

## *Editorial Comment—*

# The Exploiter

Gordon L. Corbett, an executive with the United Presbyterian Church for the Alaska and Yukon area, has forwarded to the Tundra Times an astonishing clipping from the San Diego Union newspaper.

On April 11, a California columnist carried a shocking interview with a Bethel bartender which reveals some attitudes throughout the state that bear looking into.

"What's the idea of a guy like you living in Alaska in a town of 2,800 people just to hold a job managing a bar?" the interviewer asked the former San Diego man, described in the column as a California "swinger" and "fun guy," who left for Alaska three years ago.

Back on a visit, the bartender answered, "It's the money. Bethel is surrounded by 55 Eskimo villages, each with at least 300 persons. I haven't learned to speak Eskimo, but I have no trouble selling them beer at \$1.25, 'call' whiskey, \$1.50 a drink. I get bonuses in addition to a salary and next year, the owner is giving me half the bar."

"My wife draws \$13,000 a year as regional director of A\_\_\_\_\_ and I'm opening a Laundromat. I'll come back to San Diego in five years and you won't know me. I'll be rich."

Commented Mr. Corbett who sent us the clipping: "It seems to me a real shame that so many people come to Alaska with the openly avowed intention of getting rich as quick as possible and then getting out."

"When such people are so frankly open in their boasting, it seems to me we have a right to identify them and their attitudes and pass the word along to the people who are being exploited by them and trust that the people will then use their common sense in dealing with them in the future."

We agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Corbett and urge the people of Alaska, particularly the native people, to take a good look at the fly-by-night, get-rich-quick merchants in the state who are here only to make a fast buck, to exploit people and to exploit Alaska.

This kind of man is not likely to want to contribute to building anything toward Alaska's future, nor to protecting the land and its people.

Wherever possible, we would like to see the boycotting of such merchants. Find out who they are and stop adding dollars to their pot, even if it means doing without things.

The new native corporations must develop locally owned, locally controlled businesses and these fledgling enterprises will need all the support of the people. We urge Alaskans to support the merchants and businessmen who are here to become part of Alaska, to build it together toward a future, and who respect its people.