

"I may not agree with what you say but I will defend unto the death your right to say it." – VOLTAIRE

Publisher's Notes

ALASKA'S 90-PERCENT HIRE LAW

Well, here we go again. Another Alaska Local Hire law has been ruled unconstitutional; this time by Superior Court Judge Karl Johnstone. This law, by the way, was a simple one, which required that 90 percent of all workers on a state-funded project be Alaskan residents.

And, of course, rural Alaskans will again be disproportionately affected by Judge Johnstone's ruling, if it stands, because a majority of the projects funded by the State are in the Bush. Alaska, for some odd reason seems to have been caught up in a vortex of court rulings on "Local hire" since the building of the TAPS project ten years ago.

No branch of our State government, executive, legislative, or judicial seems quite able to come up with the magic formula or workable compromise, which would give an edge to Alaskans seeking jobs-particularly rural Alaskans. What does all this mean? And where will it all end, anyway?

Since the day we discovered "pointy-toed foot prints" in the snow on the road to Prudoe Bay, feelings about our local hire laws have been running high. Those feelings sometimes translate into unfriendly attitudes by Alaskans toward "Outsiders." Alaskans, are otherwise well known for our warm hospitality to visitors, whoever they are. When plane loads of workers from someplace else descend upon Eek or Anaktuvuk Pass to build our airstrips, our schools, and our roads, while people from those villages who want to work, stand idly by and watch, who can really blame us for the feelings of resentment;

Maybe someone in the Executive or Legislative branch ought to look at the idea of attaching a rider to a local hire law requiring "10 percent Outside Hire." Stranger laws have been made in Juneau, after all. How would the courts rule on that one, assuming that someone would challenge it.

No doubt, the "90-percent Alaskan Hire" law, struck down by the Lower Court will end up in front of the five men who presently sit on Alaska's Supreme Court bench. We don't know how they'll rule on it, if they do at all. We hope, however, that the new ruling which means less jobs for Alaskans residents will be overturned.

SPIRIT DAYS - 1984

"Spirit Days," sponsored by Cook Inlet Native Association, held this past weekend is sure to become one of Anchorage's favorite summertime festivities. The potential in such an event for bring about greater understanding and appreciation of Alaska Native in Alaska's largest city is unlimited.

The idea of rededicating ourselves to the values of our culture; of celebrating our Native heritage; and of sharing all that with the community suggests a certain sensitivity and maturity in thinking.

Our congratulations go to CINA's Board of Directors and staff for a job well done.