

Aleutian proposal gains support

An official of the National Marine Fisheries Service has endorsed a proposal for transportation service to the Aleutian Chain and Western Alaska as a means of increasing alternative economic bases for the residents of the Pribilof Islands.

Walter Kirkness, director of the Pribilof Islands Program for the National Marine Fisheries Service, made the comments in a letter to Agafon Krukoff, president of the Aleut Corporation.

Aleut Alaska Shipping Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Aleut Corporation, and American President Lines (APL) have proposed to combine Aleut Alaska's extensive regional coverage with APL's fast line-haul service between Seattle and Dutch Harbor, a service already available in conjunction with APL's regular international service between the Pacific Northwest and the Far East. In order for the new service to be established, the Merchant Marine Act of 1936 must be amended

to permit APL to perform, without benefit of subsidy, the line-haul service for the Aleuts.

"At the present time," Kirkness wrote, "due to the infrequent freight trips, the government maintenance and building programs on the Pribilof Islands, as well as those of other entities, are often delayed or slowed down because of the lack of essential materials.

"However, I believe the most important contribution from improved freight service will be the economy of the Pribilof Islands.