

# Irreverent view welcomes publisher

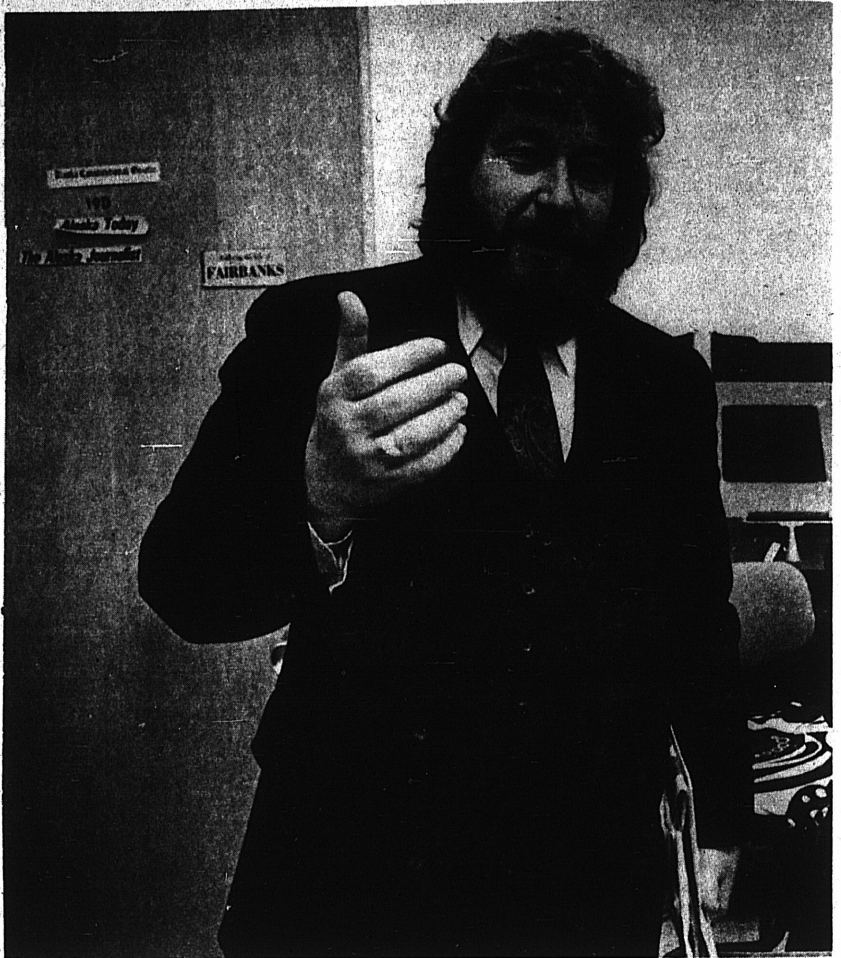
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My heart soars like an eagle. Sometimes it does not come back. Last night was one of those evenings. After considerable drink here in Fairbanks I don't remember playing the Space Wars game. I found myself in Hawaii interviewing Tom Richards, Jr. This was not at all like my visions previously. I could determine what year it was from the conversation and strangely it seemed I was no longer advertising manager. And unbelievably Tom was no longer publisher.

I asked Tom what had happened to the paper

"Jack, you must understand Native politics. It

involves some of the most potent political infighting ever experienced on the political scene. I came here to my favorite island back in 1978 for what I had thought was a vacation. While I was gone the Board of Directors called a special meeting. This did not disturb me when I found out about it since Willie was board chairman. He is NANA Eskimo and a good friend of mine. As a matter of fact no one else came to the meeting. This in and of itself was a good indication that we had all under sound control. However, a very spurious and looking back at it disturbing element took us by surprise. This was the year of the proxy for the Tundra



Tundra Times Advertising Manager Jack O. Hakkila

Times. The other board members attended by proxy representative. I had once heard how proxies had been used at a Doyon board meeting when I was still in Fairbanks but this tactic was unheard of for a Native newspaper such as the Tundra Times."

"But Tom," I asked, "How could they use the proxy method when Willie was the only one in attendance?"

"It seems that Willie had dispatched Bill Hatley of the striking Wien pilots to pick up the proxies. Each of the board members had instructed Bill to vote them. When Bill phoned me here in Hawaii informing me that I had been replaced, I was astounded to say the least. 'Well Friend!' Bill told me, 'It looks like you've been replaced.' I could hardly believe my ears when Bill told me he had been selected the new publisher. Apparently Bill had done some swift campaigning while picking up proxies and the board members had felt sorry for him since he had been out of work for almost two years."

"Tom, what did you then do?"

"Publishing was still dear to my heart. I wrote a grant application and received fifty thousand dollars from the Friends of Worth who were very interested in saving Native culture."

"But fifty thousand dollars would hardly start a newspaper?"

"It was difficult at first. We moved back to Fairbanks where we borrowed the All Alaska Weekly's mimeograph machine which they were only using to print a morning paper. We called our paper the How'ard Times, partially in memory of how hard the times had been when Howard Rock had founded the Tundra Times and certainly

as a reminder of how hard they had become for us."

Naturally I asked him about advertising revenues.

"Advertising was not a problem for us. We started a paper borough."

I was somewhat confused. You mean the newspaper started its own borough?"

"Yes," Tom replied. Through research I had been secretly conducting while on vacations in Hawaii, I discovered that the pipeline went through former Native lands north of Fairbanks. The Howard Times formed its own borough and taxed the pipeline. We no longer have an advertising department or any of the worries that accompany supervision of an advertising manager."

"What about the Tundra Times?" I asked.

"Shortly after Bill Hatley became publisher, the striking Wien pilots hired him as lobbyist in Juneau. Only days later Willie Hensley visited the office, left, and with the newspaper folded under his arm, declared,