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

Tundra Times

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Editorial—

ANICA Headquarters Should Be in Alaska

For quite a few years now we have heard some rumbles about the workings of the Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association with central offices in Seattle. The remoteness of the office from Alaska was such that we, along with many others, frankly didn't know how the nerve center of the ANICA stores operated. Somehow, the Seattle office always seemed to be veiled in secrecy. It should not have been that way because it deals with a good portion of native people and the influence it has is considerable.

We believe that time has come to lift the veil and one way to do it would be to move the central office to Alaska. We agree heartily with Leonard L. Monaghan's courageous suggestion that this be done. If this is done, we believe the office would work so much more closely with the native people. It would give them a chance to see how it operates and chances for asking advice would be more readily available.

The Seattle office is too remote—too distant—too impersonal. It has shown arrogance and has shown tendencies to intimidate. It should be made to work more closely with the people and this would be accomplished by establishing a base here in Alaska where more cooperation can be achieved. Familiarization on both sides should prove beneficial and chances for mutual success could be improved.

We believe the goal is worth working for. It would also pave the way for employment of our own people and this would be a great benefit in itself. The Alaska Federation of Natives and other native groups should be thinking hard on the matter.

BCF Announces Changes on Interest Rates on Fish Vessels

The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Commercial Fisheries (BCF) has announced changes in regulations governing interest rates on fishing vessel mortgages insured by the Department.

Bureau Director H. E. Crowther said the new regulations, designed to permit greater flexibility in the rates charged, should make it easier for the Nation's fishermen to obtain such loans.

Under previous legislation, a 6 percent interest ceiling was imposed on loans of this type. In recent months, Mr. Crowther said, the general rise in interest rates has caused most lenders to reject the fishing vessel loans in favor of others providing a higher rate of return.

The law covering insured fishing vessel mortgages has been amended to permit the Department to determine the interest rate that may be charged, taking into account both the risk assumed by the Department and the interest rates prevalent in the private market at the time of the loan.

Mortgages for financing construction, reconstruction, or reconditioning of fishing vessels can be insured by the Department of the Interior in much the same manner that the Federal Housing Authority insures mortgages to finance the construction of homes.

Details were published in the "Federal Register" June 29, 1968.

LEONARD MONAGHAN LETTER

Store Manager and ANICA Director

Gentlemen:

This is an appeal to you as store manager and director of the ANICA stores.

In Re: To dismiss Winfield Ervin Jr., the present general manager of Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association.

Four months ago I, Leonard L. Monaghan, was employed by ANICA as a store advisor. My qualifications were three years of college and general business experience. I am an Athabascan Indian from Fairbanks and the nephew of Ralph Perdue, known to many of you.

As store advisor I traveled to a number of member stores and much to my surprise, learned that general manager Mr. Ervin was paying the store managers less than state minimum wage, in direct violation of law. The store managers were getting generally, $1.25 an hour, whereas the legal minimum rate is $2.25 per hour. Therefore, during my tour, I raised the managers wages to what I thought approximated the legal minimum rate.

When I got back to Seattle Mr. Ervin called me to account and said I was "moving too fast and the natives had to walk before they could run." In answer to this I told him "the natives have been walking for 30 years. When do they run? I am merely trying to meet the standard of wages fixed by law." I was then told "they have been getting along for 20 years without you and they will get along for another 20 years without you."

The ANICA stores were established as a result of a very wonderful law called the Indian Reorganization Act enacted by Congress in 1934 and extended to Alaska in 1936. This law was designed to be a training ground for natives to become accustomed to business. So far the ANICA central organization has never given this opportunity to natives, except in a minor way. From the beginning, this central organization has been "for whites only." I say that the general manager, including the present one, is both arrogant and dictatorial, so he feels that he can fire me for raising your pay to meet the legal standards and for approving minor labor improvements in your stores.

Are we to assume that we do not wish the Seattle office to employ natives but to give these jobs from top to bottom to "whites only?" In a business that grosses over one million dollars annually and doing business in more than 60 villages, don't you agree that you should do something to better this situation?

Mr. Ervin likes to tell us that he controls the government loans (which now amount to about $400,000) and he gives you the impression that he can freeze your bank account. The Board of Directors is in control of ANICA, and that means you! Anytime the general manager injures a store or injures the entire system by enforcing such threats, he is working directly against your interest.

I say you have nothing to fear from any effort on his part to injure your store or injure you. Once we get the idea that the dictatorship is one that we have created and therefore can take away, then we acquire a freedom and we can establish ANICA for the benefit of the natives from the top to the bottom.

Don't you think that after 30 years you should be getting more than your "hand to mouth" returns? Can you imagine Sears and Roebuck being satisfied with annual store earnings of $76.00 per month? This is the ANICA average for each store, in spite of the fact that Congress has given us tax immunity from federal and state and has provided money at a very low interest rate. This means that ANICA stores can charge less than their competitors who have a federal corporate tax of 46%, from which ANICA is exempt.

You owe the government about $400,000 on which you are charged interest at the prevailing government rate, which has increased from 1% to the present 5½%, in spite of the fact that you have your own reserve fund, said to be in excess of the government debt.

You have a choice: You can continue under the miserable substandard pattern that has prevailed for more than 20 years, with of course no hope of improvement, while managers follow each other in endless succession, living above their income standard merely because they have a white collar job;

OR: You can gather in convention and reorganize your entire setup from top to bottom, unless of course you are afraid, a conclusion that I am not willing to accept.

I have been in consultation with some of our best well-known Indian leaders and they agree with me that the time has come when such a convention of village leaders should reorganize the corporation, even though you have just had your annual meeting.

I say this because the Seattle office has just sent out a letter, telling the ANICA president that ANICA is reorganizing. But, when I consider the many years ANICA has existed merely to enrich such men as Winfield Ervin and his predecessors, I can say for a certainty that he will sit on his present throne until death removes him, at which time the "power behind the throne" will exalt the newly appointed heir.

A suggestion that occurs to me which I hope you will discuss, follows: Don't you think that your business could be improved by removing your central office to Anchorage or Fairbanks? Each store manager and the councilmen could have ready and frequent access to visit your central office, in contrast with the present situation in which your general manager might as well be in Japan.

I am inviting personal and immediate responses from you and your elective leaders, store managers and friends, including Danny Lisborn, Ralph Perdue, Emil Notti, Richard Frank, John Sackett, William Hensley, and other statewide leaders.

Now is the time for ALL natives to come to the aid of their party!

Sincerely yours,
Leonard L. Monaghan

Washington Report

Senator ERNEST GRUENING

Secretary of Transportation Alan Boyd made his first visit to Alaska recently and I had the pleasure of taking him around the State. He was quite visibly impressed with our progress and our great potential, and he also got a better understanding of our needs.

We visited the scallop processing facilities now under construction in Seward and the Secretary spoke at the ceremonies marking the establishment of the scallop industry on the Alaska mainland.

This is the first substantial "break" that Seward has had since the earthquake and it is most gratifying. Seward has been the only community stricken by the 1964 earthquake which has been worse off than before. All the others, as a result of federal aid, are better off.

Seward has been worse off because it lost its principal payroll, long-shoring, which has gone to Anchorage. It still needs additional industry and for this I am working. The spirit of the people of Seward has been wonderful. They have not given up, and it was a joy to see them celebrate the coming of the scallop processing industry.

Secretary Boyd showed a good grasp of our situation when he said, "Development in Alaska is going to depend on all types of transportation —rail, air, highways, and water."

I always encourage top Federal officials, and my colleagues in the Senate, to visit our State. It's good for them to see for themselves the special needs and problems of a young and growing State. Then, when Alaska matters come before them, they have a better view of what is involved.

Secretary Boyd, for example, was able to tour the Alaska Railroad facilities and the new FAA Air Traffic Control center, meet with all Department of Transportation employees in the Anchorage area, and fly over the site of the proposed railroad extension on the way to Kotzebue.

July 10, 1968

Dear Editor:

At this time of transferring the management of St. Joseph Hospital, the Sisters wish to express their sincere appreciation for the support and mutual esteem experienced down through the years.

May God bless all of you always.

Sincerely,
Sister Conrad Mary & Sisters