

# RCA Here

At one minute after midnight, Sunday January 10, RCA Alaska Communications formally took over the Alaskan Communications System.

The Federal government decided in 1967 to turn over operation of Alaskan Communications from the Air Force to a private operator. Air Force Secretary Robert C. Seams, Jr. signed the official papers for the changeover to RCA Friday afternoon in Washington, D.C.

RCA officials and the press witnessed the historic signing, which ended the military's 70 year history of providing communications for Alaska.

Thirty-three companies submitted bids for the ACS in 1968 after Congress authorized the sale in 1967. The RCA, which included an agreement to invest a minimum of nearly 30 million dollars in new communications equipment in Alaska and to reduce telephone and telegraph rates, was accepted in 1969.

Most of the scheduled rate decreases went into effect in December 1969, after the transfer of ACS from the Air Force into private hands had been agreed upon.

RCA Alascom now handles all telegraphic and long-distance telephone service within Alaska and to the Outside. The purchase price involved the transfer of over \$31 million from RCA to the federal government.

Among the improvements RCA expects to develop are improvements in rural communications in Alaska and the greatly increased use of satellites for communication to the lower-48.