

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire



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Editorial Comment— The Plight of the Rights Commission

Throughout its years of operation, the Commission for Human Rights has never enjoyed any serious backing. This fact has stifled the agency's effectiveness and the efforts it has made to improve the minority situation in the working community of Alaska has continually fallen short. This is a frustrating dilemma. The desired quality of minority human rights has not been allowed to infuse into the general good most Alaskans have enjoyed.

For those of us who were born in our own country, the Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts, the externally stunted efforts of the commission have disturbed us profoundly. We seem to be sensing that a slow boil has become to develop on account of the commission's continuing frustrations caused by outside influences. We are feeling that we are being left out in the cold, and if this situation is allowed to continue, an uneasy atmosphere may develop.

We are also beginning to think of retaliatory alternatives in the form of Native politics and work hard to stymie the political efforts of some of the candidates. Surely, this effort can have far-reaching influences if we steadfastly decide to apply it on those people who have continually short-sold the efforts of the commission. If we did this, it would be a most effective way to deal with those who have stymied the honorable intentions of the agency.

The commission continues to suffer. Good men who have headed it have resigned in frustration. The latest to resign was Bill Vaudrin because of subtle roadblocks and lackadaisical support by people of influence. The treatment Bill received and endured was not subtle indeed. He was intimidated, harassed and threatened. If that wasn't enough, one of his husky dogs was shot and killed. The crass treatment he absorbed is pretty hard to swallow especially after he tried to do an honorable job to benefit minority people of Alaska.

We think it is about time the Native people, other minorities and women of Alaska make known their feelings against those people who have had influences in the braking effort on the humanitarian efforts of the Commission for Human Rights. There might be a good chance that this can be done through pooled political retaliatory methods. If it should be done, it can be a considerable clout against those people who have discouraged the progress of the commission and those who might likely do so in the future. Something along this line should be expeditiously considered perhaps by representatives of the minority people.

While mulling over it, it might be a good idea to consider Bill Vaudrin to direct the effort. The subject might even be posed before the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. so that body might consider the plight of the commission at its annual convention this month on Oct. 24-25-26 in Anchorage.

Letters from Here and There

**North State
Phone Service
Still Going Bad**
STATE OF ALASKA
Dept. of Health and
Social Services
Division of Family and
Children Services
Kotzebue District Office
Oct. 1, 1974

Gordon Zerbetz, Chairman
Alaska Public Utilities Commission
1100 McKay Building
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Mr. Zerbetz:

As you are undoubtedly aware, our community has had more than its share of problems with local and long distance telephone service over the past several years.

Most recently the local telephone exchange, operated by the North State Telephone Co. under a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued by your agency, has been allowed to remain out of order for a large number of subscribers almost continuously since on or about Sept. 7, 1974.

This most recent outage includes all telephones at the State Office Building and the USPHS Hospital.

It is true that these telephones were repaired on Sept. 27 while Mr. Gilbert was here from Anchorage, but they again were out on the 29th and there is no one here again to make repairs to give any assurance of when repairs will be made.

There is, apparently no one here to provide any information and/or repair service of any kind.

This is a sorry situation for the residents of Kotzebue, as well as for the agencies and offices involved. North State has been granted a monopoly situation under which it operates, and yet this company has demonstrated repeatedly that it is unable and more recently unwilling to provide the basic services for which it is certified.

I would appreciate any information your commission could provide regarding what is being done by you to correct and relieve the problems of inadequate and unreliable telephone service in Kotzebue.

Very truly,
Carl Berger
District Representative

**Knows Editor's
Writing Subjects**

7805 34th Ave. E.
Tacoma, Washington 98443

Tundra Times
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a check for \$10 to renew my subscription for another year for Tundra Times. I like Tundra Times very much. Have so much enjoyed the stories Howard Rock writes of his family at Point Hope. I knew all of his family of whom he writes. I was once a teacher at

Point Hope for five years.

Yours truly,
Janet G. Alexander
(Mrs. Earl D.)
7805 34th Ave. E.
Tacoma, Wash. 98443

In one week in 1899, 8,000 people left Dawson City, Y.T.— forever — bound for the gold fields of Alaska or for the return trip home.

Atty. Gen.'s Column— Consumer Protection

This weekly column is prepared by the Consumer Protection Service of the Alaska Attorney General's Office with the objective of helping prevent, through public information, unfair and deceptive acts and practices in trade and commerce.

It is presented in the interests both of Alaskan consumers and the honest and reputable businesses serving them — which are, of course, the vast majority.

The column offers explanations of the obligations of consumers and businesses under state and federal laws, as well as guidelines for consumer transactions.

Reader comments and observations, as well as consumer complaints, may be mailed to the Consumer Protection Service, Office of the Attorney General, in Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage. The addresses are Pouch K, Juneau, Alaska 99801; 360 K Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501; and P.O. Box 1309, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.

*Norman C. Gorsuch
Attorney General*

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