

Alaska's Unique Role at UNIMART-

State as International Crossroads to Dominate Exhibit

Alaska's unique role as an international crossroads will dominate the 49th state's 2,400-square-foot exhibit at UNIMART '72, the 22nd Annual Washington State International Trade Fair, set to run from August 11 to 20 in the Seattle Center Coliseum.

Alaska Day will be celebrated Opening Day at UNIMART.

Participation of the nation's biggest state will be directed by the Division of Economic Enterprise, one of two principal arms of Alaska's Department of Economic Development.

The show will mark Russia's first official trade fair appearance in the United States. Other major exhibitors, in addition to Alaska and the Soviet Union, will include Algeria, Austria, British Columbia and Canada, Republic of China, Federal Republic of Germany, India, and Italy.

Also taking part will be Japan, Republic of Korea, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Republic of the Philippines, and the state of Washington.

"Alaska's international trade with North America, Asia and Europe has accelerated since statehood," Division of Economic Enterprise Director Richard Eakins pointed out this week. "Commercial ties with Japan and Canada have been especially close.

"Prospects are excellent for continued growth in such trade, principally because of Alaska's abundance of natural resources and because of the state's geographic location.

"It is surprising to many people that Alaska's major international airports are closer to Tokyo than to New York. And European capitals are almost as close.

"Consequently, Alaska serves as a primary air crossroads for major routes linking North America, Asia and Europe."

Fourteen international airlines land in Alaska, Eakins said. Japan Air Lines' international flights, for example, make more stops (55) each week in Anchorage than in any other city in

the world except Tokyo, he pointed out.

Other important aspects of Alaska's international involvement to be told at UNIMART will include the fisheries and forest and fiber products industries, transportation, communications, and the University of Alaska. Alaska Airlines and the City of Anchorage also will participate with the state.

Eakins said that as background to the international aspects of Alaska's business life, the Division of Economic Enterprise also will present information and visual material on geography, environmental concern, general economic opportunities, and travel and recreation in Alaska.

Illustrative materials to be used in the exhibit in addition to eight-foot-high photographs and explanatory copy will be raw materials and finished products from Alaska's forests; large maps; multi-screen slide presentations; motion pictures; mounted sea, animal and bird life; and other items.

In recounting the aspects of Alaskan industry to be represented, Eakins said that nowhere is there more evidence of the 49th state's international orientation than in the forest products industry.

"Fibers from Alaska's forests are shipped to Japan, India, Mexico, South America and other destinations for processing into paper products, fabrics, and other materials. Wood chips also are exported for production," he explained.

In addition, logs receive primary processing into cants in Alaska and then are exported, particularly to Japan, for further manufacturing into lumber, Eakins said.

Foreign investments in forest and fiber products' plants in Alaska exceed \$125 million.

Fishing's international importance also will be discussed in Alaska's UNIMART exhibit.

For many years, Alaska has been the leading state in the United States in terms of the annual dollar value of commercial fish landings. And of the

edible seafood exported by this country, approximately five percent is exported through the Alaska Customs District, Eakins reported.

Japan and Canada have been the principal customers, while Western Europe has shown considerable promise, particularly for shrimps and prawns, he added.