1975)
- "The F-SLUPC and the Effects of Divided Land Management" (1975)
- "Oil Impact and Renewable Aquatic Resources" (1977)

(This appendix of papers by C. Konigsberg is included by way of an offer of availability to anyone interested in the evolution of the thought and biases reflected in part of this paper. An adequate approach to the subject of this paper must, of course, include papers from other analysts and the views of other Alaskans as expressed, for example, at the Brookings Conferences (1969) and on other such occasions).



REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN ALASKA

Prepared by
Gillian Smythe

Historical Perspective

Before Statehood, government organization within Alaska was in its infancy. The powers of the territorial legislature were limited by federal law, as were those of local government. At Statehood, Alaska had only about 30 incorporated cities and 15 special districts (8 independent school districts, 1 incorporated school district and 6 public utility districts), with most of the territory being outside any local government jurisdiction.

Although the relative lack of local government organization prior to Statehood hindered the early development of Alaska communities, its absence proved advantageous to the framers of the Constitution since they inherited few of the organizational problems which beset most local governments elsewhere in the nation and could therefore apply new concepts with relatively little opposition from entrenched interests.

The State Constitutional Convention set the framework for Alaska's present system of local government. As outlined in *Article X of the State Constitution*, local government in Alaska was to be carried out by as few as possible local governments exercising as many powers as practicable. Any duplication of tax levying jurisdictions was expressly prohibited. To carry out this overall purpose, all local government powers in Alaska were required to be vested in boroughs and cities.

The borough concept was developed to accommodate Alaska's special needs arising from its large physical size and small population. Boroughs were seen as regional governments covering large geographic areas with common economic, social and political interests but with boundaries established at the State level to reflect Statewide considerations. These local government units were seen

as providing all local services within their boundaries, including those on a service area basis where necessary, thus avoiding the problems of multiple taxing jurisdictions and overlapping independent districts. It was determined that the entire State should be divided into boroughs but that not all areas needed to be organized initially. Areas not organized would be part of the unorganized borough which would have the State Legislature serving as its assembly. The Legislature was to have the authority to exercise any power or function in an unorganized borough which the assembly could exercise in an organized borough, including the establishment of service areas.

The basic local government concepts outlined in the State Constitution were incorporated into the *Borough Act of 1961*. Under this Act, all special service districts were to be integrated with organized boroughs (or, in the case of some public utility districts, with cities) by July 1, 1963. Organized boroughs were to be formed through local initiative (with appropriate State review) and, upon incorporation, were required to assume areawide responsibilities for property tax assessment and collection, education, and planning and zoning. The assumption of additional powers, whether on an areawide or service area basis, was not mandatory but could be undertaken through local initiative.



Only one borough (Bristol Bay) incorporated before the July 1, 1963 deadline. In response, the State Legislature passed the *Mandatory Borough Act of 1963* which required the incorporation of boroughs as of January 1, 1964 in eight areas containing public utility and independent school districts. These areas were given the option of initiating incorporation and proposing borough boundaries themselves before the January 1, 1964 deadline (as was done in the Ketchikan, Sitka, Juneau and Kodiak Island areas) or being mandatorily incorporated by the State (the case in the Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai Peninsula and Matanuska-Susitna areas). Except for Juneau, all of the boroughs chose second class status (i.e. the weakest form of borough government at that time).

Since January 1, 1964, only two additional boroughs have been formed. The Haines Borough incorporated in 1968 after a "*third class borough*" amendment which allowed Haines to bring its independent school district into conformity with the Constitution without assuming any other burdens of local government. The North Slope Borough incorporated voluntarily as a home rule regional government in 1972. In addition, one other area is currently active in investigating the feasibility of incorporating as a borough — a 53,000 square mile region centered around Fort Yukon which includes 11 villages and a section of the Trans Alaska Pipeline.

Although only two new boroughs have been incorporated since 1964, the status of several primarily urban boroughs changed following the 1967 State legislature's action to permit the merger of organized boroughs and all cities within them to form a single unit of home rule government. Anchorage, Juneau and Sitka have since elected to become unified home rule municipalities.

Current Status

Of Alaska's 11 existing organized boroughs, 5 are centered around a major urban area (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan and Sitka) and 4 are regional units (Kodiak Island, Kenai Peninsula, Matanuska-Susitna and the North Slope Borough). The remaining 2 boroughs fit neither category. The Haines Borough is a semi-regional unit, while Bristol Bay Borough covers only a small physical area which includes three unincorporated villages and an Air Force base.

The 11 organized boroughs together cover an area of close to 150,000 square miles or about 25 percent of the State total. According to estimates provided by the Employment Security Division of the Alaska Department of Labor, the combined population of these organized boroughs in 1978 was 338,000 or slightly more than 80 percent of the State's total population. Thus, the unorganized borough accounts for about 75 percent of the State's area but only for around 20 percent of its resident population.

Although organized boroughs have their own problems, particularly where second class boroughs include home rule or first class cities, probably the most serious local government problem in Alaska today lies with the unorganized borough. Physically large but with a small and scattered population, a very large share of it being Alaska Natives residing in second class cities which have very limited sources of revenue or in unincorporated villages, the effective delivery of government programs and services in the unorganized borough has proven extremely difficult or simply impossible.

Other Perspectives

A number of legislative attempts have been made to solve the inequities of the existing regional government situation in Alaska. These inequities have generally been addressed either from the perspective of better delivery of government services or from that of the present absence of property taxation in the unorganized borough. The following major types of attempts have been unsuccessfully made:

1. Mandatory incorporation of the unorganized borough into organized borough units;
2. Creation of service areas in the unorganized borough;
3. Division of the unorganized borough into several unorganized borough units;
4. Imposition of a property tax in the unorganized borough.

A fifth type of legislative attempt was successful and resulted in the creation of what are essentially "semi-independent school districts" throughout the unorganized borough. As a result, delivery of education services in the unorganized borough has undergone a fundamental change.

Until recently, education services in the unorganized borough (except for home rule and first class cities) were provided by the Alaska State Operated School System and by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, provision of education services by a remote State and federal bureaucracy was not felt to be adequate for the needs of unorganized borough residents. With an absence of local government which could assume responsibility for education and because of a constitutional prohibition against independent school (and other special school) districts, a rural education system funded by the State (and the Bureau of Indian Affairs) but with local administrative and budgetary control was devised and passed as *Senate Bill 35* in 1975. A total of 21 Regional Educational Attendance Areas (REAA's) was established, each with its own elected school board. However, given the constitutional prohibition against the delegation of local government powers to any but cities and boroughs, the legal standing of REAA's is thought by many to be shaky. Furthermore, the establishment of similar types of single purpose entities to perform other services in the unorganized borough would be cumbersome and would probably be challenged in Court since the services would be provided without any local tax contribution.

In the absence of a regional government system, delivery of a range of federal programs in the unorganized borough is carried out by non-profit Native corporations. These include Native associations established before (and some after) passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act which primarily deliver programs in their regions or perform services with funds from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Department of Labor, as authorized by the federal Indian Self-Determination Act. Other specialized Native non-profit corporations have also been organized to deliver health care and to develop housing programs. This group of corporations, loosely referred to as the "non-profits" (as distinct from the regional and village corporations established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) has also been used by a number of State agencies for program delivery or for performance of specific projects in the unorganized borough.

Although the non-profit corporations perform a valuable service, it is very important to remember that they are not government entities. Furthermore, their activities are not confined to the unorganized borough since a significant share of their primary

clients, i.e. Alaska Natives, live in urban areas of the State. Thus, the non-profits should not be regarded as providing an answer to the lack of a delivery system for government programs in the unorganized borough.

Directions

Clearly, something needs to be done to carry out the concepts outlined in Article X of the State Constitution and to better serve the local government needs of a large physical area of Alaska. This writer proposes that future consideration be given to organizing the unorganized borough and, at the same time, making adjustments to the boundaries of some of the organized boroughs through the following actions:

1. Develop and refine a detailed map of the entire State divided into future organized borough units. Factors to be considered in addition to those specified in the Constitution and existing State law should include Native Corporation regional and sub-regional boundaries, existing organized borough boundaries, and others as appropriate. (However, where existing borough boundaries do not encompass areas which should logically be within their respective regions, as is clearly the case with the Haines and Bristol Bay Boroughs for example, existing boundaries should not be regarded as inviolate).
2. Request the State Assessor's office to assess the value of property in each of the proposed boroughs. This assessment should *not* include unused Native lands since they will not be subject to taxation until 1991 and possibly even later. Using population estimates developed by the Employment Security Division of the Alaska Department of Labor (or other appropriate measures), per capita property valuations should then be developed (as is presently done by the State Assessor each year for organized boroughs and for independent home rule and first class cities).
3. Concurrently, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs should also be requested to undertake an analysis of other potential sources of revenue available to these proposed borough units and to compare estimated total revenues available at different rates of taxation with probable needed levels of expenditure to provide the three mandatory areawide borough powers of assessment and collection of taxes, educa-

tion, and planning and zoning. This analysis should include a review of anticipated administrative costs since these would necessarily be high in large regions where villages are connected only by air. It should also analyze probable initial capital improvement-related costs.

4. Develop a formula by which the State could financially assist in the operation of the poorest of the proposed borough units. Even without detailed analysis, it is obvious that several proposed borough units would lack an adequate tax base to support the provision of minimum levels of service to their residents. Because of this, the contribution of State funds to the operation of several proposed boroughs, especially those in Western Alaska and parts of the Interior, would be necessary. There are several means by which this could be done. However, the most equitable would require some local property taxation (or other locally generated revenue) effort, with the level of State support related to the extent of local effort and total demonstrated need.

The relationship between property valuation and population provides a reasonably accurate measure of the financial ability of local government units. Thus, *a formula which related per capita valuation and local tax effort to determine the level of State support would seem to be equitable*. For example, if a proposed borough had only a \$5,000 per capita valuation and did not feel it could levy a property tax of more than 10 mills, the State could contribute funds to increase the effective per capita valuation to a more workable figure. Only in extraordinary cases, however, should State assistance exceed the level of local effort.

5. Once an equitable formula for determining State assistance has been developed, organization of the unorganized borough could be enacted by the State Legislature. Such legislation could probably have to mandate incorporation, similar to the Mandatory Borough Act of 1963. New boroughs should be at least second class government units as third class boroughs have little flexibility. In addition, all REAA's should be abolished and their functions assumed by borough school districts.

It may appear that the costs associated with organizing the unorganized borough are high and they certainly would be. However, the cost of the unorganized borough to the State is

already very high when the hidden costs of ineffective delivery of local government programs and the waste which accompanies this are considered. Furthermore, residents of what is now the unorganized borough would be making some local contribution toward basic school support whereas this cost is presently assumed entirely by the State. For their part, unorganized borough residents would be given a stronger voice in the delivery of programs in their regions and in the formulation of State programs. The State would be provided with a single Statewide system of local government as provided for in its Constitution.

It should be noted that State "subsidies" to newly organized units in what is now the unorganized borough are not necessarily a perpetual cost. Rather, they should be viewed as assistance until such time as the economic climate in these areas improves sufficiently to provide a tax base which is adequate to support needed local government services.

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Biographical Sketch

Gillian Smythe completed her formal education in Canada and New Zealand. Since 1965, she has worked on an extensive series of comprehensive plans for urban and rural Alaskan communities while employed with ASHA, as senior planner for the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs and as a principal of Alaska Consultants, Anchorage.

FUTURE FRONTIERS

Local Government in Alaska

by
Ginny Chitwood

Historical Perspective

The first non-native local control in Alaska was enforced by the Russian-American Company, chartered by the Russian government for fur trading. The Company had virtually limitless authority over the people within its jurisdiction.

After the United States purchased Alaska in 1867, there still was no legal authority to organize local government until 1900. In the meantime, the little law and order that existed was maintained by the military.

Two different times Sitka tried unsuccessfully to establish local control. Both governments were largely ignored and basically ineffective because there was no legal authority to back up the efforts at governing.

Although it didn't authorize the formation of local government, Congress did recognize the need to provide some governmental structure in the area by enacting the Organic Act of 1884. This Act extended Oregon laws and U.S. mining laws to Alaska.

Miners law, with miners meeting organizations, provided some limited local government to Alaska, especially after being sanctioned by the Organic Act of 1884, but it wasn't until 1900 that Congress passed an act authorizing the formation of cities. The Act of 1900 allowed area of 300 or more residents to petition for incorporation as first class cities, with a weak mayor form of government.

The Organic Act of 1912 granted territorial status to Alaska and authorized the creation of a territorial legislature. The legislature could enact laws relating to local government, but within a very restrictive framework established by Congress. The legislature

established second class cities, and later, third and fourth class cities. Counties, however, were not permitted unless approved by Congress, and it wasn't until 1943 that the city manager form of government was authorized.

In addition to cities, there were two other forms of local organization prior to statehood - school districts and public utility districts. Some of the school district boundaries coincided with city boundaries; others included suburban and rural areas as well.

With the adoption of the Alaska Constitution and statehood in 1959, the local government role expanded. Section 1 of Article X states, "The purpose of this article is to provide for maximum local self-government with a minimum of local government units, and to prevent duplication of tax-levying jurisdictions. A liberal construction shall be given to the powers of local government units."



Delegates attempted to avoid the problems of counties in the lower 48 by creating a new form of regional government which they called the "borough". Service areas within boroughs were authorized but they were to be controlled by the borough assembly.

Prior to statehood, what little power cities had was a direct grant from the legislature. With the adoption of the constitution came "home rule", which authorized cities and boroughs to adopt home rule charters, assuming all local government powers not prohibited by law or charter. In theory, this procedure allows local residents to devise the kind of government best suited for their area, within the broad guidelines set out by the Constitution and the legislature.

Over the years the courts have alternated between interpreting home rule powers broadly and narrowly. This inconsistency makes it difficult for local governments to evaluate their authority. The legislature further restricts home rule power each year by adding more sections to the law applying to home rule governments.

In 1961, the legislature started the process of implementing the regional government provisions of the Constitution by passing the Borough Act. Two years later after only one area, Bristol Bay, had incorporated, the Legislature adopted the Mandatory Borough Act, which set out eight areas for incorporation: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Matanuska-Susitna, and Sitka. Since that time, Haines and the North Slope have also formed boroughs.

A further refinement of the local government scene occurred in 1967 when the legislature authorized unification of a borough and any cities within it into a single unit of home rule local government. In 1970 the voters of the Juneau area adopted a charter consolidating the Greater Juneau Borough, the City of Juneau, and the City of Douglas into one municipality. Sitka unified next, followed by Anchorage.

Current Status

There presently are three unified municipalities, one home rule borough, six second class boroughs, one third class borough, eleven home rule cities, twenty-one first class cities, and one hundred and seven second class cities. In addition there is one federal

law town, Metlakatla, a native community on Annette Island. There are also many villages that are recognized by the federal government for purposes of implementing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, but have no legal standing in the State system.

Any first class city or borough may achieve home rule status with approval of a charter by its voters. The original first, second, and third class city designations have been combined as first class; the fourth class designation has been modified and is now labelled second class.

Over 80% of the State's population lives within an organized regional government (borough or unified municipality), yet the vast majority of the land mass is unorganized except for small pockets of city incorporations.

In the organized areas there are the traditional jurisdictional disputes: city vs borough, municipality vs school district, service area board vs assembly, etc. The major problem, however, facing municipalities appears to be an economic one - how to stimulate the economy to generate a tax base sufficient to support the services demanded by the residents.

In the unorganized areas, not only do the people have the economic problem, but they also have the problem of no infrastructure with which to plan for and deliver services.

Other Perspectives

The Alaska Municipal League is an organization that works on a continuing basis to improve local government in the State. Originally created in 1950 as the League of Alaska Cities, the League amended this constitution in 1962 to offer full rights and privileges of membership to boroughs and changed its name to its present one.

The League provides a forum whereby municipal officials may interchange ideas, experiences, and obtain expert advice. It also offers educational and training programs to its members throughout the year.

D 6 In addition, the League works to secure legislation that will be

beneficial to municipalities. For example, AML worked hard for legislation changing the Local Affairs Agency to the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, for the enactment of revenue sharing, and for the major rewrite of the municipal code that completely revised the mishmash of local government law that had been accumulating since 1900.

As an ongoing process, League members work with each other and the legislature to develop solutions to local government problems.

A one time only event, the "Conference of the Future of Alaska", sponsored by the Legislative Council in association with the Brookings Institution, examined many issues facing the state. This series of seminars was held after the state had received 900 million dollars from Prudhoe Bay and specifically addressed the question of what to do with that money.

Although local government was not a subject that was studied extensively, there was a general endorsement of the concept of revenue sharing to enable local governments to increase levels of local service, to fund a major portion of education costs and to relieve municipalities from present and new school construction debt.

The conference participants also agreed that whatever revenue sharing formula was used should ensure maximum local control on how the money was used. There was positive recognition of the need for people to be able to choose their own goals.

The conference also recognized the need for some kind of government structure in the unorganized borough in order to increase local determination in the rural areas. It recommended that the legislature devise some form of intermediate regional government with financing sufficient to make local control feasible.

A major force in the municipal arena is the Joint Senate and House Community and Regional Affairs Committee's Local Government Study, initiated earlier this year. The Joint Committee is co-chaired by Senator Arliss Sturgulewski and Representative Bill Parker. Legislators, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, and the Alaska Municipal League all have recognized the need

for an in depth study of municipal problems, municipal/state relationships, and the lack of local governmental structure in the unorganized borough.

Because of severe constraints dictated by the limited time between sessions, the committee decided to focus on the unorganized borough, asking the Municipal League to identify the concerns of the organized areas.

As a first step in developing legislative solutions to problems in the unorganized borough, the committee sponsored an intensive, two-day Local Government Symposium in Anchorage. In attendance were knowledgeable people from diverse backgrounds, such as native leaders, state administrators, municipal representatives, planning consultants, lawyers, legislators, and researchers from the university.

The second step of the committee's solution-oriented process was a series of public hearings in rural regional centers and associated villages. These hearings were recently completed, and preliminary recommendations may be available by the time Future Frontiers convenes.

Directions

According to a recent national survey of public attitudes on government and taxes conducted by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), people now believe they get more for their money from local government than from either the state or federal government. This is the first time since 1972, when ACIR began its annual poll, that local government has topped the list and indicates a trend toward a growing confidence in the level of government that is closest to them.

People now realize that the old saying, "You can't beat City Hall" is not true. With some effort it is possible to make a point on the city council or borough assembly level, but it is difficult to have an impact on Congress or even the State Legislature. This is not to say that federal or state legislators individually are unresponsive, but simply their large constituency and arena or responsibility precludes the individualized attention possible on the local level.

The increasing responsiveness of cities and boroughs to the needs of their residents unfortunately is not matched by an increasing ability to fund the services that are demanded. Local governments, for the most part, rely on the two most regressive taxes that there are - property and sales. Additionally, the state and federal monies that are necessary for survival frequently have so many strings attached that municipal officials are unable to use the funds to the best advantage of their constituents.

Substantially increasing state revenue sharing is one way to ease the problems facing municipalities and at the same time to allow an equitable distribution of the wealth generated by non-renewable resource development in Alaska. For the most part, the present structure of organized local government is adequate to deliver demanded services and respond to stated needs as long as funding is available and as long as traditional municipal powers are not eroded by the Legislature. (For example, platting powers that were diluted by the Legislature last session when dealing with the lands situation, should be fully restored to local government.)

Another way to ease the burden of the local tax payer is to provide a state income tax credit based on the amount of local taxes paid for school support. This credit would have the added benefit of balancing the cost of education between those who live in organized areas and those who do not.

What to do in the unorganized areas is less obvious. There is a growing demand for self determination but the economic viability of traditional local government in the unorganized borough is questionable. Hopefully from the results of the Joint Senate and House C&RA Committee's Local Government Study and from thoughts of Future Frontiers participants more knowledgeable than I on this subject will come ideas to form the basis of solutions to these complicated problems.

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Biography

Ginny Chitwood is Executive Director of the Alaska Municipal League. Formerly Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Assemblyman — City & Borough of Juneau; President, Board of Directors — Alaska Municipal League; Chairman — Greater Juneau Charter Commission.



ALASKAN EDUCATION

by the
Alaska Department of Education
Marshall L. Lind
Commissioner
and
Marilou Madden

Historical Perspective: Rather than outline the entire historical development of education in Alaska, this paper will focus on developments since the Conference on the Future of Alaska, held in 1969. As can be seen in the reports of the four seminars held as part of that conference, education emerged as one of the top, if not the top, priority concerns, and each of the four groups (Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta) urged greater state effort and expenditure in this area.

To understand some of the recommendations of the previous conference, it is necessary to briefly describe the organization, financing and scope of education in Alaska at the end of the last decade.

Organization: In the 1969-70 school year, Alaska's 85,500 school-aged children were educated by four distinct systems: the city/borough school districts, which accounted for about 70 percent of the students; the State Operated School System, which enrolled about 19 percent or most of the rural students, as well as on-base students; private schools, which accounted for about 2 percent of the total student population and the Bureau of Indian Affairs federal system which enrolled approximately 9 percent of the predominantly rural students.¹ City and borough school districts, as at present, were governed by boards of locally elected citizens. Neither the State Operated School System nor the Bureau of Indian Affairs system had access to local governing boards, although in some areas, local advisory boards were formed. The questions of multiple public systems and unequal local representation between urban and rural systems was highlighted by three of the four groups during the 1969 conference. Alpha group recommended, in its first priority, that "Rural education . . . be restructured in order that Native Alaskans as well as non-Natives may be equipped to choose

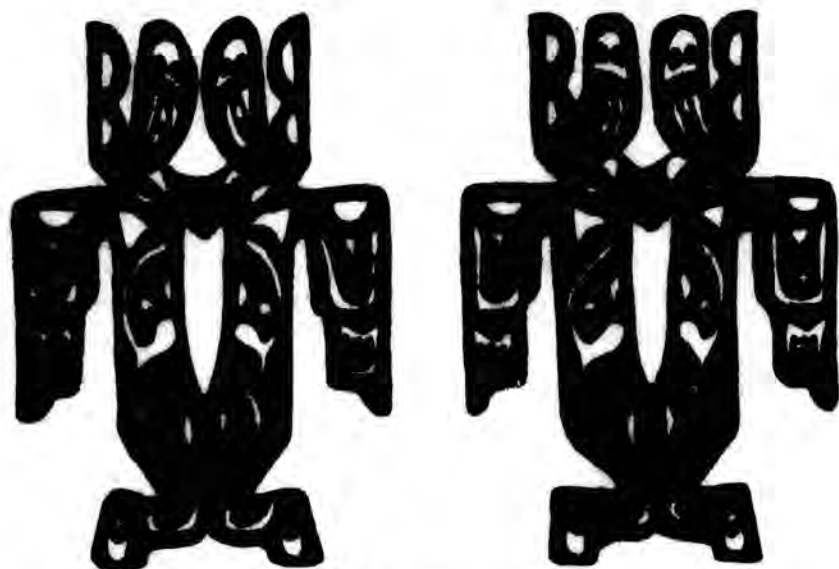
the life-style of their own seeking, a situation which does not now exist."²

Beta group urged that "In formulating educational programs, maximum local participation coupled with responsive and innovative methods . . . be sought. Beta group further urged the " . . . transfer of all BIA schools to the state as soon as it is feasible."³

Delta group, also under one of its highest priorities, stated that "Public school systems should be administered under local direction, thereby maintaining a culturally relevant curriculum in keeping with regional difference."⁴

Financing: Financing of public education during the period under discussion was as varied as the systems themselves. Although both city/borough school districts and the State Operated School System received state support, the methods for distribution and the percentage of total costs assumed by the state varied widely. For city/borough school districts, state support was distributed through a fairly complex formula which calculated allowable numbers of teachers, administrators, custodial and support staff. Some consideration was given to higher costs by adjusting funding for each of four areas of the state: Central, Northwest, Southcentral and Southeastern. Districts' total budgets were approved by the Department, and allowable costs calculated. Statewide, the city/borough districts received about 69 percent of their total operating costs from the state, the remainder being raised from local and federal sources, with the primary source local property taxes. The total budget for the State Operated School System appeared as a separate line item in the Department of Education's budget. Budget requests were made to the legislature on the basis of historical expenditure information rather than calculated by any formula. Revenues came entirely from the state, with the exception of limited federal program funds. In contrast, the BIA system, as is still the case, was funded entirely by Congressional appropriation. Again, appropriation requests appear to have been made on the basis of historical expenditures rather than on a formula. Private schools, obviously, were and continue to be funded by tuition and private contributions.

Capitol construction costs were also handled in diverse ways. City/borough school districts built on the basis of locally generated



revenue; SOS schools were fully financed by the state; BIA construction funds came as a direct Congressional appropriation.

Participants at the previous conference had several recommendations concerning public school financing; both for operation and capital construction. Beta group "urge(d) the legislature to increase substantially its financial aid to school districts, specifically considering the relief of local government from its present school construction debt and the cost of new school construction on a basis which is equitable between local governments."⁵ Delta group recommended that "... the state ... immediately assume responsibility for setting uniform minimal educational standards and assume full responsibility for the attainment of those standards."⁶ Although the recommendation does not specifically refer to finances, the call to the state to assume full responsibility can be interpreted to imply full fiscal responsibility. Alpha group recommended that the "... state ... fund a major portion of educational costs through revenue sharing while leaving school control in local hands."⁷

Scope: In the context of this paper, scope of the educational system refers both to level (e.g., elementary, secondary, postsecondary, adult) and to special services (e.g., bicultural, vocational,

special education).

As is the case with both organization and financing, difference in scope existed between city/borough school districts in the more urban areas and the SOS/BIA systems in rural Alaska. By the 1969-70 school year, all city/borough districts in the state offered elementary and secondary programs; many offered kindergarten as well. By contrast, SOS operated few high school programs in the whole of the Unorganized Borough and BIA offered one in-state program at Mt. Edgecumbe. Almost without exception, rural students left their villages to attend high school, many traveling to BIA high schools in the "Lower 48." Although most of these students attended large boarding schools, some were beginning to be placed in boarding homes, particularly in Anchorage, under the State's Boarding Home program. Although the 1962 Community College Act had extended postsecondary opportunities to adult citizens in the urban centers of the state, at the end of the last decade access to adult basic education or continuind education services was limited, particularly in the rural areas.

The previous conference participants had much to recommend concerning the extension of education, at all levels, to all citizens of the state. Of special concern to the Alpha group was "... no kindergarten and an inadequate secondary school system for rural Alaska."⁸ It recommended two remedies: First, "There should be regional schools with boarding facilities so that Native children (and others in remote areas) need not be sent outside the state for schooling. Opportunity should remain for rural children to attend urban schools through a program like the present Foster Home arrangements."⁹ Second, Alpha group recommended that "... there should be preschool training in all urban and rural schools."¹⁰

Beta group urged the state "... to upgrade the value of Alaska's educational system and broaden its influence, particularly in rural Alaska."¹¹ In its final recommendations, the group recommended that "Secondary education, particularly for Native Alaskans, should be responsive to their needs, easy to assimilate and adaptable to technological demands."¹² This group also gave a high priority for legislative funding to the "state community college complex and extension program."¹³

Gamma group suggested that "... schools near Natives' homes (are) important, at least through high school, when family relationships are important."¹⁴ This group also, in its strongest statement on education, called for the state to provide "... a tuition and fee-free opportunity for each resident of Alaska to attend pre-school, elementary and secondary schools — including vocational and technical training — as well as institutions of higher learning through the B.A. degree. This also includes funding for transportation and subsistence, where necessary."¹⁵

Delta group made the most extensive recommendations concerning the expanded scope of Alaska's public school system. It called for: 1) "... developmental education of the highest quality ... available during the early years of all Alaskan children using state funds where or when necessary; 2) free schooling through two years of post-high school education within Alaska; 3) liberal availability of subsidies for those students who have demonstrated competence to continue purposeful education at higher levels; and 4) a vigorous policy of continuing adult education in a broad spectrum of fields which encompass academic and non-academic interests."¹⁶

As mentioned above, scope of the educational program can also refer to the richness or diversity of content area and to ways in which programs accommodate special student needs. By 1969, the state had enacted legislation concerning the provision of vocational secondary education and special education for students with various handicapping conditions. Again, provision of such programs and services varied widely between urban and rural Alaska. For the 1969-70 school years, the state expended about \$3,000,000 on vocational educational programs. Although comparable figures are not available, because of the limited secondary education opportunities available in rural Alaska, it can be assumed that vocational education opportunities were severely limited if not non-existent. Rural residents who attended school at Mt. Edgecumbe, outside BIA boarding schools, or Anchorage high schools through the Boarding Home program did have access to vocational education, but hard data on costs or numbers of students so served are not available. It is probably accurate to suggest that vocational education opportunities at the secondary level were limited to students of major urban areas and that much of the support for such programs came from local sources or through the federal Vocational Education Act. The Community College Act of 1962 did make

provisions for the offering of non-degree adult vocational education classes, in conjunction with the local school district, and for offering degree adult vocational education, in conjunction with the University; however, the extent to which such courses were being offered is unknown since no uniform data collection system was in place.

By the end of the 1960's special educational programs for handicapped students were being offered, to some degree at least, in most of the city/borough school districts. During the 1969-70 school years, such districts served 1,232 students; by contrast, the SOS system reported only 80 students served. Again, accurate data is not available concerning the extent to which such services were provided by BIA. However, as late as this current school year (1979-80), BIA schools in the state are providing limited special education programs, despite a massive national effort to expand such programs, so one may assume that programs were either extremely limited or non-existent ten years ago.

Participants at the previous conference recognized the limitations of the then existing programs in vocational and special education and made the following recommendations. Gamma group emphasized the need for vocational education, particularly in the areas of fisheries and oceanography. Alpha group called for expanded state support of vocational education, with special reference to training for Alaskan industries. Alpha group also called for expanded special education services and recommended state support for "special education problem centers, particularly for rural Alaskans."¹⁷

Beta group focused its attention primarily on postsecondary technical training and urged that all citizens have access to free postsecondary education, at least for two years. Gamma group also addressed vocational-technical education needs by calling for free postsecondary education, both vocational and degree oriented.

Although only one group (Alpha) spoke to the needs of handicapped students, several groups (Alpha, Beta and Delta) spoke to the need for culturally relevant curricula and materials and for programs to accommodate students with problems in English proficiency. Since at the time of the conference the state did not legislate bil-

ingual/bicultural programs, the extent to which such were offered in any of the school systems is unknown. Again, however, data collected for later years shows little activity except through SOS, so that one may assume that such programs were virtually non-existent at the time of the conference report.

Other conditions: Several other conditions existed in Alaska and nationwide ten years ago which impacted the scope and quality of education programs and which have changed considerably during the past ten years. First is the role played by the federal government in the funding and policy direction of educational programs, both nationally and in Alaska. In 1969, this role was a relatively minor one, as federal attention and intervention focused primarily on expanding educational services to low-income children, with some minor attention to the improvement of school libraries and to development of innovative educational projects. By the 1969-70 school year, all city/borough school districts as well as SOS received some federal aid although that federal aid amounted to only 8.8 percent of the total statewide expenditures for education.

Second, school districts were not required to negotiate with certificated personnel, the establishment of salary schedules being left up to local boards, although statewide minimum salaries were set through statute for each of the four regional areas.



Third, staff turnover, both at the administrative and teacher levels, was extremely high in all areas of the state. Although no accurate figures are available, it is estimated that between the 1968-69 and 1969-70 school years over 30 percent of urban staff had moved either out of state or to other districts within state and up to 60 percent of rural (SOS) teachers had left or taken new positions. Information is not available for BIA schools, but it seems likely that this system also experienced a large staff turnover either between BIA school sites or out of the system altogether. The adverse programmatic effects of large staff turnover, particularly the effects on program continuity and responsiveness to local needs, was addressed indirectly by Alpha group in the previous convention. This group recommended that the state: a) foster and support the use of local village residents as aides; b) increase the number of Native Alaskans in the teaching profession; and c) develop a teacher cross-cultural orientation program for all new urban as well as rural teachers.

Fourth, at the end of the last decade, the lack of adequate communication and transportation networks continued to be a major problem. Again, participants of the previous conference recognized this problem and called for the development of such networks, not only for economic development but to increase educational opportunity. Gamma group saw such development as "almost co-important and often intertwined with education."¹⁸ Alpha group suggested that areas of importance for the future "include the use of teaching tools such as satellite television,"¹⁹ while Beta group called for the "implementation of educational television."²⁰ Although in 1969 the state, particularly SOS, was planning experimental educational use of ATS-1, and audio-only communication satellite, educational uses of telecommunications and computer technology was non-existent.

Finally, the education system at the end of the last decade was feeling the effects of the general development of the state in terms of continued and steady growth in the student population. Between the 1967-68 and the 1968-69 school years, total enrollment in state public school (city/borough and SOS) climbed from 67,808 to 72,526, or an increase of about 7 percent. By the 1969-70 school year, the same population had grown to 76,000 for a total increase over the two-year period of over 12 percent. By contrast, enrollment in private school dropped from 2,242 in 1967-68 to 1,923 in 1968-69. It

dropped further in 1969-70 to 1,656, for a two-year decrease of over 28 percent. BIA enrollments for the same two-year period went from 6,449 to 7,697, or an increase of over 18 percent. With the relatively small numbers involved, drastic changes in percentage points can reflect the movement of only a few pupils; however, by 1969 a trend of increased public school enrollments and declining private school enrollments seems rather clear.

Current Status

With the above brief overview of educational conditions at the end of the last decade, we will move to a discussion of the current status of Alaskan education, using the same outline as above. In order to clarify some of the existing conditions, it will be necessary to refer at times to state or federal actions and activities which have taken place throughout the ensuing decade, and which account for the sometimes considerable differences between the present and ten years ago.

Organization: As mentioned above, education in Alaska in 1969 was reorganized into four separate systems, characterized by diverse methods of governance and finance. It should also be remembered that a major concern of the time was the lack of local decision-making and representation in rural education, as well as the continued existence of a federal system of education (BIA) in rural Alaska. These concerns came to a head in 1975, when the legislature mandated a massive reorganization of state supported rural education through the passage of an Act Related to Education in the Unorganized Borough. The act, which became effective on July 1, 1976, created 21 new school districts, or Regional Educational Attendance Areas, in the Unorganized Borough, replacing the former SOS system. This act delegated to REAA school boards all rights and privileges of school boards of city/borough school districts and had the effect of placing most public elementary and secondary education in Alaska (with the exception of BIA) under one governance system. The act revived the turn over of BIA schools to state control, a trend which had begun in 1962 under an overall plan for rural education and which ceased in 1971. In the 1976-77 school year, nine former BIA schools came under REAA control. Several new turn overs have occurred in the past three school years and the number of children attending BIA schools in

the state has decreased from 7,697 in 1969-70 school year to 2,999 in the 1978-79 school year (the last year for which statistics are available), representing a 61 percent decrease in enrollment. Put another way, in 1969-70, BIA enrollments accounted for about 9 percent of the total state student population; in 1978-79, they accounted for about 3 percent. Further turn overs will depend on the full implementation in Alaska of Native options under the federal Indian Self-Determination Act (P.L. 93-638) which allows Native groups a variety of governance options within the BIA educational system.

As mentioned above, in the 1969-70 school year, private schools accounted for about 2 percent of the total state student population. By 1971-72, private school enrollments had shrunk to 1,534 (or about 1 percent of the total); the lowest figures since the 1967-68 school year. During the 1972-73 school year, however, private school enrollments had begun to increase, peaking in 1977-78 when their 3,149 students accounted for more than 3 percent of the total and when private school enrollments, for the first time, exceeded those of BIA.

The 1978-79 school year showed a slight decrease (three-tenths of one percent) in private school enrollments, but with the establishment of several new private schools for the 1979-80 school year, enrollments are expected to increase again.

Currently, then, Alaska continues to have a dual system of public education: local districts, both city/borough and REAAs and the BIA. However, the numbers of students attending schools under the direction of a locally elected board have increased dramatically to the point that the earlier vision of a single system of public education for the state has been virtually accomplished.

Financing: Another major concern at the turn of the decade was the inadequacy and inequality of state support for public education. Two major events occurred in the 1970's to significantly alter, if not entirely erase, the problem. The first major event was the complete revision of the Public School Foundation Act in 1970. Although too complex to fully discuss here, the act had three major components. First, it described the state's fiscal responsibility in terms of basic need; that is, on a calculation of costs associated with the education of certain groups of students. In doing so, it attempted to tie

state support to program components as opposed to staffing patterns as had been done in the past. It also greatly simplified the calculation process while at the same time left maximum flexibility with the local school board in deciding how educational revenues would be spent. Second, it increased the state's share of total educational costs from the previous 69 percent level to about 78 percent. Third, it took into account the relative ability of districts to generate local funds by requiring a contribution to basic need from 10 percent to 0.1 percent or less, based on the local ability to pay.

In addition to these general components which affected all districts, the 1970 foundation act also recognized the added costs of special programs by providing additional state support to vocational and special education programs. Finally, it took into account the differing costs of doing business by allowing eight area differentials instead of the previous four.

In a related piece of legislation enacted in 1970, the state established a debt retirement system to provide partial state reimbursement to local districts for capital expenditures for education.

The second major event affecting school finance was the Act Related to Education in the Unorganized Borough, referred to above, which placed state financial support for rural education, for the first time in the state's history, on the same footing as city/borough districts. Since July 1, 1976, the REAAs have been financed under the same formulae as the cities/boroughs with the difference that the state picks up 100 percent of the basic need in recognition of the fact that there is no taxing authority for the Unorganized Borough. In addition, the state compensates for this lack of local revenue by distributing to each REAA an amount of state funds for each REAA student equal to the average per pupil local contribution of the city/borough districts. With these two exceptions, however, we have achieved, at this point in the state's history, the goal of consistent distribution of state educational support to both urban and rural students. Whether or not the current system is entirely equitable, however, is a question which is receiving much consideration at this point in time. Although the formulae for distribution are essentially the same for both city/borough and REAA districts, certain facets of the current foundation program disequalize rather than equalize state support. There appear to be three major concerns, although others are beginning to surface as

studies of the current foundation program progress. The first is that many of the small city districts have a correspondingly small ability to raise local revenues. Although some compensation for limited ability to pay is allowed in the current formula, city/borough school districts can only approach, but never reach, 100 percent state funding of basic need. In addition, no city/borough school district receives the per pupil "in lieu of local tax" payments currently available to REAAs, although many districts cannot raise, through local sources, an amount per pupil anywhere near the current state average of \$710. Thus, in absolute terms, less wealthy school districts can never achieve the amount of funds available to REAAs.

Second, no city/borough can achieve 100 percent state support of basic need. In addition, the calculation of basic need appears to have become less workable as a description of the normal operating costs of a district, in that it is not unusual, particularly in the larger districts, that the state share funds only between 60 percent to 80 percent of the total school budget; this, although the state's minimum share of basic need has increased from 90 percent in 1970 to 97 percent in 1977, is where it remains today.

Finally, although the foundation program does take into account a district's ability to pay from local resources, it does so over a very narrow percentage spread (i.e., 3 percent, the difference between 97 percent and 100 percent state funding of basic need). Such a small percentage spread does not begin to equalize the vast differences in local wealth among the organized cities and boroughs of the state.

The change in the foundation program, like the Act Relating to Education in the Unorganized Borough, affected only state controlled programs. It did not, of course, alter the financial support structure for the BIA schools. At the present time, such schools continue to be funded by a direct Congressional appropriation which takes little if any account of the similarities or differences between BIA per pupil expenditures and per pupil expenditures of REAA districts serving a like population. Although data is not available to allow for a comparison, it seems likely that there is a disparity between expenditures of BIA for elementary services and the expenditures of an REAA district for similar programs in a neighboring village. This statement is not meant to imply that the BIA necessarily spends less per pupil than the REAA, but only to indicate that there is no

current system to assure the BIA and REAA students have equal access to educational resources.

One final point needs to be made concerning the current status of public school financing in the state. As mentioned above, a state supported debt retirement program for city/borough school districts was initiated in 1970. At that time, a district could be reimbursed up to 50 percent of "... payments made by the borough or city during the fiscal year two years earlier for the retirement of principal and interest on outstanding bonds, notes or other indebtedness incurred ... to pay costs of school construction."²¹ In 1978, the minimum percentage of state support for approved school construction was raised to 80 percent. On the other hand, school construction for the REAAs, as part of the Unorganized Borough, is financed entirely by the state, either through the sale of state voter-approved bonds, or, as in 1978, through a direct cash appropriation by the legislature. In any case, there currently exists a disparity between the state support for rural, REAA construction which is at 100 percent of costs, and that of state support for city/borough school construction which, at a maximum is supported at 80 percent, and this only as a two-year delayed reimbursement of expenditures already made by the city/borough.

Scope: Several major changes occurred in the current decade to change the scope of public education in Alaska, in terms both of levels and of special programs.

As will be recalled from the earlier historical overview, a major concern in 1969 was the provision of secondary school programs for rural Alaskans. It will also be remembered that at least one group called for the establishment of regional high schools in the state to decrease the number of students, particularly Native Alaskans, who had to leave the state for secondary programs. And indeed, by 1970 the state had constructed three regional high schools; at Nome, Bethel and Kodiak. However, during that same period, a major effort was initiated to compel the state to provide secondary programs in each village which desired such. This effort came to a head in 1972 with the class action suit, *Molly Hootch, et al. vs. Marshall Lind et al.*, filed on behalf of rural secondary residents who did not have local access to secondary programs. Although the court did not rule that access to local secondary programs was a constitutional right of all citizens, a subsequent out-of-court settlement bound the state

to construct facilities and finance the operation of partial or 4 year secondary school programs in any village which formally requested such a program. To date, the state has committed in excess of \$90,000,000 for construction of high school facilities or modified elementary school facilities to allow secondary programs to be added in 77 villages.

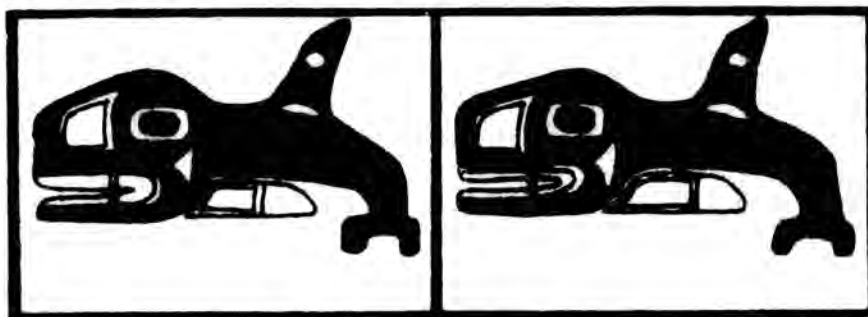
Also singled out for attention by the earlier convention was the need for expansion, both down to preelementary and upward, to adult programs. Again, several changes have taken place in the last decade. Almost all city/borough school districts and REAAs have established kindergarten programs; some REAAs also provide limited preschool, although, as in 1969, most public preschool programs in the state are run by RuRal CAP under the Head Start program. However, in 1974 the legislature amended the Education for Exceptional Children Act to extend state support for special education services to children "... who are at least three years of age and for whom the regular school facilities are inadequate or not available."²² Currently, around 350 children between the ages of three and five are being served by 16 local school districts throughout the state.

The current status of adult programs, on the other hand, has changed significantly from the end of the last decade. Adults enrolled in Adult Basic Education courses, that is, those who did not complete a regular elementary program, jumped from 2,780 in FY '75 (the first year for which reliable data is available) to 5,500 in FY '79. Adults completing the General Educational Development program, which leads to the equivalent of a high school diploma, rose from 1,840 in FY '75 to 3,252 in FY '79. Although several major regions of the state still do not have access to ABE or GED programs, financial support of the programs, which is mainly state with some federal contribution, has gone from \$680,000 in FY '75 to \$1,172,000 in FY '79.

The earlier conference also spoke to the need to extend adult vocational and degree related educational opportunities. Although the growth of postsecondary education through the university system is beyond the scope of this paper, it should be noted here that the community college system, through its several campuses and extension centers, offers both degree and non-degree programs in 21 communities of the state; such programs include both voca-

tional and academic courses.

Two other training and continuing educational resources are currently in place which were not available in 1969. In January, 1970, the Alaska Skill Center at Seward was established to provide high quality, non-degree vocational training to Alaskan citizens. Although initially started with federal Manpower Development and Training Act funds to service only the unemployed or underemployed of the state, in FY '78 the Skill Center opened its programs, on a tuition basis, to any citizen of the state, regardless of family or personal income. At the present time, approximately one-third of the Skill Center students pay their own educational costs. During the 1979 legislative session, funds were allocated to the Department of Education to establish a similar center in Anchorage. The Anchorage program has not yet begun, so it is too early to predict whether or not this extension program will succeed.



The second adult education resource was created in 1975 when the legislature passed the Community Schools Act. Although never fully funded, the act did provide some state support to local school districts for the purpose of providing continuing educational opportunities to local adult citizens through the extended use of public school facilities. Currently operating in about 180 school sites in 34 districts on a state appropriation of 1.2 million dollars, the Community Schools Act has succeeded in extending access to at least avocational education to a significant percentage of adults throughout the state. To date, community school funds have not been used to a great extent to provide vocational training, which, as will be recalled from the earlier historical overview, was felt to be a major educational need in 1969. For all practical purposes, locally available vocational training or upgrading programs for adults are

still limited to those citizens with access to a local community college, extension center or the Alaska Skill Center.

One other recommendation of the earlier conference has been partially addressed in the ensuing decade; that of state support to individuals pursuing postsecondary education. As will be recalled, several of the groups called for tuition and fee-free public education for at least two years after high school. To date, nothing has been accomplished in this area, although it has continued to be suggested by individuals and groups at various times over the past ten years, the most recent being a bill introduced in the last legislative session which would have allowed, on a pilot basis, state support for grades 13 and 14 run by local districts.

While the state has not waived tuition and fee requirements for postsecondary education, it did establish, in 1971, a Student Loan program, which "... provided low cost educational loans to Alaskan students enrolled in undergraduate, graduate or career degree programs. These need-based loans offer the recipient a ten-year repayment period at an annual interest of 5 percent ... An incentive, in the form of up to a 40% cancellation is offered to those individuals who work in Alaska after completion of their programs of study." Through the 1978 fiscal year, nearly twelve thousand loans were awarded to students, of who 4,396 attended programs in state and 7,460 attended out of state. In all, approximately \$22,000,000 had been granted, up until FY '78, with an additional \$5,000,000 and \$8,150,000 appropriated for FY '79 and FY '80 respectively.

In the historical overview, we examined a second facet of "scope" — i.e., the provision of programs which are specialized either in content or by the particular needs of the target student population. We indicated that, in 1969, the two most widespread programs under this definition of scope were vocational education and special education, both of which were cited by the earlier convention participants as areas in need of expansion. These two programs received considerably more state support through the revised foundation program enacted in 1970. Such services were similarly extended to rural Alaska with the creation of the REAAs and the concomitant extension of state categorical funds, on a formula basis, to these new school districts. At present, all but two school districts in the state offer some vocational education at the secondary level at a cost, in the 1978-79 school year (the last year for

which data is available) in excess of 13 million dollars. While the quality and breadth of some of these programs may be limited by lack of facilities and of a sufficiently large student body, it is probably safe to say that most secondary students in the state have some access to occupational training and job preparation.

Similarly, all but one school district in the state offer special education programs, at least at the elementary level, for students who, because of handicapping conditions, cannot access the regular educational program without special services. Programs for special students at the secondary level are not as well developed, although considerable attention is now being given by districts to strengthening such programs. During the 1978-79 school year approximately 6,500 students were served, at a state cost of \$22,000,000.

The relatively phenomenal growth in the numbers of special education students serviced from school year 1969-70 to school year 1978-79 can be attributed to several things; first, the continual strengthening of state legislation concerning education of exceptional children coupled with increased state support and the massive federal effort in the area, stemming from the passage by Congress in 1975 of P.L. 94-142, which stated the right of each handicapped child to a free, appropriate education.

In our historical overview, we mentioned the concern in 1969 over the state's responsibility to Alaskan Natives, particularly in the area of secondary school programs, but also for the provision of culturally relevant curricula and materials. During the middle years of the current decade, this concern became intensified in the state through the action of the federal Office for Civil Rights which insisted on the state's responsibility to provide equitable educational services to children who either did not speak English when entering school or who came from a family whose primary language was other than English. Negotiations with the Office for Civil Rights led to the expansion of the state's Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act.

First enacted in 1972 to serve non-English speaking students in the Unorganized Borough only, the act was extended in 1978 to both require and fund, through state sources, programs for non-English and limited English speaking students in all districts. Although

originally conceived, by both the 1975 legislature and the Office for Civil Rights, as a program designed primarily to serve Alaskan Native students, the Bilingual-Bicultural education fund in FY '79 supported programs in 26 of the 51 districts, reaching students from 63 language backgrounds, of which only 14 were Alaskan Native languages or dialects.

One other special student population has been singled out for additional attention and funding in the ten years since 1969. In 1975 the Education of Exceptional Children Act was amended to include gifted and talented children and to extend state support for programs to serve them. Currently, 32 districts offer programs which affect a total of 2,200 students; efforts are now underway to establish such programs in all districts within the next several years.

Other Considerations: In the historical overview, five other conditions were listed which prevailed at the time of the first convention and which had direct or indirect impact on Alaskan education. The first was the essentially passive role of the federal government in both educational funding and policy direction. During the ensuing decade, we have witnessed an active and increasingly pervasive federal intervention into education, primarily as an advocate of and enforcer for the provision of equal educational opportunity for various individuals and minority groups. Although the state has not experienced federal intervention in the area of race desegregation — a major issue nationwide — as was mentioned above, the federal government either by direct legislation, as in the case of special education's P.L. 94-142 or through its civil rights enforcement arm, as in the case of bilingual-bicultural education, has become an increasingly active partner (or adversary) in the realm of state and local policy decision making.

Without judging the desirability of this more active role, it is necessary to point out that through increased funding, monitoring or data reporting requirements, the federal government now much more directly controls and shapes the state's educational programs than was envisioned by the participants of the 1969 conference, or perhaps by anyone in the state at that time. Worthy of note is that federal influence has continued to grow, at the same time that federal funds to support educational programs has remained fairly limited. Funds flowing to school districts under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1964, the federal government's major

contribution to education, amounted to \$1,851,000 in FY 1970 as compared to \$7,323,000 in FY 1979, or about 6 percent of current instructional program costs. Other sources of federal support show similar narrow impact.

A second condition which has undergone major change in the past decade is that of teacher/board relations. The Negotiation and Mediation Act, which requires each city/borough school board to "... negotiate with its certified employees in good faith on matters pertaining to their employment and the fulfillment of their professional duties" 24 was passed in 1970 and extended to REAA boards in 1975. Partly as a function of this act, although partly too as a function of inflation, teacher salaries have continued to rise from a statewide average of \$10,560 in 1969-70 to \$45,323 in 1978-79, an increase of 125 percent, while the salaries of all professional school personnel (teachers, principals, superintendents) rose 129 percent from \$11,109 in 1969-70 to \$25,456 in 1978-79.

Negotiations have brought about other changes since 1969 over and above salary increases. Certainly, the recent Anchorage teacher strike would have seemed unlikely if not unthinkable in 1969. Whether one considers the cumulative effects of mandated negotiations to be positive or negative, the impact on school district finances, operations and decision making is significant.

A third condition which was mentioned in the historical overview was the high rate of staff turnover in the state, particularly among teachers but also among other professional and administrative staff, with its concomitant adverse effects on program continuity and cultural responsiveness. Although statistics on teacher turnover for the 1978-79 school year indicate an 18.5 percent turnover statewide, conditions differ widely between larger urban districts and rural areas, whether REAAs or small city/borough districts. For the six largest urban areas, from 1977 to 1978, all but Anchorage had turnover rates well below 20 percent; between 1978-79, the same areas, with the exception of Anchorage (for which data is not available), experienced a turnover rate of around 10 percent. As with student population shifts, staff turnover percentages in the smaller districts are based on very small numbers, so that a change in one or two staff members can result in a high percentage increase; therefore, it is difficult to interpret with much accuracy the conditions in rural Alaska. With this in mind, however, figures show that

turnover among all of the REAAs fell from 28 percent between 1977-78 to 24 percent in 1978-79. In only three cases did turnover rise significantly between these two school years; in most cases, the drop was significant. Given the continued housing problems in rural Alaska, in rural city/borough districts as well as REAAs, a turnover rate of around 25 percent a year is probably not unreasonable, particularly as most districts continue to need to recruit from outside local residents.

While it is still too soon to tell if turnover rates will continue to stabilize in rural Alaska, the trend in urban Alaska toward less turnover seems quite clear, and will no doubt continue as long as the job market for teachers outside as well as in urban Alaska remains glutted. The programmatic and fiscal implication of this will be discussed in the next section of this paper which deals with probably future development in education in the state.

A fourth condition discussed above was the lack of adequate communication and transportation networks, particularly in rural Alaska. Again, although the problem is a long way from being solved, considerable changes have taken place in the past decade, at least in the area of education. In 1969, very limited educational uses were being planned for ATS-1, a two-way audio-only communication satellite which linked Alaska, the "Lower 48" and several of the Pacific Rim countries. In 1975, Alaska became one of three major experimental sites for the ATS-6 satellite, a two-way video-audio satellite which covered the "Lower 48" and some parts of Alaska. Under a grant from the National Institute of Education, the state mounted three educational experiments: two dealt with the use of one-way live video transmission of classroom educational television and one dealt with an open-ended "teacher forum" utilizing both one-way video and two-way audio. Although the experiments had some positive impact, the greatest lessons were negative; i.e., about what *didn't* work or what was *not* cost-effective. Overall, the experiments seemed to indicate the following: 1) Live video transmission did not have a significant educational advantage over time-delayed transmission or video tapes, partly because the different time zones covered by the satellite footprint made it virtually impossible to deliver the classroom programming at times appropriate to all areas of the state. 2) Alaskan produced educational video programming appeared to have some educational advantage over programs produced outside, but the advantage was slight, par-

ticularly when the cost differences between producing and purchasing already produced materials was taken into account. 3) Many teachers were unable or unwilling to use ETV without additional training. 4) The use of two-way video, although not tried experimentally in an educational setting, was shown, through experiments in the medical field, to be prohibitively expensive and probably of limited educational value. 5) The more sophisticated the equipment, the more likely that breakdowns will occur which cannot be handled readily within the village. Throughout the experiment, repeated equipment failure was a significant deterrent from using the system. 6) The audio-only use of the system was severely limited, partly because of equipment failure, partly because of uneven quality of the transmission, and partly because the nature of the communication required a written rather than a verbal response. The ATS-6 experiment lasted less than one calendar year, after which the satellite was moved and further work became impossible.

All of the above rather negative findings were taken into account when, in 1977, the state received a major 3-year grant from the National Institute of Education to further experiment with the educational uses of telecommunication. For this grant period, activities were not tied to an experimental satellite so that the state could begin to look at educational uses of existing telecommunications networks, specifically long-line transmission. This decision limited experimentation to the areas of data transmission (including written messages as well as numerical data) and ruled out further experimentation with video transmission. However, as will be discussed later, other telecommunication systems were being developed by the state which could be and have been used for the transmission of instructional and educational television.

The NIE telecommunications project focuses on two major areas: 1) administrative uses of telecommunications, and 2) classroom applications of telecommunications technology. Activity in the first area has led to the development of a computer-based communications network which links each school district's administrative office with the Department of Education and with other districts. Now in full operation, the communication system has two current uses: 1) the Electronic Mail System which allows for almost instant transmission of written messages to any or all network participants, and 2) the Alaska Knowledge Base, which allows educational practitioners around the state to access a large information file which in-

cludes research findings, descriptions of successful programs in most content areas, names and resumes of Alaskan educational experts and descriptions of public and private agencies which provide assistance to local schools. Over the next year, the system will be expanded to allow the system to collect statistical information from districts about finances, student populations, facilities, etc. In addition to its data transmission capabilities, the equipment in each school district is also available for a variety of small computer operations, such as accounting and student recordkeeping, for the district's own internal use.

Although the EMS system has been fully on-line only since early fall of 1979, the number of messages transmitted since September exceeds 4,200. The short turn-around time between message and response has made it ideal for communications about grants, meetings, administrative problems, etc. As district personnel become more accustomed to using this alternative to the letter and telephone, use is expected to increase tremendously.

The second application under the NIE grant, that of instructional uses of telecommunication technology, is currently in the pilot test stage in seven districts. The educational content focuses on Alaskan History and ninth grade English at the secondary school level. The delivery system utilizes interactive computer time for programmed instruction, supporting written, audio and visual materials and a master teacher located in a centralized area. Although initial development costs-per-course are fairly high, the experiment will attempt to develop processes which will significantly decrease the developmental costs of subsequent courseware.

Of major importance and difference between the current instructional experimentation and that mounted over ATS-6 is that the current effort is individualized rather than group based; that it is time-independent in terms of transmission; and that it uses a variety of instructional techniques rather than relying only on video.

In the area of instructional television, significant changes have also occurred since 1969. Again, the current situation has developed with attention to the findings of the ATS-6 experiment. The current situation relies on the state-supported satellite network which currently serves 42 villages in rural Alaska with direct broadcast, delivering both prime time commercial television and about six hours per school day of instructional television. A major effort

has been made to identify and utilize already-produced instructional television series and programs which can be adapted to Alaska. Programs are selected by a panel of local teachers who also suggest content for the teacher's guide to using instructional TV in the classroom. Because of the ATS-6 findings that many teachers did not know how to use ITV effectively and were thus reluctant to do so, an intensive effort has been made to educate teachers in the use of this teaching tool. During the 1979-80 school years, 26 ITV series will be broadcast, reaching 78 villages by spring of 1980. Teacher and student evaluations of the programs have been enthusiastic.



A fifth condition was discussed in the historical overview — that of steadily increasing student population. In this respect, Alaska mirrored what was happening nationwide. However, during the past several years, schools throughout the United States have seen a slow but steady decline in student population, particularly in the primary grades. Demographic projections indicate that this decline will continue, due to decreasing birth rates.

In Alaska, the overall student population, grades K-12, has continued to increase, over the past ten years, with the exception of a slight (seven-tenths of one percent) decrease in the 1973-74 school year. However, in the past two years (school year 1977-78 to 1978-79, the last year for which analysis is available) this increase statewide has been slight, around one tenth of one percent. Although figures for the current school year are not available, recent news articles speak of a 2,000 student decrease in the Anchorage school population from last year, and a less drastic but significant decrease in the Fairbanks area. Thus, it seems likely to assume that we in Alaska are beginning to experience at least a leveling off of student population growth, if not an actual decline in enrollment. Although it is possible that this leveling off or decline could be halted by a major economic effort, such as a new pipeline, it should be noted that the construction of the Alyeska pipeline did not bring with it, except in Valdez, the kinds of student population growth which was anticipated. During the peak of the pipeline years, overall growth in student population hovered between two and three percent.

In addition to the twin causes of school population decline — lower birthrates and outmigration of families — a third cause for potentially diminished public school enrollments is the development of private schools in many areas of the state. Since the 1971-72 school year, enrollments in public schools have shown a steady increase, more than doubling from 1,534 in that year to 3,139 in 1978-79.

In the latter year, private school enrollment showed a slight (three tenths of one percent) decrease, but with the opening of several new denominational schools for the 1979-80 school year, total statewide private school enrollment is expected to once again show an increase. Public school population for the same eight-year period, 1971-72 through 1978-79, showed a ten percent increase as opposed to the private school increase of over one hundred per-

cent. Of course, with Alaska's small population very small numbers of students can lead to a large percentage of either increase or decrease, so that the apparent magnitude of the growth in private school student population translates in reality into quite few students. However, given the rise in costs of private school education, the corresponding trend of continued population increases seems significant.

Actual figures for private school enrollments may be higher than suggested above, since not all private schools report to the Department of Education. Although required by law to report, the Department has no way of monitoring the establishment of private schools; thus the data discussed is from the 38 private schools which are currently known to operate in Alaska. In 1978, the legislature amended the Compulsory Education law in a way which, while it has not yet been felt, could provide a significant impetus to the rise of private — particularly private, profit-making — schools in the state. In effect, the law removed private schools (not only private, non-profit schools) from the necessity of meeting any state requirements concerning staff certification, by allowing pupils attending such schools to meet attendance laws when "the average student proficiency (in the private school) is not less than the average proficiency found in the public school in the area as measured by national achievement tests."²⁵

If the author's interpretation of this statute is correct, the law now allows any individual, group or organization to provide educational programs, at cost or for profit, on a performance — contract basis. As may be remembered, during the late 60's and early 70's, several major school systems in the "Lower 48" and in Anchorage made similar student achievement performance contracts with several large industries, Quality Education Development Corporation and Westinghouse, among others. Although several such programs did result in student achievement gains, the experiments were dropped for a variety of reasons, including public sentiment. However, the possibility currently exists in Alaska for any group or organization to develop — and attempt to market — a variety of innovative, non-traditional education approaches which will legally meet the state's requirements under the compulsory attendance.

As we have attempted to outline above, the current K-12 student

population enrolled in public schools is remaining fairly steady in terms of numbers and may begin to decline, partly because of the alternatives available to parents and students through the growth of private schools. One other alternative should be considered. Although still a part of the public educational system, Centralized Correspondence Study, operated by the Department of Education, has provided alternative programming since 1977, when an amendment to its authorizing legislation opened CC/S to any student in the state. As is the case with the private schools, CC/S does draw some of its students from the populations of other school districts. Since 1976, the full-time equivalent of all students in Centralized Correspondence Study has risen from 348.7 to 497.7 in 1979. Most of this growth occurred at the secondary (grades 7-12) level, which jumped from 42.6 FTE in 1976 to 182.3 in 1979. Although some of this growth can be attributed to the strengthening of secondary school services to students who have no other access to public education, some of it may also be attributed to those students with daily access to school who have enrolled in Centralized Correspondence Study as an alternative to the regular secondary school program offered by their home district, as is allowed under the 1977 statute.²⁶

Another condition which differs significantly today from 1969 is the spiraling costs of education, partly due to general inflation in the total economy but also attributable to the significant salary increases for all school staff which have occurred throughout the latter part of the 1970's. Personnel costs, in such a labor intensive enterprise as education, account for between 70 and 75 percent of the total operating budget; thus the salary increases of over 120 percent which have been experienced by all professional staff — administrators as well as teachers — have had a tremendous effect on educational costs. In addition, fuel and energy costs in the state have continued to rise at rates equaling or exceeding those of the rest of the nation, further escalating the price of doing educational business. In the ten years since 1969, average per-pupil costs from state and local sources have risen from \$1,012 to \$3,254 in school year 1978-79, or an increase of 222 percent although inflation in the total economy for the same period was about 105.6 percent.

Given a further rise in fuel costs during 1979, as well as negotiated agreements which tie salary increases to total inflation rates, the costs of providing education services will probably continue to rise in excess of 10 percent annually, if not considerably higher.

TRENDS FOR THE 80'S The format for the papers prepared for this conference suggested a discussion of "Other Perspectives," which would outline efforts by other public and private agencies to address the general issue being discussed. However, for the purposes of education, it seems more fruitful to attempt, from the above two sections on "Historical Perspective" and "Current Status," to identify trends which will carry on through the 1980's. In the final section, "Directions," ways will be discussed by which the state might accelerate or lessen the pace of these trends. As in the above two sections, we will deal with organization, financing, scope and other conditions affecting education.

Organization: During the 1980's, it is likely that Alaska will finally see the establishment of only one system of elementary and secondary public education in the state. This will happen in one of two ways. Either the remaining BIA schools will be turned over to state control through the surrounding REAA districts or local Native Alaskan governing bodies will exercise one of the several other options under P.L. 93-638; that is, to run their own BIA school under contract with the federal government or to subcontract out the operation of the BIA schools to a separate, non-profit entity. Under either contract option, the former BIA schools will become in effect private rather than public schools.

It is further possible that the 1980's will see changes in the structure of the Unorganized Borough, leading to the development of local municipal and borough governments in this area. If this is accomplished, the current differences between city/borough school districts and REAA districts will disappear, resulting in a truly uniform system of public education in the state.

One interesting organization or governance question is likely to occur in the 1980's, which, while not influencing the development of a uniform statewide system of public education, will affect the policy direction and operation of our larger school systems. Currently, the average citizen's access to representation on local school boards varies widely around the state. In Anchorage, for example, which has half the state's school population, the governing board is composed of 7 members; on the other hand, the Lower Kuskokwim REAA, with a student population of 1,617, has an eleven-member governing board. A review of the school board minutes of any large urban system in Alaska reveals that much of

the board's time is spent dealing with the concerns of special interest groups who feel shut out of the decision-making process. The recent attempts of the Anchorage Board to close two neighborhood schools is a good case in point. It seems likely that the increasing demands of citizens for access to decision-making for education will lead to the establishment — either locally or through state mandate — of neighborhood school boards or committees similar to the Community School Committees which were originally mandated for the REAAs. The mandate was made optional in 1979 although it appears that all REAAs except for two single community REAAs thus far have elected to maintain CSCs as originally established.

Financing: The trend over the past decade for the state to assume a greater portion of educational costs will likely continue through the 80's with the state at some point in the near future funding 100 percent (rather than the current 97 percent) of basic need. In addition, it appears likely that the concept of "basic need" will be revised to more accurately reflect, and fund, the majority of educational costs at the local district, with the result that the state may eventually fund close to 100 percent of all educational costs for K-12 programs in organized as well as unorganized areas of the state.

If the state continues to mandate or allow local contributions to educational programs in city/borough districts, it seems likely that some adjustments will need to be made to better take into account local ability to pay; or, put another way, to better equalize local support across wealthy and less wealthy districts, particularly those small city districts with relatively limited abilities to pay.

The disparities among local tax bases between wealthy and less wealthy communities, together with the implications of these disparities on equal access to education, will continue to bring pressures on the state for a more equitable system of school construction. Within the coming decade, it seems likely that the state will move toward an increased support of city/borough capital school construction, approaching 100 percent reimbursement. In addition, the state will continue, at least in the next five years, to support considerable school construction in the Unorganized Borough. Estimates based on a recent survey by the Department of Transportation indicate that an additional \$50,000,000 is necessary for priority school construction; that is, construction for currently

unhoused students and construction needed to assure the health and safety of currently housed students.

As was mentioned earlier, districts are at present under great pressure to expand or modify programs for students who need special services. Costs for such programs, particularly for students with severe mental or physical handicaps, have risen to rates which exceed even the extraordinary inflationary increases of the regular school program, primarily because of federal legislation which requires a variety of supportive, non-educational services. Again, it seems likely within the next several years that the state will increase significantly its support for such high-cost programs.

Finally, it appears that the state may need to continue support of regional or statewide programs or activities which are beyond the ability of local districts to fund; in particular, telecommunications networks, certain high-cost services for severely handicapped students, and some intensive, high-cost technical training programs.

Given the historical state commitment to education which has characterized Alaska since statehood, it seems likely that such support will continue to increase; however, it is also likely that questions of local district accountability for the dollars received will also increase. This will become an even more important issue as, as alluded to above, the student population remains fairly constant or even decreases at the same time that educational costs soar. Whether the accountability question results in statewide mandates concerning minimum competencies, district comprehensive plans or some other mechanism designed to assure quality control is unknown, but public school districts in the 80's can look toward increased local and state pressure to describe and improve student achievement.

Scope: The 1980's will undoubtedly see an expansion in the scope of public education, certainly at the adult level and probably reaching to younger children.

Although it seems likely that the need for Adult Basic Education (elementary) and General Education Development (secondary) programs will decrease as the next decade closes, primarily because of

the extension of regular secondary programs in rural Alaska, the need for continuing education will probably grow as a result of several factors. First, changing economic conditions and related jobs will require continued and increasing access to programs for job skill upgrading and change. This need will be seen in all areas of the state's economy, the most visible, at present, being the need for a fairly massive fisheries education and reeducation program to allow Alaska fishermen to take advantage of expanding opportunities in the bottom fish industry. Similar skill building and upgrading educational opportunities are needed in the areas of forestry, oil technology, tourism, etc. In any job sector, including state and local government, employees and employers will be faced with the need to secure training to meet changing job conditions. In many cases, the state may find it in its best interests to underwrite at least a portion of these job-related training activities, through an expansion of the community college system, continued support of the community schools programs with a concomitant emphasis on vocational as well as avocational courses, or the development of other educational resources such as regional vocational/technical centers.

Second, the change in life style and values of Alaska's citizens which is already in evidence now will increase the demand for education opportunities directed at improving satisfaction with life and the use of leisure time. Nationwide, the trend in the past decade has been away from a lifetime commitment to a particular career toward greater attention to a life style in which work, social relations and avocational pursuits have equal importance. This trend requires continuing access to an educational system which increases the individual's ability not only to earn money but to lead a fuller life. While it may not be a state responsibility to provide its citizens with "education for life" as well as "education for work," it should be remembered that taxes to support a public education system ultimately come from citizens and that these same citizens are likely to demand immediate returns to themselves as well as on the investment in future human development. This will become even more true as the state's population begins to mirror population shifts in the rest of the nation; that is, as the number of adults, particularly older adults, increases and the number of the school-age children remains constant or decreases. With or without a conscious state policy, then, it seems likely that education opportunities for adult citizens will increase, either as a public respon-

sibility or as a function of marketplace economics where demand will generate supply.

The need for expanded preparatory — as opposed to continuing — education, which will continue to be felt as jobs require more advanced training, will no doubt lead to an increasing demand for free, public education beyond the current K-12 years. The earlier convention called for free education at least through grades 13 and 14, if not through a baccalaureate degree. It seems highly likely that extension through the grade 14 at public expense, either through the community colleges or the local school districts, will become a reality in the 1980's. It also seems likely that, as many of the smaller areas cannot support full, high cost technical training locally, the state will develop a system of regional, postsecondary technical centers, either through the community colleges, an extension of the current Alaska Skill Center or through yet another, unidentified organizational system. Again, these resources will need to be heavily subsidized by the State even if they are not tuition- and fee-free.

Extension of the school system to reach children younger than the current school starting age is more difficult to predict. At the turn of the current decade, forces within Alaska and nationwide were emphasizing the positive effects of early childhood education on later achievement and calling for public funding for such programs through the school systems. As was seen above, this pressure resulted, in 1974, in lowering the school age for exceptional children to three years of age. At that time, it was expected that the public would begin to demand similar services for all children; however, such demands have not been made to any great extent. On the other hand, this situation could change dramatically in the 1980's, although it is likely that demands to lower the school age may be based more on economic policy than on educational principles. The dramatic increase in employment of mothers of young children has severely strained the existing facilities and resources for child care in all areas of the state. Although the private sector has, in the larger areas, moved in to provide some of these services, the availability and quality of day care for young children varies widely throughout the state. Since the provision of day care services in the less populated areas of Alaska is not economically attractive to the private sector, the state may be faced with increasing pressures to provide such. Since the public school system has, in the past, been called upon to serve social as well as

educational needs, it is not beyond reason to suggest that school systems may be delegated this responsibility in the coming years.

Changes in scope as it relates to the diversity of program content and methods of delivery are perhaps easier to predict and envision than those dealing with the extension in the levels of education. Certainly, the extension of equal educational opportunity to all individuals, particularly those of minority groups, will continue in the next decade. There is little, if any, evidence to support a prediction that less attention will be given to the educational needs of gifted, bilingual, female, low-income, handicapped or culturally different children. However, there is evidence that the current methods of treating the educational needs of such children may change significantly in the next decade, and further, that education will begin to focus on the individual needs of each child rather than on groups of special target groups. In other words, the current epidemic of pluralism in the state and nation will reach the point where alternative programs for groups of children are no longer effective, cost efficient or acceptable to parents. At such time, the schools will move away from alternative programs and into a delivery system where each student has his or her own educational program. This does not mean that education will become "individualized" as that is currently defined to mean a student working alone as opposed to in groups. What it does mean is that each student will have an educational plan for the 12 or more years of public education which will tailor his or her educational experiences to a total program designed to meet individual interests and needs. This is already happening in special education where each enrolled child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), developed in conjunction with the student's parents, which outlines both short- and long-term educational objectives, details activities by which these objectives will be met, and cites evaluation procedures to assess student progress on a continual basis, although the paperwork burdens on local school personnel in developing and monitoring IEPs for exceptional children have been cumbersome, the system has begun to produce two favorable benefits: first, it has succeeded in making the individual child the focus of the education delivery system and second, it has allowed for meaningful inclusion of parents in the design and evaluation of their child's education.

It is this latter aspect which is likely to increase demands for similar programming for all children. Parents are beginning to ex-

press their concerns over the current quality and scope of the public school system in a variety of ways: by increasing pressure on local boards, the state and in the courts to provide more responsive services to children with different backgrounds and needs and by removing their children from the regular public school program and enrolling them either in private schools or the Centralized Correspondence Study program. The increased enrollments in these two alternatives over the past five years are significant, particularly when one considers the costs to the parents in terms either of tuition or of time commitments necessary to educate the child at home. In many cases, the parents' reasons for choosing these alternatives come from an objection to the moral or ethical tone of public schools, particularly at the secondary level. While schools can do much to lessen the harmful influences of drugs, alcohol and violence, it is doubtful if the public school system, even with totally individualized educational planning, can provide the moral and religious education required by some parents. For these, private denominational schools may continue to be the only alternative. For other parents, however, whose concerns are for the type and delivery of educational content, the IEP approach for each child may provide an acceptable solution.

The concept of individualized educational programming for all is attractive in one other way in that it can allow for greater flexibility and creativity in the development of educational experiences. Several programs currently exist in the state, particularly at the secondary level, which incorporate and rely heavily on out-of-school community resources to provide portions of a student's education. An excellent example is Kodiak High School's CE² program which structures a student's total education program — academic as well as vocational — around learning experiences utilizing community resources.

In other areas of the state, programs extend educational resources beyond the local community, to the region, state, nation or even outside the country. Student travel-cum-school programs have become commonplace in the state to the point that a significant portion of the child's educational career may be spent outside his or her home community. A major difficulty with such programs, at present, is that they are not always integrated into the student's regular educational program, thus minimizing their true educational value. This difficulty could be overcome, however, if such ex-

periences were planned for and woven into a student's individual educational plan. Such is the case with a pilot project, PROJECT EMPLOY, conducted by several districts and REAAs. Under EMPLOY, a student, his parents and teachers develop an individualized vocational education plan which utilizes the resources of the local high school, large schools in the region and, depending upon student objectives, the Alaska Skill Center or the Kenai Community College. In effect, under this program, the state, rather than only the local community becomes the educational resource for the student. The increased usability of computer and communications technology to track student progress and simplify student scheduling may provide an added impetus to the development of individualized educational plans for each student, since the application of such technology should greatly simplify the recordkeeping burdens currently associated with such planning.

If public school systems do not move fairly rapidly in the area of individualized planning, public pressure and demand may well result in a proliferation of private educational programs, particularly private, profit-making programs. As we alluded to above, the advances in technology already make possible the delivery of individualized, self-paced programs using computers, support print, audio and visual materials and distant teachers. The rapid decrease in the costs of home computers, together with the explosion in instructional software programs, make it entirely feasible, within the next decade, that students can be adequately and effectively educated at home or in any other location. Our current statutes do not differentiate between private non-profit and private profit educational institutions in meeting compulsory attendance requirements. Further, a private program can operate in the absence of any state requirements if it can equal or exceed the average student achievement of the surrounding public schools. This legislation could certainly make it economically feasible for the private sector to begin to offer performance-contract education, utilizing existing technology, to citizens throughout the state.

If such marketplace economics are fostered, it does not seem unlikely that in the future, although not necessarily within the next decade, the state will move toward a direct or indirect allocation, through grants, tax incentives or other means, to each citizen of funds to be used to purchase educational services, from any public or private source. Although such a concept may seem far fetched at

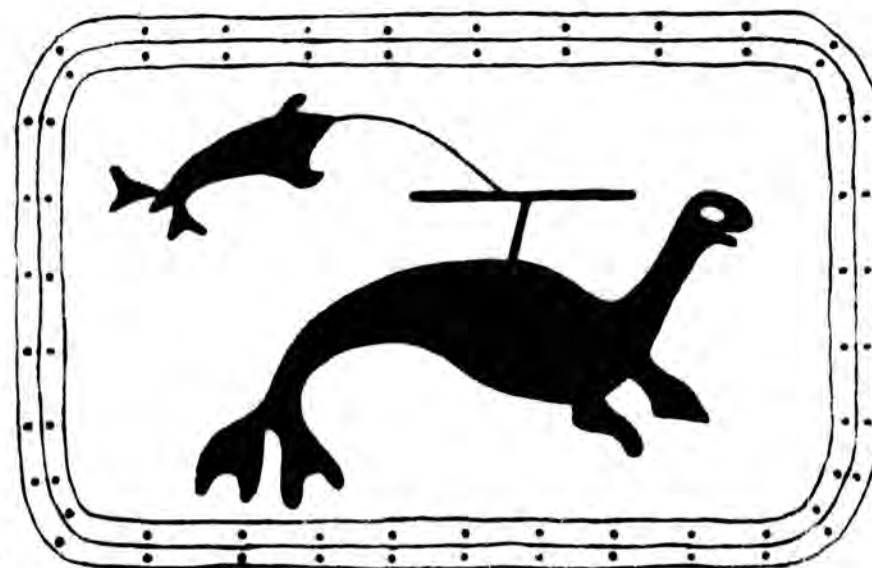
the present, one needs only to reflect on some of the massive changes that have taken place in the financing, organization and delivery of educational services that have occurred since 1969. And, indeed, such a scheme reflects somewhat the thinking behind current ideas about returning some of the state's resource development wealth to individual citizens. Again, although the fostering of private sector activity in education may seem strange at present, one should reflect on the dramatic increase in costs of delivering education through the public sector—costs which can only increase in the years to come, as we see further unionization of professional public education staff, increased costs of facility maintenance and operation and static or declining school enrollment. Although attractive on the surface, such a scheme could well result in the demise of public education as we know it and should be considered with extreme caution.

Other Conditions: Several of the conditions described in the first two sections — i.e., uses of technology for education, slowed or declining enrollments and increasing costs — have already been considered. However, three — i.e., the federal role in education, staff/board relations and teacher turnover — need further discussion as to possible future trends. As was mentioned earlier, the federal government has assumed an increasingly active and obtrusive role in education, both nationwide and in Alaska, and there is little evidence that such a trend will decrease. Quite the opposite is likely true, in fact, with the recent creation of a federal Department of Education and the almost inevitable concurrent rise in federal educational activity and bureaucracy. Since such increased activity will probably take the form of further federal insistence on equal educational opportunity and uniformity of educational programs, with a resulting increase in federal monitoring and data collection, the state in the next decade may be faced with a decision either to relinquish or lessen policy control over Alaska education or to refuse to accept federal educational funds. This latter course could cost the state and local districts around \$11,500,000 annually in federal program funds which are currently available for special education, vocational education, bilingual education and, to lesser extent, regular education programs. Such a decision may require the state to assume these costs from its own resources.

A second area or condition which will continue to affect local school districts in the 80's is the increase in teacher unionization —

at the community college as well as K-12 level — and the demands by unions not only for increased salaries and benefits but also for an increasing role in policy development and decision-making. Such increased demands could eventually lead to teacher representation on local school boards in much the same way as the United Auto Workers recently achieved representation on the Board of Directors for Chrysler Corporation. Whatever the final outcome, it will be interesting — and significant to future educational development — to see the effects of teacher demands on school governance and operation.

A final condition — that of teacher turnover — has less far reaching effects than most of the other areas discussed above, except that it will impact both the rising costs of education, (since teacher salaries are based, in part, on years of service in the districts) and the ability of schools to try out innovative and non-traditional education approaches with staffs trained in traditional methods. In addition, if staff turnover decreases significantly in rural Alaska, it will impede the inclusion of large numbers of local, particularly Native Alaska residents, in the professional staffs of rural schools.



Directions:

Several major areas were cited above which will require policy attention by the state in the coming decades. While no attempt will be made to determine the content of such policy, the following areas need to be considered.

1. The State needs to consider the continued existence of BIA educational activity in the state, although the final resolution of this historical problem may rest with the affected villages themselves.

2. The state needs to consider its level of support for both the operation of public education and the construction of school facilities.

3. The state will need to examine the current scope of public education in the state and to determine whether or not it is in the state's best interests to extend free public education to include younger children or to include postsecondary and adult job-related and "life" educational opportunities.

4. The state will need to consider whether or not it wishes or needs to control private profit and non-profit educational programs, and if so, to what degree.

5. The state will need to determine what demands it will make on local districts to account for the expenditure of and the results gained from state support.

6. The state will need to examine more closely the educational uses of technology and determine if it wishes to extend and foster the use of such tools by public education.

7. The state will need to consider the effects of the new federal Department of Education on the field of education and to decide whether or not the continued acceptance of federal funds, with the concomitant increase in federal direction and control, is in the state's best interest.

8. The state will need to examine ways in which the total educational enterprise — in policy development, planning, curriculum and delivery systems — can become more responsive to the needs

and desires of students, parents and the community at large, especially in urban centers where citizen access to representation is limited.

FINALLY, the state will need to encourage the public school system — through policy direction, funding, or other mechanisms — to examine alternatives to present curricula and delivery systems in order that all students, urban as well as rural, majority as well as minority, are equipped to survive and succeed in a future quite different in opportunities, attitudes and values from today's world.

Whether these questions are consciously considered and a firm policy direction established for the state, it seems clear that the next ten years of education in Alaska will see changes of a similar or even greater magnitude as those occurring in the past decade. That change will come is clear; the challenge is in how to control that change to best meet the educational needs of Alaska's present and future populations.

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Biographical Sketch

The preceding paper was prepared for the Department of Education by Marilou Madden. Ms. Madden has been with the Department since 1972 and has served in a variety of capacities: Research Analyst, Special Assistant to the Commissioner and, at present, the Director of the Division of Education Program Support, a position she has held since 1975.

During her years with the Department, Ms. Madden has worked closely with such projects as the ATS-6 satellite experiment, the Governor's Pipeline Impact Committee, the reorganization of State Operated Schools, and the development of rural vocational, special, and secondary education programs.

NOTES

PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN ALASKA — THE 1980s

by
Patrick J. O'Rourke

Historical Perspective

Public Higher Education in Alaska has been essentially provided by one entity, the University of Alaska Statewide System of Higher Education. Its roots are anchored in the establishment of a Land Grant College at Fairbanks, Alaska in 1917. The period 1917 to 1954 was devoted primarily to the growth and development of this campus, along with its multiple programs. Residential facilities were constructed, class room and office buildings built and the college moved from a School of Mines and Agriculture to a full University entity with its concomitant teaching and research functions.

By 1954, there was a recognition of the growth that had taken place in the greater Anchorage area and this year saw the establishment of Anchorage Community College in association with the Anchorage Borough School District. In April 1955, Ketchikan followed suit with the founding of the Community College in that city. These two events marked the first thrust toward what is becoming a *statewide system* of higher and postsecondary education. These units were designed primarily to provide lower division academic work which could be transferred to the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and needed vocational/technical training in their areas. Throughout this period of growth and development, the statewide Extension Service was perhaps the only extended activity of the University of Alaska. An experimental farm was developed in the Mat-Su Valley and other applied research stations established throughout the state. Agents were involved in the translation of theoretical research to applied Alaskan topics and engaged in informal education of Alaskans in a number of communities around the state.

The growth and development of the University system during the decade of the '60s is perhaps characterized by three significant factors. First, in 1962, the Legislature passed the Community College

Act in an attempt to join the University and the School Districts in a cooperative postsecondary education venture. Second, a commitment to the permanency of programs beyond Fairbanks was made with the beginning construction of facilities in other areas of the state. Third, continuing expansion of the system occurred with the establishment of Community Colleges at Sitka, Juneau, Kodiak, Palmer and Kenai. Additionally, embryonic four-year programs were begun in Anchorage and Juneau. The activities of the sixties were marked by strong central control from the University campus at Fairbanks with other units being viewed as extensions of the Fairbanks campus operation. By this time too, the University of Alaska had secured for itself a national and international reputation particularly as it pertains to geophysics and cold climate research. Greater awareness of the needs of rural native Alaskans began to emerge and a number of special programs were created at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks in order to encourage and assure the success of these individuals.

The decade of the seventies represents the most turbid period of time in the history of public higher education in Alaska. The beginning awareness of rural Alaska native needs carried itself forward with the establishment of other Community Colleges at Bethel and Nome, followed by the need for increased vocational training in the Fairbanks region with the establishment of Tanana Valley Community College and culminating in 1978 with the establishment of Community Colleges at Kotzebue and Valdez. By the end of this decade there were now units of the University embracing within their service regions, 92 percent of the state's population. Additionally, Extension Centers were operating in a number of areas of the state in further attempts to provide higher education services to rural Alaskans. Increased autonomy for different sectors of the University became major demands and in the second half of this decade, the system reorganized itself three times. By the mid 1970s, a crisis in finance and management began to emerge and the second half of this decade was marked by major changes in leadership, a loss in the University's credibility before the Legislature and the Alaskan people and the restoration of appropriate management systems with which to move forward into the '80s. During the second half of this decade, the system saw five separate Presidents and numerous changes in its upper level management team. Perhaps it could be said that the system had expanded beyond its capabilities to provide sound management and qualitative programs.

Current Status

As the 1970s draw to a close and the 1980s thrust upon us, public higher education in Alaska finds itself in an improved state of health, but facing many critical issues whose resolution will determine its ability to continue to flourish and grow. The crisis management of the 70s has passed, new Presidential leadership for the University system has been provided and beginning seeds planted for renewed faith and confidence on the part of Alaskans in its public higher education system. After two decades of expansion, we now find three four-year campuses of the University of Alaska; a residential campus at Fairbanks, a metropolitan campus at Anchorage and a limited four-year campus at Juneau. Eleven Community Colleges are currently in existence and eight Extension Centers are operating. Additionally, twenty major research sections are engaged in the investigation of questions pertinent to national, state and international concerns.

Public higher education must now address the qualitative status of each of its units, and grapple with the basic problem of how far and in what manner to extend its services across the state.

Issue #1 — Rural Alaska. How can the needs of rural Alaska be better served by the public higher education system?

It has been said by some that rural Alaska is the glue that holds the state together. The faction fighting that occurs between the primary urban centers in Alaska is held in check only by this adhesive force of the rural communities. Many of the urban centers have developed their current employment and commercial bases in order to serve rural Alaska. Thus, the health and well being of rural Alaska will also contribute to the health and well being of urban Alaska. We have spent a quarter of a century securing even basic secondary education for rural Alaskans. We are now on the threshold of providing that postsecondary education and cannot afford to wait another quarter of a century in order to adequately fulfill this promise to our citizens.

But, how geographically far and to what degree of program depth can and should the University of Alaska extend its services across the state? In a state of 410,000 people, is there a need for three full four-year campuses, eleven Community Colleges and eight Extension

Centers? Is the system currently over expanded and how might its resources be more adequately used to serve broader state needs? The values and life style of rural Alaska defy much of standard tradition and if this is the case, then non traditional means must be utilized to reach these non traditional students.

Modern technology, primarily in the telecommunications area offers the potential and the promise to public higher education to better serve the higher education needs of the adult citizens of all of Alaska. Is it reasonable to expect that in a state which is unable to meet its basic transportation needs because of its geographical vastness, that an extremely sophisticated communication network is a basic requirement and basic service that ought to be expected and demanded just as citizens in urban Alaska expect and demand better road conditions? This lack of a highway transportation network creates a unique situation for the University as it attempts to carry out its charge to the people of this state. Rural service must be carried to small scattered populations. Accessibility is often difficult and the high cost of established methods of instruction in sparsely populated areas of the state, demands that new delivery methods and modes be conceived and developed.



Issue #2 — Educational Policy Making. Is educational policy making in Alaska too segmented to be completely effective?

Currently, three State Boards are charged with the development of overall state education policy. The Alaska State Board of Education, the Board of Regents and the Alaska Postsecondary Commission, all have a policy making, regulatory or coordinating authority of one type or another; yet, there is overlap between these three Boards. The lines of distinction are unclear in certain areas, particularly as it relates to the education of adults. The State Board of Education, through its Commissioner's office, is involved in adult programs of a variety of types and natures. They are directly involved in the operation of Skill Training Centers and provide for certain offerings in vocational education, adult basic education and other areas. The Community Colleges, under the direction of the Board of Regents, attempt to meet their open admission standards by the development of programs specifically designed for adult learners which will allow them to make a proper transition into postsecondary and higher education. Additionally, in terms of certain areas in vocational education, they have now reached a point where they are considered creditable as postsecondary level training. Thus, there is overlap between these two Boards for there is a very fine line of difference between what might be considered adult education and what might be considered postsecondary or higher education. Also, the University Centers with their public service mission overlap in the areas of Community Schools and community interest programs.

The Postsecondary Education Commission, as a third entity, has both coordinative and regulatory authority over certain public and private agencies in Alaska; yet, this authority is limited. Who resolves the differences between these three Boards? Are we wasting resources because of duplication in certain areas which occurs when one governing or regulatory body believes it can perform a service better than another? Additionally, each regulatory body believes full well that the charge has been given to it to perform a certain mission. Is there a need to consider an overall education reorganization act for Alaska which will place education policy making for all levels of education in the hands of a single Board? There is waste occurring, despite great efforts by staff to bring about coordination.

Issue #3 — Governance and Organization of Public Higher Education. What type of higher education system would best suit Alaska?

Currently there is a single public Statewide System of Higher Education encompassing both University Centers and Community Colleges; yet, there are philosophic and geographic rivalries that continue to exist within the system. The philosophic differences generally differentiate a Community College from a University Center, while the regional rivalries are factional battles that ensue between the three University Center campuses as each struggles for its own identity and its own prestige and reputation.

Philosophically, Community Colleges differ from University Centers in a number of areas. First, Community Colleges generally offer a tripartite educational function; that of general education and academic transfer programs, career and vocational education and community and public service of a continuing education nature. Only in the first of these and to a minor extent in the third, do the University Centers embrace this portion of a philosophic mission. Second, the role of Community Colleges is to provide access to all peoples regardless of background, location or financial capability. They are open admission institutions which allow any adult above the age of eighteen to enroll regardless of prior educational background. For many of these adults, programs of developmental studies are designed to assist them to successfully complete and master a postsecondary education program. University Centers on the other hand, have a selective admission process which is utilized in accepting students who may attend these institutions. Third, Community Colleges serve a more limited geographic locale and ought to be community based. Programs are designed with a specific eye toward the local community needs and it is the philosophic thrust of these institutions to provide adult education as close to home as possible. University Centers, on the other hand, serve a broader and more far ranging geographic population base. Fourth, Community Colleges traditionally try to provide financial access by maintaining tuition rates at low or no cost to the individual student. In a recent survey by the Postsecondary Commission of tuition rates in thirteen western states, the University of Alaska had the lowest rate of tuition for all Universities in those states. However, when the Community Colleges were compared with the Community Colleges in those same states, the rate for the Alaskan Community Colleges is third highest among these thirteen western

states. Does the utilization of the same base of tuition between University Centers and the Community Colleges preclude Alaskans from attending who might otherwise enroll and should our concept of access to postsecondary education also include economic access? This is particularly prevalent in rural areas of the state where per capita income among the indigenous population is extremely low. Fourth, Community Colleges do not have any particular emphasis on research, while University Centers legitimately do. Sixth, Community Colleges offer only the first two years of academic programs and many of the associate degree programs are designed with a *dual* purpose to allow a student, after completion, to either go out into the work force or to transfer to a four year institution. The University Centers offer primarily baccalaureate degree work of a full four year nature. Seventh, Community Colleges also place a special emphasis on vocational/technical education which is not generally of major importance in the University Centers. Eighth, the student population of Community Colleges is usually two-thirds part time with a normal average student body age of 28 to 30 years. University Centers, on the other hand, serve predominantly a full time student population and its student population is usually younger.

The geographic disputes among the University Centers seem to arise from a lack of distinction in the missions of the three centers. As the University of Alaska, Fairbanks was established first, full programs and a major research effort were developed. Now the predominant population base is in Anchorage and not Fairbanks and as the University of Alaska, Anchorage comes into its own, it finds itself in competition with the Fairbanks campus for certain research segments, certain baccalaureate and masters degree programs along with certain needs in the areas of physical facilities. All of these are real needs to serve an Anchorage base, but at the same time could result in under utilization of the Fairbanks campus. How can one segment of a single statewide higher education system be allowed to grow without diminishing another segment of the same system and without engaging in unnecessary duplication? Some duplication will be required by all units, however, our work force data seems to indicate that there are other areas where there is a need for only one program in the state. For instance, we duplicate our Bachelor of Education degree in elementary education at the three University campuses, yet none of the three offers the necessary credential for teaching in vocational education. This

same situation exists with the University of Alaska, Juneau, although to a lesser extent; this is yet an embryonic institution, but has heavy developmental needs. New campuses require a much heavier financial commitment on the part of the state than do existing campuses. How do we allow these new University Centers to achieve their potential status and at the same time preserve qualitative programs at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks?

University faculties also feel the need and professional thrust to engage in research in their disciplines. How will research be organized to allow all three University Centers to appropriately engage in this activity? Additionally, should all three centers be University Centers or should we maintain one University Center and additional state Colleges, which would have more of a teaching emphasis rather than research.

Issue #4 — Public Higher Education Research and Alaskan Needs. How can public higher education research answer better the basic questions relative to the economic, social and personal needs of Alaskans?

Criticism has been frequently leveled that the organized research being conducted within this state by the University of Alaska is too often geared to national and international questions and less often geared to Alaskan needs. This criticism is not, however, totally valid, for many institutes and research projects are geared specifically to the needs of Alaska. Alaska is one of several arctic areas; its research is integrated with that of other arctic and north pacific regions, but its University also represents the United States in the far north. How can the balance between this national/international and state need be balanced and still allow the University and its faculty the academic freedom to pursue questions of interest and validity to them as scientists? What incentives can be created through the Legislative and Executive branches of state government to assure that our public higher education scientists are addressing questions which need to be addressed by this state? As we begin the economic enterprise development in Alaska, we must be in a position to utilize our own human resources to explore the basic questions.

What linkage can be brought about between the public higher education system and the state policy makers? If higher education,

as part of its mission, is to answer basic questions pertinent to Alaska's commercial and industrial development, and if public higher education is to provide a trained work force at an appropriate time to meet the commercial and industrial needs of the state, then mechanisms are necessary to join these two arms in the exploration of mutual issues. As commercial, conservation and industrial issues are identified within the state and task forces or commissions set to explore them, a better binding could be brought about by involvement of the public higher education system at these early times. It is within the power of the Legislative and Executive branches of this state to conduct public policy planning in such a manner that public higher education can both contribute to this policy making and is in a position to respond in a timely fashion to the specific needs of the state. As we explore our bottom fishing needs over the next decade, many of our institutions must be in a position of being able to retrain Alaskans to partake in this economy. Yet, if such training is brought about too early, there will be no commercial enterprise for the trained fishermen to engage in unless the training and planning and development of markets occurs hand in hand with the state.

Issue #5 — Unmet Needs. How can public higher education in Alaska perform better those tasks it is currently engaged in? Four areas are highlighted here.

What must be done to better attract Alaskan High School seniors to the state's public postsecondary educational institutions? The Alaska High School senior survey report for the years 1977-78 and 1978-79, conducted by the Commission on Postsecondary Education, has indicated for two years in a row that only 30 - 32 percent of the state's High School seniors are planning to attend institutions in Alaska to continue their higher education. The three most frequently cited reasons by these High School senior for selecting the the institutions of their choice were as follows: the availability of a particular program, the reputation and prestige of the school, and parents' or relatives' encouragement. For those students planning to remain in the state, the principal determinations in their selection of an institution were its closeness to home, program availability, parental encouragement and low tuition and living expenses.

How can the statewide higher education system assist in meeting the critical energy needs of Alaska? What can be done to

develop alternate energy sources? The statewide system of higher education must be engaged in practical and applied research which can be used by the average homeowner in curtailing his energy needs. The state government must assure that public agencies, including the statewide higher education system in Alaska, are utilizing public utilities wherever possible for their own basic resource needs in order to assure the least possible cost of these energy needs to citizens within the surrounding community. When a public agency sets up and establishes its own source of energy and does not utilize the public utility, higher costs will result to the individual homeowner and user. What state policies are currently in existence to assure that all public facilities being constructed in this state are of an energy efficient design?

The statewide public higher education system is not yet adequately meeting the vocational/technical needs of Alaskans. As we become a more technological society, our needs for increased skills in trade and technical areas becomes more and more evident. Although a multiplicity of vocational/technical programs exist around the state, there are still many areas of unmet needs. If we are indeed to maximize the utilization of Alaskans in our skilled work force, major support for vocational/technical education in the adult sphere of the University must be forthcoming. It is not only the training function which must be highlighted here, but the need to provide the linkages and liaisons with business and industry to assist in the development of jobs to aid in the placement and counseling of individuals who have completed programs and to help the colleges to keep their programs on target as they relate to the commercial and industrial needs of the state.

Finally, there is a whole generation of rural Alaskans who have been skipped by the formal education process. How can their developmental and adult education needs be met? A high percentage of Alaskans between the ages of 30 and 60 grew up at a time when secondary or postsecondary educational opportunities were not available to them. Most of these individuals exist in rural Alaska. They are individuals who are the natural leaders of their villages and associations yet, they lack some of the technical skills that the younger rural Alaskan native population has developed. The result is a conflict of leadership in rural Alaska. The younger rural Alaskan native has the formal educational capability of dealing with a modern technological society, yet lacks to a large extent, the

wisdom of age required for sound decision making. The older rural Alaskan, on the other hand, possesses the wisdom of age but lacks the modern technological skills to deal with current society in many ways. As a result, a reversal of roles occurs and a situation of social conflict between old and young is established. We cannot afford to merely pass over this generation of Alaskans, but must find ways to better meet their needs.

Other Perspectives

Currently there are three private non-profit higher education institutions in Alaska; Alaska Pacific University, Sheldon Jackson College and Inupiat University of the Arctic. In addition to these, there are a number of proprietary schools functioning and operating within the state. They all contribute to the education and training of Alaska's adult population and ultimately, the state's economic development. Private higher education in Alaska has played a supplemental but important role yet, the cost of doing business in Alaska coupled with its sparse population, mitigate against the potential success of these institutions.

If we accept the notion that different philosophic missions among our higher education institutions contribute to a diversified heterogeneous population and that such educational plurality is healthy for the State of Alaska, then both public and private higher education must submit themselves to coordination by an authority with non-vested interests. What can the public system do to insure the health and well being of the private institutions in this state, while still fulfilling its mission as a public institution to all segments of Alaskan society?

Recommendations:

1. That the State of Alaska and its public higher education system establish within its existing structure a statewide, non-campus based, non-traditional College of Alaska to meet the wide variety of needs not currently met by the existing, more traditional institutions. The University of Alaska has been undergoing preliminary planning in this area through its rural education section and so some of this ground work has been laid. As Susan A. Powell states in "State Policies: Plans and Activities" in Peterson's "Life Long Learning in America", non-

traditional students have widely divergent educational, psychological and financial needs which make demands on the traditional structure that the institution is often not equipped to meet. For these reasons, if the state relies in the future primarily on its existing units, their impact on non-traditional students will remain minimal. The most viable alternative to provide the access, diversity and equal opportunity desired by the University to meet the unique needs of rural clientele is for rural education to become a degree granting unit of the University which can then establish and sustain relevance and coherence in educational service to rural Alaska. As former Chancellor Ernest L. Boyer wrote to the trustees of the State University of New York in 1971, regarding a proposal to establish a non-residential degree granting college within New York, "we must now develop a higher learning system that is not restricted to a rigid curriculum, a single campus or a fixed calendar."

The non-campus college for Alaska must be village based for instruction and student support, but augmented by statewide capabilities in educational resources and programming. Orientation to the rural environment will provide the philosophical base, but attention will be paid also to the provisions of the educational experiences necessary to prepare individuals for equal participation in economic, social and political opportunities in a wider society.

2. That the State of Alaska provide its public higher education system with the telecommunications capability to provide equal postsecondary educational opportunities for all citizens in this state.
3. That the Governor and the Legislature of the State of Alaska look at the overall organization of educational policy making within this state. This investigation should determine whether or not appropriate coordination and utilization of sources is occurring at all levels, identify overlap of service, and make appropriate transfers to utilize the state's resources as efficiently as possible. This review should look particularly at adult and continuing education activities.

4. That the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska, with appropriate assistance from state government, define the educational mission of each major administrative unit of the statewide public higher education system in such a way as to clearly delineate to the public the issues addressed in issue statement #3.
5. That a differentiated tuition structure for Community Colleges and University Centers be established so as to provide individuals with financial access to postsecondary education.
6. That there be established within organized research of the public higher education system, an institute for state policy studies. Such an institute, while needing a basic core staff, can draw together some of the existing institutes and have the financial resources available to it to draw from other research areas of the University, those faculty and scientists needed to answer some of the state's critical questions.
7. That the Postsecondary Education Commission engage in a detailed analysis of why students go out of state by further exploring the reasons stated. Specifically, this project should identify what programs these individuals cannot currently find within state and what might be necessary to build the reputation and prestige of the public higher education system in Alaska to better attract Alaskan High School seniors.
8. Due to the lack of transportation corridors within the State of Alaska, state policy makers should encourage the establishment of appropriate student housing on a number of campuses within the public higher education system.
9. That financial incentives be provided to encourage University scientists to engage in applied energy research in cooperation with the energy consumers of Alaska. Such research activities should be directed toward identifying economically feasible energy conservation measures for the average Alaskan.
10. That the State of Alaska adopt as its policy that all public agencies participate in the local utility systems within their communities in order to create a lower overall rate of energy

consumption for the average Alaskan taxpayer.

11. That the State of Alaska provide a major funding thrust to improve the status of vocational/technical education within Alaska. Such efforts should be geared not only toward program development and maintenance, but improved employment prediction needs and improved job development and placement.
12. That the State of Alaska provide the financial resources necessary for a major undertaking in providing for developmental and adult education in those areas of the state where our adult citizens have not had previous access to the educational processes.

The needs of public higher education in Alaska are indeed great. In some ways this state has attempted an undertaking in its educational system which has been attempted by no other state in the country; but this has been Alaskan tradition — to provide for its people a quality of service which will overcome all natural and geographic boundaries. The issues need thorough investigation and exploration and the alternatives and consequences must be fully explored as we move forward into the decade of the '80s.

Biographical Sketch

Patrick J. O'Rourke is currently Chancellor for the division of Community Colleges, Rural Education & Extension of the University of Alaska Statewide System of Higher Education. He is a sixteen year resident of Alaska and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from St. John's University in Jamaica, New York, his Master of Science degree from Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana and his PhD from the University of Connecticut.

Dr. O'Rourke has been a Teacher, Counselor and College Administrator in rural Alaska, a former Director of the Upward Bound program at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and founder of Kuskokwim Community College in Bethel.

Dr. O'Rourke has been with the University of Alaska since 1970 and assumed his current position in November 1977. His current responsibilities include the state's eleven Community Colleges, ten Extension Centers, Statewide Correspondence Study program, the statewide Cooperative Extension Service, the Alaska Native Language Center and Rural Education. He has served on the Governor's Manpower Planning Council, the state Manpower Services Council, the Alaska Native Human Resource Development program and the Economic Policy Development Council for Southwestern Alaska. Additionally, he has served on numerous state Task Forces during his years in Alaska.

AIR TRANSPORTATION IN THE FUTURE OF ALASKA

Prepared by
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Air Transportation

Alaska's airport terminals are probably the place where friends most often meet. The importance of the air transportation system to the state's social and economic well being is well recognized. Despite that recognition, probably no other sector of importance in Alaska has been more neglected by the state government. The result is that the aviation system of which Alaskans have been so proud is at present in sad straits in several of the state's rural areas.

There are several reasons for the present situation in western Alaska where freight and mail shipments suffer long delays; where the small air carriers serving a large area of the state have been shut down by the Federal Aviation Administration for safety reasons; and where old experienced operators are giving up after years of effort to build a strong local air carrier.

Part of the reason lies with the efforts of both state and federal governments to deregulate the economic aspects of aviation in Alaska. Part is with the great increase in demand in rural Alaska. Most is due to a policy of general neglect by those agencies responsible for the public welfare in aviation.

Alaska's air system has three main tiers: states - Alaska and international service; service from the major hubs of Anchorage and Fairbanks to the regional hubs like Bethel, Nome and Barrow; and, service from the regional hubs to the small villages. The first is well served at present, the second has no major problems, and the third area is where the problems referred to earlier occur.

In order to understand the present problems a short review of Alaska's aviation history is instructive. From the arrival of the first

aircraft in 1921 until World War II, Alaskan aviation was largely unstructured and consisted of small aircraft operating from largely unprepared landing areas.

In 1939, a careful planning and construction effort was begun which by 1945 resulted in a statewide system of airports and radio aids to navigation. This system linked Alaska's major communities for the first time with a safe and reliable air transportation system. It did little for the smaller villages since airports between the larger towns were sited to meet military needs rather than those of the existing population.

After the war, a period of intensive competition between scheduled and non-scheduled air carrier ensued. In addition, several of the small bush operations utilized their earnings during the war to establish positions as strong regional carriers. Northern Consolidated, Wien, Pacific Northern, Alaska, Reeve Aleutian and Coastal Ellis emerged as the strong regional carriers during the 1950's, while Pan American and Northwest maintained their positions as international and states — Alaska carriers, joined by Pacific Northern, Alaska and later Western in the states — Alaska traffic. In 1957, Scandinavian Airlines instituted the first polar flights and were soon joined by a host of other foreign carriers. Alaska became truly the "Air Crossroads of the World".

DEW line construction resulted in a ring of modern airports with radar navigation aids around the western and arctic coasts of Alaska. Here again, there was only incidental relationship to the needs of the resident population as the sites were chosen to provide overlapping radar coverage.

At statehood, Alaska inherited from the federal government an airport system that was reasonably modern and adequate for the cities and larger towns, but which was still in the bush period in so far as most of the small villages were concerned. Short poorly constructed airstrips or water landing areas were the rule for rural areas.

At statehood, the FAA maintained some 40 flight service stations throughout Alaska which provided a focus for aviation communications, weather, field information and which maintained the network of radio aids to navigation.

In the first ten years of statehood little was accomplished to upgrade rural airports in most of the state. Maintaining and upgrading the regional hub airports, and the program to "put Southeast on wheels" absorbed most available funds. During this period, the FAA began its program of centralizing its facilities and serving the bush through remote controlled outlets. This eliminated on-site weather observations and other immediate information for many areas.

From 1968 through 1977, the major energies of both state and federal agencies concerned with aviation facilities were directed to support of the Prudhoe Bay development, Alaska Oil Pipeline construction and continuation of the Southeast Alaska airport program. Upgrading small rural airports was a minor program and of 230 small communities for which air service is essential due to lack of other transportation, less than one third had substantial improvements on their airports during the first twenty years of statehood.

The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), as a result of its Alaska Service hearings, in 1970 and 1971, concluded that Alaska could best be served by strong regional carriers. This policy resulted in the joining of Wien and Northern Consolidated into Wien Air Alaska and giving that airline the scheduled air service rights for most of Western Alaska, the Arctic and the Interior. Alaska Airlines was given exclusive rights for Southeastern Alaska, which eliminated both Western and Pan American from that area, while Alaska gave up its rights in serving Nome and Kotzebue. Reeve continued to serve the Aleutian area and Kodiak Western served Kodiak Island and portions of Bristol Bay.

During this period, the major regional carriers continued to subcontract their mail routes from the regional hubs to the villages with small air taxi operators. This process began in 1957 and by 1977 all bush routes were subcontracted. The result of this was a gradual diminishment in the capability of the air service to meet peak demand loads or to haul oversized freight to many places. The small carriers could not provide the back-up services in communications and radio aids to navigation that the regional carrier had provided, and general reliability of service was diminished.

In 1978, the CAB began to implement the Airline Deregulation

Act, a procedure which brought a turnaround in policy by encouraging competition in air service. Wien and Alaska had previously held a monopolistic position on most of their routes. Now competition between the two major Alaska carriers was encouraged as well as allowing service by new entrants such as Great Northern Airlines. The Alaska Transportation Commission also issued competing certificates of necessity on many bush routes where one carrier had previously held a monopoly.

Previously, air carriers in Alaska had depended upon pay for carrying mail and CAB subsidies for a substantial part of their income. Under the new policy, mail pay can be divided among several carriers, if necessary, and subsidies are not encouraged as a means of guaranteeing service to points that generate little passenger, freight or mail revenues in air service. Thus, carriers must find new revenues, be more efficient or prepare to exist on less income, if competitors must share a revenue base that is relatively limited.

The CAB is required, under the terms of the Air Deregulation Act, to ensure the provision of essential air service to small communities. This process is still underway and the Board will soon be issuing some findings on essential air service for comment. There is no indication, thus far, that serious consideration is being given to the cost of air service to small communities. The situation in the past five months is that air fares to rural Alaska have increased over 20 percent while those on high density routes such as Anchorage-Seattle have remained relatively stable.

The result, thus far, of deregulation of air service has been a plethora of special fares on high density routes with substantially reduced fares by airlines offering services on new routes. However, fares on low density routes have often increased. There is little system or economic pattern that can be determined as yet, but there is cause for genuine apprehension that the net result of deregulation will be substantially higher costs for rural Alaskans.

In recent months, in Alaska, there have been several incidents in air service that cause concern for the future. Two major subcontractors for mail service were shut down by the FAA because of faulty maintenance procedures. In the past, this has been one of the first indications of an air carrier that is operating with limited revenues and rising costs and looking for ways out of a cost squeeze

One major subcontractor has indicated he is terminating his contract and will discontinue service to some 53 points in Western Alaska. A new subcontractor with an entire new fleet of aircraft and new personnel will replace the old operation.

The present situation is that mail and freight service to many points is extremely poor. Passenger service is marginal in many areas due to the small aircraft in use and unreliability of scheduled service. Many operators say that they cannot finance more suitable aircraft without a great increase in fares, freight rates, and mail pay.

The condition of airports and support services for aviation is worse in many areas than it was twenty years ago. Poor telephone service to many places makes it difficult to make reservations and to exchange weather information and other aviation data.

Limited funding for airport improvement has made it impossible to generate a major program for bush airport improvement. With some 230 rural airports competing with those in the urban areas for about \$20 million in mostly federal funds with some state money, there is obviously not enough funding in the system. Usually improvements are not completely adequate to do the job because of the necessity to cut costs.

The state has never accepted any responsibility to provide radio aids to supplement the FAA program. The FAA system provides good coverage at high altitudes and around urban areas. It provides no coverage or service to almost all of the smaller communities. The FAA has a few radio aids budgeted over the next few years, but

these will only provide a very limited expansion of capability for the air system.

There are no provisions for terminals or storage at almost all of the smaller airports. Some of these are a substantial distance from the village they serve and sometimes people must wait for hours in cold or rainy weather for delayed air service.

Improvements in the rural air system should have a positive effect upon economic development in several areas. Fisheries is the first example that comes to mind because of the substantial portion of the annual fish catch that is being lifted by air service already. Longer runways at key locations would improve the efficiency of this operation.

Many Alaska Native village corporations are planning new ventures in forest products, agriculture, tourism and other ventures. Improved air service, at reasonable cost, will enhance the viability of these ventures in their initial years.

Development of both off-shore and on-shore oil and gas will continue to make sporadic localized demands for intensive air service. A basic good statewide structure will make it easier to accommodate these surges in demand without severe deterioration of service to the rest of Alaska.

While there are a range of problems with the States - Alaska, international and interurban air service in Alaska, most of these are being addressed and major projects are underway to remedy many of them. The effects of deregulation on costs in these areas still remains to be seen but it will certainly be largely affected by the general effect of deregulation on air service nationwide; and any detrimental effects will probably be addressed by nationwide corrective measures.

The problem of rural air service is unique to Alaska and can be most affected by what we do ourselves. Federal programs will never be sufficient to meet the requirements for a first rate rural air service.

Airports, aircraft and personnel to man both are the primary requirements to any air system. Radio aids, communication and other



supporting services are absolutely necessary if a reasonable level of safety and reliability is to be maintained.

Rural airports will require the expenditure of a great deal of money to bring them all up to a reasonable level of quality. Some areas can be connected to a central airport by road but this is a limited option. The relationship between airports and aircraft is the area where greatest immediate savings can be achieved.

Many communities in Southeastern Alaska, Kodiak Island and other areas still rely upon float equipped or amphibious aircraft for all of their service. In areas where this service is predominant, the utilization of amphibious aircraft with greater capabilities in handling freight and passengers is an alternative. Many of these places do not have a good airport site.

Helicopters are another alternative for places that have no runways or inadequate runways. The villages around Bethel are an example where helicopter service might be considered. Both helicopters and amphibious aircraft are inefficient to operate economically and demand higher fares than conventional aircraft.

Another category of aircraft that would lessen runaway costs are short takeoff and landing (STOL) types. Many of these presently available can carry large freight items and large numbers of passengers. They too are inefficient to operate economically compared to conventional aircraft, especially over long distances.

However, when the costs of using aircraft of this type are measured against the costs of building long runways, some significant savings may be realized without penalizing the service to the small communities. The obvious question that arises is why have we not done this in the past?

The major reason is that we have been locked into federal funding patterns which provide money for airports but not for aircraft. There are limited federal programs for aircraft now available, but these are too new to have any effect yet and may be too limited.

Utilization of state monies allows us to make the decision for airport expansion or more suitable aircraft on its merits. Proper aircraft would provide more immediate relief while the state entered upon a

long term program of upgrading airports. The other major advantage is that such a program could be adjusted to fill economic dips if sufficient long term planning is accomplished. However, many communities do not fit into the above patterns and need immediate relief on airport expansion or improvement.

There appears to be an adequate supply of pilots and trained flight personnel. Expanded training opportunities in Alaska will insure that the air services are provided by local residents to the maximum extent possible.

Maintenance of rural airports has been a constant problem. The most logical solution is to continue to train and utilize local people. This problem will be greater if radio aide, field lights and other improvements are made. The answer is still to train local people to the maximum extent possible in repair and maintenance of equipment.

Radio aides, communications and field lighting need special designs to make them low energy utilizers and as easy for maintenance as possible. They must be certifiable by the FAA but designed for use in village Alaska. The experience with small earth station design has provided us with a fund of experience in how to design electronics for rural Alaska.

Terminal improvements at major regional hubs and rural airports should be strongly considered. Alaskans of all walks of life spend a substantial part of their lives in airport terminals or waiting around airports. Why not make the experience as comfortable as possible.

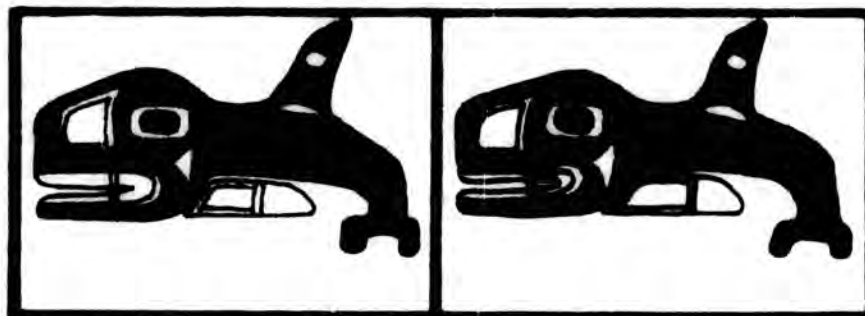
Weather observers should be hired and trained throughout the state. It is ridiculous to continue to operate in large areas where no public weather information is available.

Communications can be provided with conference (hot-line) circuits to link rural areas with the regional hubs as a minimum improvement at this time. These circuits would connect FAA stations, airline offices and others in the hubs with postmasters and airline agents in the villages. They would eliminate many of the frustrations involved with waiting for aircraft that never come.

There has never been a real aviation system plan for Alaska. The state has an airport plan, FAA an air traffic and air navigation plan,

CAB and economic plan and each carrier its own plan. The improvements suggested here should, indeed, must be related to an overall plan which will provide the base for the private system of air carriers to give the best possible service at reasonable rates. It is primarily a state responsibility to design such a system for inter-Alaska services and one that has been ignored too long.

Aviation is too important in the future of Alaska to continue to receive the casual offhand treatment it has received in the past from the state government. The time to move is now, before we enter another period of major development, and the problems are pushed to the back of the heap to emerge again after the next boom period with no basic changes in the flaws of the system.



Biographical Sketch

Walter B. Parker has been involved in Alaska's air transportation system since 1946, beginning as a radio operator for the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) and continuing through various positions as an air traffic controller, training officer, planning officer, and evaluation officer for the Federal Aviation Administration which succeeded the CAA in 1957. He was Transportation Planning Officer for the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska in 1970-71 where he did extensive work on the problems of rural air transportation. He then consulted in transportation until 1974, working on a comprehensive economic analysis of the Alaska transportation system in 1973 which included a strong segment on the air system. He was Director of the Technical Staff for the Alaska State Office of the Pipeline Coordinator in 1974 where he had a good deal of involvement with the air support operations for that effort. In 1975-76, as Commissioner of Highways, he was active in developing the legislation which eventually created the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities in 1977. As State Co-Chairman of the Federal/State Land Use Planning Commission in 1976-79 he provided oversight on several transportation studies. He is now active again in consulting and working on air transportation problems in rural Alaska for the Alaska Legislature.

NOTES

WATER BORNE TRANSPORTATION

**Prepared by
George C. Silides, P.E.**

Transportation! Usually the most sensitive issue in Alaska, whether the issue pertains to the transport of natural resources through and out of the State, or whether it concerns the cost of transporting the everyday necessities. No matter what the current economic development may be in any part of Alaska, the cost of living and the quality of life is enhanced by improved transportation or by the construction of those facilities which give access to adequate transportation. This paper deals, briefly, with various aspects of water borne transportation and with some of the capital improvements/investments that are needed to make better transportation modes possible and effective along the coast and through the great interior rivers.

Historic Dependency

All of the people of Alaska have always been highly dependent upon water borne transportation, though nowhere is this fact more truly reflected than throughout rural Alaska. There the quality of life and, in fact, the very ability to maintain a community at a given location depends greatly on the ability to move freight and people in and out of the community.

Facilities Need

It is a modern paradox that in these days of sophisticated, high speed, transfer of people and the goods of commerce, many communities of this State remain totally without any mode of surface transportation by a public facility, or of regular service by a surface common carrier.

Need studies conducted by the Division of Waters and Harbors, beginning in 1972, showed scarcely a community along the coast and rivers that was not in need of some attention. To the historic state role of rendering fisheries assistance was now added the concern of providing public assistance for the handling of fundamental

freight needs in both urban and rural areas. In the case of the rural areas, such assistance often meant the difference between measurable economic growth, such as was afforded by the public docks at Dillingham and Bethel, or continued privation.

Financial Need

Also in 1972, it became evident that dependence upon the receipts from the Marine Fuel Tax was no longer adequate to both sustain and enlarge a marine facilities construction program. Furthermore, such use taxes are subject to erosion or outright repeal by legislative action.

Additionally, port and harbor projects for which Corps of Engineers or Federal Economic Development participation had been authorized demanded a permanent commitment of funds which would be immune from future legislative action. The best solution to provide this fund was determined to be a series of General Obligation Bond issues.

Legislative Action

In 1972 the Legislature and the Administration joined their efforts in an initial \$20,000,000 bond issue for water resource development, thus marking the birth of a modern, long range, port and harbor improvement and construction program. A comprehensive Port Facilities Act in 1974 gave further meaning and direction. The program of furnishing adequate facilities to the burgeoning industry of harvesting Alaska's fish and shellfish resources, and to the freight handling needs of coastal and river communities seemed well launched.

Administrative Action

There followed a series of significant actions. In addition to expansion and repairs to existing facilities at Ketchikan, Juneau, and Sitka, docks were constructed at Bethel and Dillingham to serve as Regional Ports. Small boat harbors were completed at Sand Point and King Cove, and begun elsewhere. Studies were conducted to determine the needs of the Kenai Peninsula, the Seward Peninsula, and Southwest Alaska. Determination was made of the economic feasibility and of the capital improvements necessary for the exten-

sion of the coastal freight handling capabilities of the Marine Highway System to the westward.

Delays

The marine facilities program was dealt a setback in 1976 when, on very poor advice, the Governor vetoed the legislative bond issue authorization of that year. Despite a later change in Administration attitude, and a 1978 bond issue authorization, the program has been impeded in the recovery of both its scope and impetus.

Much of the delay to facilities construction and to extension of the marine highway system stems from the 1977 re-creation of the oversized Alaska Department of Transportation. Such was its unwieldy structure in 1962 before it was broken up by Executive Order, and historic evidence of its failure is being repeated. One can recite a litany of ills, but the evident result is a lack of accountability. Formerly productive units have been reduced to bureaucratic cogs, and the Department appears unable to comply in a timely fashion to either legislative intent or the Governor's openly stated wishes.

An unconcionable delay to proven necessary and publicly desired development has been caused by interference from other agencies on environmental grounds, after valid environmental protection needs have been identified and satisfied. In 1977 the Legislature responded to this interference by enacting a Master Permitting Act, but to this date the Act has not been fully implemented as various agencies guard their "turf". Such delay is economically devastating. Faced with today's rate of inflation, the development potential of the principal sum of any bond issue cannot long endure.

Oversight Protection

In its concern to develop criteria for the beneficial use of unanticipated state revenues, the Conference On Alaska's Future Frontiers must also concern itself with the survival of that criteria within the social and political mechanism of the coming decade. A firmer stand against spurious attacks and more effective legislative oversight will aid that survival.

Extension of the Marine Highway System

Through the operation of the Alaska Marine Highway System, surface movement has been made possible to some of the roadless communities of Southeastern Alaska, Prince William Sound, and Kodiak Island. Though the system was primarily designed to accommodate tourist traffic and private vehicles, the freight transportation capacity of the system was quickly recognized. Today the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System make possible the delivery of a substantial portion of the much needed freight received at their ports of call.

There is a recognized and growing need for public marine transportation service to the communities of western coastal Alaska, whose water orientation is a way of life.

Because of the ready accessibility by water to almost all of the communities along the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Bristol Bay, an extensive system of roads is neither needed nor economically practical. It is both needful and useful for the State of Alaska to alleviate the existing conditions by implementing a moderate, economically sound, extension of the Marine Highway System.



That system should use small, high freight capability-low passenger, coastal ferries. It cannot use the tourist passenger-personal vehicle type of vessel presently in use in southeastern Alaska, and between Seward-Homer-Kodiak. If currently uninformed and disruptive political pressure regarding the size and type of vessel is set aside, implementation of the extension through vessel purchase and construction of docking facilities can begin.

River Transportation

The major rivers of Alaska were once the main routes of access from the coast. They are once again resuming their historic status of major highways for commerce, fed from the regional port at Bethel on the Kuskokwim River and the railhead at Nenana on the Tanana River.

Two additions to the State's Interior transportation system are needed if the Yukon and the Kuskokwim are to contribute their full potential to the transportation economy.

The first is the construction of a rail link to the village of Tanana, near the confluence of the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. Such an extension will have a marked effect on the handling of cargo destined for river points. One effect will be the elimination of the necessity of partially loading barges to 3-1/2 feet of draft for the trip on the Tanana River, and reloading at the village of Tanana to a draft of about 6 feet for the trip on the Yukon.

The second addition to the system which can beneficially affect traffic patterns and haul distances is the joining of the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers in the vicinity of their nearest proximity to each other. An earlier plan to join the rivers by means of a canal has proven both economically and environmentally unsound. The feasible alternative is to join the rivers with a heavy duty, unpaved, gravel road, approximately 30 miles in length. A dock is proposed at each end, and a probable oil products pipeline alongside. All communities can then enjoy access from the deep water port at Bethel, and from the railhead at Nenana and or Tanana.

In any event, there are presently few, if any, cargo off-loading facilities at the river communities. Because of this lack, unloading of cargo is a difficult, often dangerous, time consuming affair. As a

result, it is also much more expensive than it should be. The added expense is passed on to the consumer, and increases the already high cost of living in Interior Alaska.

The problem is further aggravated by the various stages of the rivers — high in June, low in October, and unpredictably anywhere at other times. No cargo handling facility can be built on these rivers without careful attention to water level fluctuations during the shipping season, and to the problem of ice battering at Spring breakup. Any solution must be common to all communities.

Perhaps the most promising scheme is one adapted from facilities on the Mississippi. This consists of a rail mounted, movable platform which can serve as a barge breasting device and unloading platform, and as a means to winch freight up the bank to the village level if no trucks are available, as is often the case. The necessary rails are set in a concrete plank ramp, already developed and in use in the state.

The Northwest

One cannot close a paper on marine transportation without mentioning the need at Nome and at Kotzebue to lighter freight for very long distances. This is especially true at Kotzebue. The cost of this lightering is reported to be 50% of the total transportation cost.

A deep water port on the Seward Peninsula is necessary for the reduction of these lighterage costs, for the development of the area's mineral potential, and as an alternative oil and gas pipeline terminal. To this date, the State has left the development of such a port to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is time that the State undertook the development of this deep water port on its own account if there is to be any hope of a reasonable construction time frame.

Recommendations

From the preceeding discourse we are led to the following recommendations as some of the action necessary by the State during the next decade.

1. Establish a high freight - low passenger capability ferry system between Kodiak, Unalaska, and Bristol Bay.
2. Construct a railroad link to the village of Tanana on the Yukon.
3. Construct barge tie up and freight off-loading facilities at the communities on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers, and on their major tributaries.
4. Construct a heavy duty, approximately 30 mile long, gravel, unsurfaced, highway link between the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.
5. Expand the regional ports at Bethel and Dillingham.
6. Construct regional ports at Naknek and the Seward Peninsula.
7. Establish a ferry - portage system from Iliamna Bay to Kvichak Bay, via the Pile Bay portage, Iliamna Lake, and the Kvichak River.
8. Establish an independent Alaska Port Authority.
9. Put less dependency on Federal assistance.
10. Establish adequate legislative oversight procedures.

About the Author

George C. Silides has been a resident of the State of Alaska since 1947, and a Registered Professional Engineer since 1952. He has maintained his own consulting service since 1957 engaged in a varied and widespread practice of Engineering, and as Consultant to industry and government on matters of resource development. As a former State Senator he was active in the establishment of more effective marine transportation development procedures and funding. He is the author and co-author of a number of published reports on the economic and engineering feasibility of marine facilities, as well as a participant in the design of some of those facilities.

NOTES

ROAD TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

by
Woodrow Johansen

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Prior to July 1, 1960, road construction and maintenance in the District, Territory and State of Alaska was performed by a succession of agencies of the federal government. On July 1, 1960, the State of Alaska through the Department of Public Works assumed the responsibility of constructing and maintaining its highway system. In 1963 the Department of Highways was created by the Executive Order of then Governor Egan and in 1977 Governor Hammond encompassed the organization within the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

Alaska Road Commission

The first organized effort to locate and construct trails and wagon roads in Alaska began in 1885, 1898 and 1899 when expeditions under the War Department were sent in to the District of Alaska to collect data regarding the country and the best national routes of travel. It is interesting to note that the routes travelled by these expeditions are the locations of the principal highways of this State.

In 1901 Congress appropriated \$100,000 to the War Department for roads and bridges in Alaska to be spent on a route from Valdez to Eagle. The funds were sufficient only for the construction of a crude pack trail through sections otherwise impassable and the building of some of the most necessary bridges along the route.

In January 1905 Congress created and funded a formal organization — The Alaska Road Commission — as an agency of the War Department whose purpose was to improve and maintain the system of trails and wagon roads in the District of Alaska and to construct new roads as available funds permitted. This system of some 4,890 miles consisted of wagon roads, winter sled roads and

trails. As the only construction and maintenance organization in the Territory, the Road Commission performed many services not ordinarily thought of as a function of a highway organization. They maintained the national cemeteries and monuments at Sitka, maintained the roads and trails in Mt. McKinley National Park, built and maintained a ferry in Norton Sound, built and flagged winter trails, built shelter cabins for the use of those driving dog teams on winter trails, built and maintained telephone lines, built and maintained flood control works, airfields, and a portage between the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. In addition they operated tramways: one from Dunbar to Logjam on the Tolovana, one from Nome to Shelton on the Seward Peninsula, and one from Chitina to McCarthy in the Wrangell Mountains.

Funding for the operations of the Road Commission was obtained from federal, territorial and other sources:

1. Federal Sources —

- a. Each year the War Department and after 1932 the Department of Interior presented a budget to Congress to cover the operations of maintenance and construction.
- b. Reimbursable agreements with the Quartermaster Corps and the National Park Service.
- c. The "Alaska Fund" was established by Congress to fund the operations of the Alaska Road Commission. It was created by setting aside 65% of the monies collected from taxes levied on liquor and tobacco outside of incorporated towns in Alaska. The amount available from this source varied from \$28,000 to \$242,000 a year.

2. Territorial Sources —

Beginning in 1920 the Territory of Alaska appropriated funds for the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and trails for specific projects as recommended by the Territorial Board of Road Commission. Over the years this fund amounted to \$6,250,000.

3. Other Sources —

These funds were paid to the Alaska Road Commission by municipalities, corporations and individuals as compensation for services performed. The compensation was made in cash or goods and services.

The Road Commission continued as the principal road building agency in the District and Territory of Alaska for fifty-one years. Under the Alaska Road Commission Two Hundred and Three Million, Two Hundred and Thirty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty-One dollars were expended to improve and maintain the highway system. When the Alaska Road Commission was transferred to the Department of Commerce on September 16, 1979, there were 1,000 miles of paved primary highway connecting our principal cities, 1,250 miles of feeder roads, 1,350 miles of local roads and 445 miles of trails built and maintained in the Territory. By Act of Congress — The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 — the functions of the agency were taken over by the Bureau of Public Roads of the Department of Commerce.

Bureau of Public Roads

The signing of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 by the President on June 29, 1956, ushered in a new era of road building in Alaska. With the passage of this act, the Alaska Road Commission was made a part of the Bureau of Public Roads. The functions of highway maintenance and construction were continued as in the past; however, the other services previously performed on a reimbursable basis were curtailed.

Alaska, in Fiscal Year 1957, participated for the first time in the Federal Aid Highway Act and received an allocation of some \$2,000,000. The following year the allocation was \$13,500,000. At long last, the Territory was assured of reasonably adequate funds with which to effectively plan and efficiently carry out the improvement and extension of Alaska's highway network.

The Bureau continued to carry out its responsibility as a federal agency until Alaska was admitted as the 49th State on January 2, 1959. They then contracted to carry on the functions for the State until July 1, 1960, at which time the Division of Highways under the Department of Public Works became an operating organization. The

State then took over all the responsibility for planning, constructing and maintaining the highway system.

State Highway Organization

The Division of Highways organized under the Department of Public Works was the State Division that organized and operated the highway organization from July 1, 1960, until September 1, 1962. The task of organizing and staffing a division of state government between January 3, 1959, and July 1, 1960, was formidable. The organization was staffed with people newly hired from outside coming from many states in the west and mid-west and coming from Highway organizations as diverse as the topography of the states from which they came. You can imagine, therefore, the differing opinions that existed on any subject and the difficulties encountered in trying to resolve those differences. Mr. Downing, then Commissioner of Public Works, and Mr. Sherard, then Director Division of Highways, must be given credit for developing an operating organization in such a short period of time.

As can be expected, problems developed in the organization, projects began falling behind, relations with the public deteriorated and the legislature launched an investigation. As a result, the then Governor Egan issued Executive Order No. 18 dated March 15, 1962, which established the Department of Highways as a department of state government and appointed D.A. McKinnon as Commissioner.

The Department of Highways provided an organization with a logical assignment of functions to four principal divisions in Headquarters and in the Districts. With this basic organization much more authority, accountability and responsibility was given the District Engineers and their staffs. As a result things began to move and the highway program as we know it today evolved. One year after the Department was created, it was handling \$80,000,000 worth of engineering and construction work.

In 1975 some legislators and members of the public began discussing the advisability of establishing a Department of Transportation to encompass all modes of transportation in one department. The federal government had reorganized in this manner and many thought we could work more closely with them if we were so organized. Others thought by so reorganizing there would be

closer cooperation between the various modes. Still others thought an organization formed along functional lines encompassing all modes of transportation would be more efficient. Governor Hammond publicly discussed the proposal in 1976 and on July 1, 1977, by Executive Order No. 30, he established the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. The new department essentially combined the old Departments of Highways and Public Works and encompassed Highways, Aviation, Buildings, Waters and Harbors, the International Airports, and the Ferry System. The intent was to organize this department on functional lines. It is an intent which is only partly realized at present but it is a goal that will be achieved.

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is now two years old with an operating budget of \$150,000,000 exclusive of the Capital Improvement Program. The highway mode including marine transportation accounts for \$92,000,000 of this amount. The Capital Improvement Program funded for highways by the legislature amounts to approximately \$200,000,000 — \$39,000,000 direct appropriation and \$161,000,000 bond money.

CURRENT STATUS

At this writing there are approximately 6,700 miles of road maintained as a part of the State Highway System. Of this the Federal Aid System accounts for 5,400 miles: 3,000 miles is primary, 2,400 miles secondary and 100 miles is urban. The Marine System accounts for about 1,440 miles of this system. The State Maintained and Local Service Roads and Trails System amounts to 1,250 miles.

In addition the cities, the boroughs and villages of this state maintain 2,600 miles of roads, streets and walkways. Under federal control in the National Parks, National Forests and Reservations, there are 1,750 miles of road being maintained.

To maintain the State System the last legislature appropriated \$42,177,200 for fiscal 1980. Of this amount \$5,500,000 was earmarked for Haul Road maintenance and camp construction. We have, therefore, some \$36,700,000 to maintain approximately 5,300 miles of highway varying in section from a 20 foot dirt road in an outlying area to four and six-lane paved divided highways containing storm drains, sidewalks, utility conduits, lighting, signalization and pavement marking.

To maintain the highway system of 3,600 miles of roads in 1956, the Alaska Road Commission expended \$4,100,000 or an average cost of \$1,100 per mile. This compares with an average cost of \$6,900 per mile we are now spending on our highway system. When one takes into account the depreciation of the dollar over a period of twenty-three years, when one considers the actual amount of resources required to maintain a modern highway section as compared with one of two decades ago, when one realizes that motor vehicle registration in this State has increased from 81,924 in 1960 to 318,217 in 1978 and when one examines closely the work being performed to maintain our highway system; one must realize that the State of Alaska is not committing sufficient resources to accomplish the task.

The projected State Highway Design and Construction Program for the next six years is in an amount of \$96,000,000 in Fiscal 1979 to a high of \$143,000,000 in 1982. The total projected funding for the six year program approaches \$678,000,000 with about \$305,000,000 allocated for the Central Region — the Greater Anchorage Area. The construction cost for this program is estimated at \$568,000,000 and the remaining \$100,000,000 will cover the costs of location, design, right-of-way, and utilities. Right-of-Way and utility costs are of course exceedingly heavy in the Central Region. In this region for the period 1979-1980 these costs are estimated at more than double the total costs for the rest of the state.

Sources of Funding (Federal)

The sources of funding for road construction in the state are many. Far and above the largest is the Federal Aid Highway Program of construction on the primary, secondary and urban roads, which program also includes funding for the construction and alteration of the state ferries. These funds are administered by the Highway Division, Design and Construction Section, within the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and amount to approximately \$80,000,000 a year.

Another federal program administered by Highway Division, Design and Construction, is the Safer Off-System Roads Program. These funds are intended to correct safety hazards on heavily travelled roads and bridges not a part of the Federal Aid Highway System. Approximately \$8,500,000 is allotted to Alaska each year.

under this program providing for a total program with state matching funds of \$9,500,000.

A third federal program of significance to this state is the High Hazard and Road Side Obstacle Program. As the name implies this program is intended to eliminate hazardous locations on the Federal Aid Highway System. It is administered by Highway Division, Design and Construction, and amounts to about \$5,000,000 per year including the state matching money. This program gives special emphasis to eliminate or mitigate the hazards existing at railroad crossings, at high volume intersections or at any section of highway where an obstacle or hazard may exist.

As a result of the deterioration of bridges throughout the nation and the failures that have occurred as a result of this deterioration, Congress initiated a program of bridge replacement. Work can be performed on or off the Federal Aid Highway System. This program administered by Highway Division, Design and Construction, will replace three bridges in the state in the next two years. Funding for those two years amounts to approximately \$16,000,000 including state matching funds.



Sources of Funding (State)

In 1977 the State Legislature initiated a program of road construction titled the Local Service Roads and Trails Program. It also is administered by Highway Division, Design and Construction. Under this program, funded entirely by the legislature, some 530 miles of new and reconstructed road have been built. In addition several hundred miles of foot paths, bike paths, vehicle parking areas, bank protection, board walks, foot bridges and winter trails have been built by the state to be maintained by the local communities. To accomplish the above the state has spent some \$24,000,000 — \$14,000,000 directly in unorganized boroughs and \$9,000,000 allocated to organized boroughs, the Municipality of Anchorage and home-rule cities to be spent on projects of their choosing in accordance with policies and procedures established by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

Each year the legislature will make direct grants to a specific city, borough, village or organization to accomplish roadway or trail work outside the established programs administered by the state. Some of the grants are made to the Department with specific instructions on how the funds are to be expended.

Maintenance

The law which created a Federal Aid Highway Program in 1916 stipulated that to receive the benefits of the program a state must, among other things, establish a functioning Highway Department and agree to maintain any project built using Federal Aid to Highways Funds.

When the Legislature of the State of Alaska established the Local Service Roads and Trails Program in the 1970-71 Session, the law contained a stipulation that the then Department of Highways would be responsible for the maintenance of any project funded and built under the program.

From the foregoing it is clear that the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is responsible for maintaining the major portion of the highways in Alaska — approximately 6,700 miles. To accomplish this work the Department operates with a budget approximately \$42,000,000 a year including \$5,500,000 for facilities

and maintenance on the road to the North Slope. This money is a direct appropriation by the legislature funded by general obligation bonds and apportioned to the operating regions in accordance with their road mileage and traffic volume.

All organized local communities (2nd class cities and higher) are eligible for revenue sharing for public roads and streets providing they accept the maintenance responsibility. In Fiscal 1979-80 communities applied for revenue sharing for maintaining 1,350 miles of public road and 166 miles of winter road open to the public. The state will participate in revenue sharing only on those roads that carry licensed vehicles. It will not share the maintenance responsibility for the upkeep of trails not constructed by the state. Revenue sharing can include not only roads built by the state but roads and streets built by others.

Other Roads

In addition to the 6,700 miles of road maintained by the state, there exists some 1,800 miles of road constructed and maintained by the Federal Government in our National Parks, National Forests and in those areas that were formerly Indian Reservations in Alaska. Funding for these activities is, of course, obtained from congressional appropriation.

There are another 2,600 miles of roads, streets and trails under the jurisdiction of local authorities — Boroughs, cities and service districts. These facilities are constructed and maintained with funds obtained from local taxes and grants from the state.

CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

The maintenance, improvement and extension of the road system in the State is a subject which is constantly being discussed and debated in our homes, on the floor of the legislature, in the press and on radio and television. There is no activity of state government that directly effects the everyday life of a resident of Alaska as much as the activity of highway maintenance and construction. As a result, any proposal of the Department of Transportation is a proposal that generates interest in the work involved.

The various procedures developed and followed by the State as a

project progresses from inception to completion are procedures which generate participation from the public, other State agencies and Federal agencies. In following the procedures outlined in the "Alaska Plan" for the development of a project, the Department progresses through a procedure of some seventy steps involving the participation of those interested in at least ten public hearings and meetings and requiring written contact and cooperation of some seventy-five government agencies and private organizations. It is the input from this process that results in the final product.

There are no government or private entities whose efforts are directed toward the construction and maintenance of roads other than those agencies mentioned previously. The National Park Service constructs and maintains roads and trails in National Parks and Monuments. The Forest Service constructs and maintains roads in National Forests sometimes with their own forces, but more frequently through agreements with the State or with the logging contractors utilizing the forest products. The Bureau of Indian Affairs constructs and maintains roads on Indian Reservations or on what was formerly Indian Reservation or on land that has been or is being turned over to Native Cooperations as part of the Land Claims Settlement Act. The activities of these Federal agencies maintain some 1,750 miles of road funded with Congressional Appropriations.

Boroughs, municipalities and service districts within the State maintain some 2,600 miles of road mostly funded by local taxes or state revenue sharing.

OTHER PERSPECTIVES

Most of the government or private entities whose efforts may be directed at times toward highway construction and maintenance are really involved not so much with the idea of getting a road constructed or maintained, but with being able to accomplish this improvement with the least adverse effect on their primary area of concern. Whenever a location hearing on some road project is in progress, some participant will invariably object, not to the idea of the road, but to its location as it may effect their area of concern; not to the need for the improvement, but to its width as it may effect their area of concern. It is seldom, if ever, that the participants object to the idea of a project.