

Progress in Human Rights Second Annual Report



1964

Alaska State Commission
For Human Rights
Room 24, Reed Bldg.
Anchorage, Alaska

1964

**Progress in Human Rights
Second Annual
Report**

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WILLIAM A. EGAN
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

Dear Fellow Alaskans:

As the nation continues to take ever more positive steps toward safeguarding the basic civil rights of all of its citizens, we can be proud that Alaska stands in the front ranks of those states which guarantee these rights.

In this vital area, we must be ever vigilant. If prejudice and discrimination deprive any Alaskan of his human dignity and right to live as an equal, it becomes the duty of every citizen to work toward elimination of such evil.

President Johnson clearly defined the significance of the civil rights issue in his address to the Congress on proposed voting rights legislation:

"...Should we defeat every enemy, and should we double our wealth and conquer the stars and still be unequal on this issue, then we will have failed as a people and as a nation."

Though the State has adequate laws to insure each citizen his human rights and also a commission to work in this field, no law or commission can be effective without full support and cooperation of the people.

A study of this report may serve to point out areas where each may contribute to hasten the day when all Americans will be equal under the law.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William A. Egan".

William A. Egan
Governor

December 31, 1964

His Excellency
William A. Egan, Governor
Honorable Members
Alaska State Legislature

Ladies and Gentlemen:

With honor and some sense of satisfaction and accomplishment, we take pleasure in submitting to you our second annual report of the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights as prescribed by Chapter 15, Session Laws of Alaska for 1963.

Winding up our first full year of activities since our creation a year ago this past July, this report covers our accomplishments and problems in this crucial area and contains our recommendations for needed additions to our program and personnel, to enable us to effectively carry out the task with which this Commission is charged.

This year has seen us give effective leadership in the area of these problems in our Alaskan communities. Working with the various segments of our population both public and private, our personnel were able to make added contribution beyond the scope of our primary concern during the trying days immediately following the Good Friday earthquake by coordinating relief efforts of various agencies.

With the continued support of the administration and legislature, we look forward to achieving greater progress in 1965.

Respectfully,

Fred M. Selkregg, Jr., Chairman

Leslie F. Callan, Commissioner

Barney J. Gottstein, Commissioner

Ernest W. Griffin, Commissioner

Roy Peratrovich, Commissioner

COMMISSION MEMBERS

	Term Expires
Fred M. Selkregg, Jr., Chairman	January 31, 1967
Leslie F. Callan, Secretary	January 31, 1970
Barney J. Gottstein, Commissioner	January 31, 1969
Ernest W. Griffin, Commissioner	January 31, 1966
Roy Peratrovich, Commissioner	January 31, 1968

STAFF

Willard L. Bowman	Executive Director
Miss Barbara Trigg	Secretary



Fred M. Selkregg, Jr.,
Chairman



Roy Peratrovich
Commissioner



Ernest W. Griffin
Commissioner



Barney J. Gottstein
Commissioner



Leslie F. Callan
Secretary



Willard L. Bowman
Executive Director



Miss Barbara Trigg
Secretary



Foreword

"WHERE AFTER ALL, DO UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS BEGIN? IN SMALL PLACES, CLOSE TO HOME--SO CLOSE AND SO SMALL THAT THEY CANNOT BE SEEN ON ANY MAP OF THE WORLD. YET THEY ARE THE WORLD OF THE INDIVIDUAL PERSON: THE NEIGHBORHOOD HE LIVES IN, THE SCHOOL OR COLLEGE HE ATTENDS; THE FACTORY, FARM, OR OFFICE WHERE HE WORKS, SUCH ARE THE PLACES WHERE EVERY MAN, WOMAN, OR CHILD SEEKS EQUAL JUSTICE, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, EQUAL DIGNITY WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION. UNLESS THESE RIGHTS HAVE MEANING THERE, THEY HAVE LITTLE MEANING ANYWHERE. WITHOUT CONCERTED CITIZEN ACTION TO UPHOLD THEM CLOSE TO HOME, WE SHALL LOOK IN VAIN FOR PROGRESS IN THE LARGER WORLD." Within these words, spoken by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1958, lies the formula for the success of the human rights program throughout the world, the nation, and the state. Regardless of how many laws are passed, the right of the individual must be recognized and supported by all others, for only after all men accept the worth of the individual as being of primary concern will man rise to the true greatness of which he is capable.

This year there were many incidents which can be scored as advancement of the human rights program throughout the world, but none received more unprecedented attention than the long bitter battle, waged in the U. S. Congress, to enact the first comprehensive Federal civil rights legislation in America since the Emancipation Proclamation over 100 years ago.

While enactment of the measure was played against a backdrop of world interest and concern, opponents of the legislation fought to stem the tide of national consternation for the basic rights of the individual.

After months of delay and virtual torrents of words pro and con, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was finally passed and signed into law. Its passage and the emotional trauma engendered, made deep and telling wounds. Some, cutting across political and geographic lines, will leave scars which will be long in healing.

One of the strongest arguments advanced in favor of this national legislation was and is the continuing success of the growing number of state and municipal commissions for human rights. There are presently 25 states having commissions with fully enforceable laws to administer; and indications are that other state legislatures will soon be creating similar commissions to work in this rapidly expanding field.

Also in 1964, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights came of age when it passed its first birthday. Though the Good Friday earthquake caused a complete cessation of Commission activity, due to extensive damage to our offices and the emergency work the staff was assigned, we worked closely during the year with civic, religious and governmental agencies. Our primary goal was to establish communication between all groups, and point up the need of community level awareness and active participation in the human rights program.

In most instances it can be stated that the response from throughout the state has been in the affirmative. We have also had occasion to note firsthand, the appalling lack of empathy or cognizance on the part of some civic leaders throughout the state, who are still of the opinion, "We have no discrimination here."

In this our second annual report, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights discusses its programs; and documents the progress it has experienced as we continue toward our stated goal of the elimination of racial discrimination.



Introduction

In 1945, the then Territorial Legislature of Alaska enacted its first civil rights legislation when it declared it an unlawful act to discriminate against a person in any place of public accommodation because of race, creed, color or national origin. This was followed in 1953 by the Fair Employment Practices Act, which made it unlawful to discriminate in employment; and last, the 1962 legislature made discrimination in housing accommodations unlawful.

The legislature had thereby made non-discrimination a matter of State policy and although this covered the main areas of civil rights, it was soon apparent that the law unto itself was not enough. To enforce these laws, the 1963, legislature, by amending Alaska Statute 18 to add Chapter 80, created in the Office of the Governor, a State Commission for Human Rights (Chapter 15 SLA 1963).

The Commission consists of five Commissioners, appointed for staggered terms of five years, and confirmed by the legislature. It is inter-racial, non-partisan, and inter-religious, and its members represent employers, labor and the general public. The members of the Commission are authorized per diem and travel allowances allowable to members of other boards and commissions, but otherwise serve without pay.

On July 30, 1963, Governor William A. Egan assembled the Commission members, charged them with the task of promoting equal opportunities in employment, public accommodations, and housing, and set the effective date July 31, 1963.

The activities of the State Commission for Human Rights for the year 1964 are reported herein.

PURPOSES OF COMMISSION

The purpose and aim of the State Commission for Human Rights is to create, throughout the State of Alaska, at the community level, a climate of understanding and mutual respect in which all Alaskans of whatever racial, religious, or cultural background can and will be made to feel that all are equal in dignity and rights.

To promote this purpose, it is the responsibility of the Commission to:

(a) Work to bring about intergroup understanding and good will by a broad range educational program designed to eliminate and prevent discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing based on race, creed, color, national origin, age or sex.

(b) Receive, initiate, investigate, and resolve complaints of discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing when based on race, creed, color, national origin, age or sex.

(c) Make factual studies and surveys of this moral problem to determine the extent of its effects on the citizens of Alaska.

POWERS OF COMMISSION

The Commission is given the power to:

- (a) Elect one of its members as Chairman.
- (b) Hold a regular annual meeting, and hold special meetings as are found necessary.
- (c) Adopt procedural and substantive regulations necessary to carry out its duty.
- (d) Appoint an Executive Director approved by the Governor, and hire other administrative staff as may be necessary to the Commission's function.
- (e) Receive, initiate and investigate alleged complaints of discrimination.
- (f) Hold hearings requiring the person or persons complained of to answer the allegations, take testimony under oath, and issue orders based on its findings.
- (g) Report to the Governor and the Alaska Legislature on its activities annually and recommend legislative action.

Regulatory Activities

Employment

Discrimination Prohibited (A.S.23.10.190)

The law provides that "no employer, employee, labor organization, employment agency or other person may discriminate in the employment of a person because of race, religion, color or national origin." (Section 23.10.190)

That the opportunity to obtain employment without discrimination because of race, religion, color, or national origin is a civil right. The State, in its attempt to eliminate discrimination, considers the following acts to be unlawful employment practices:

(1) an employer to refuse employment to a person, or to bar him from employment, or to discriminate against him in compensation or in terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of his race, religion, color or national origin;

(2) a labor organization, because of a person's race, religion, color or national origin, to exclude or to expel him from its membership, or to discriminate in any way against one of its members or against an employer or an employee;

(3) an employer, labor organization or employment agency to discharge, expel or otherwise discriminate against a person because he has opposed a practice forbidden under this chapter, or because he has filed a complaint, testified or assisted in a proceeding under it;

(4) a person, whether or not an employer or an employee, to aid, abet, incite, compel or coerce the doing of an act forbidden under this chapter or to attempt to do so;

(5) Refuse to hire, discharge, or otherwise discriminate against a person with respect to the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, otherwise lawful, because of the person's age, when the reasonable demands of the position do not require the age distinction. (A.S. 23.10.255)

(6) No employer may discriminate in the payment of wages as between the sexes, nor may he employ a female in an occupation in this State at a salary or wage rate less than the rate paid to a male employee for work of a comparable character or work in the same operation, business, or type of work in the same locality. (A.S. 23.10.155)

Public Accommodations and Housing

Public Accommodations

Persons entitled to full and equal accommodations, facilities and privileges; (A.S. 11.60.230)

(a) A person is entitled to full and equal enjoyment of accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of public inns, restaurants, eating houses, hotels, motels, soda fountains, soft drink parlors, taverns, roadhouses, trailer parks, bath rooms, resorts, campgrounds, barber shops, beauty parlors, resthouses, theaters, swimming pools, skating rinks, golf courses, cafes, ice cream parlors, transportation companies, and all conveyances, housing accommodations, and all other public amusement and business establishments, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to all persons.

(b) Any denial of the use of the foregoing facilities by reason of race, creed, or color of the applicant therefore is a violation of this section.

Housing

(c) Public amusement and business establishments within the meaning of this section include any establishment which caters or offers its services or goods to the general public, including but not limited to public housing and all forms of public assisted housing, and any housing accommodation offered for sale, rent, or lease.

Complaints

Filing Procedure

Any person claiming to be aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice may sign and file with the Commission a written, verified complaint which shall state the name and address of the employer, firm or person alleged to have engaged in the discriminatory conduct, and the particulars of the discrimination. The Director of the Commission may file a complaint in like manner when an alleged discrimination comes to his attention.

Investigation

A member of the Commission's staff, designated by the Executive Director shall informally investigate the matters set out in a filed complaint, promptly and impartially. If the investigator determines that the allegations are supported by substantial evidence, he shall immediately try to eliminate the discrimination complained of by conference, conciliation and persuasion.

Hearing

If the informal efforts to eliminate the alleged discrimination are unsuccessful, the Executive Director shall inform the Commission of the failure, and the Commission shall serve written notice requiring the person charged in the complaint to answer the allegations of the complaint at a hearing before the Commission. The person charged in the complaint may file a written answer to the complaint and may appear at the hearing in person or otherwise, with or without counsel, and submit testimony. The Executive Director has the power reasonably and fairly to amend the complaint, and the person charged has the power reasonably and fairly to amend his answer. The Commission shall not be bound by the strict rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law or equity. The testimony taken at the hearing shall be under oath and be transcribed.

Order

At the completion of the hearing, if the Commission finds that a person against whom a complaint was filed has engaged in the discriminatory conduct alleged in the complaint, it shall order him to refrain from engaging in the discriminatory conduct. The order shall include findings of fact, and may prescribe conditions on the accused's future conduct which the Commission determines are relevant to the cessation of the discrimination. A copy of the order shall be delivered in all cases to the Attorney General of Alaska.

Effect of Compliance with Order

Immediate and continuing compliance with all the terms of a Commission order is a bar to criminal prosecution for the particular instances of discriminatory conduct described in the accusation filed before the Commission.

Complaint Processing

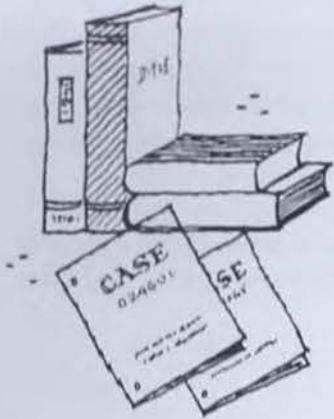
The Commission is still plagued by a shortage of help. At a time when it should have long since organized, developed, and implemented educational programs to help teachers and students better understand the problems of minority groups; study the need for and assist in the development of vocational training programs for adult minorities to prepare them for available job opportunities; survey, study, and make statistical reports on problems encountered by minorities in the vital areas of employment, public accommodations, and housing, it finds itself slowly losing ground beneath a rising flood of complaints.

In the current reporting period, January 1, 1964, through December 31, 1964, the Commission's case load has tended to reflect more of the problems of our larger urban areas with most of the individual complaints coming from the cities of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau respectively. Also, as last year, all of the complaints were based on race or color, and were primarily in employment.

Type of Case	Resolved	Under Investigation	Under Conciliation	Totals
Employment	13	7		20
Public Accommodation	2			2
Housing	3	1	1	5
Other	2	1		3
Totals	20	9	1	30

While the success or failure of agencies in human relations work cannot be measured by the number of complaints processed, the above totals do indicate problems we have encountered. Because of great distances involved, we have had to adopt measures calling for preliminary investigations to be conducted by correspondence. This keeps the number of cases remaining under investigation at an abnormal high. Admittedly, correspondence is not the best way of conducting investigations; yet, the only other alternative is to travel on each complaint. Naturally, our travel appropriation would very soon be exhausted.

The number of cases in our table of statistics does not tell the complete story of the Commission's compliance activities. For all formal complaints processed, the Commission has also counseled at least twice as many informal complaints. These are complaints where there was not enough information, the person did not wish to verify the complaint, or the complainant withdrew the complaint for one reason or another.



Case Histories

Case A

While hunting for an apartment, a Negro couple applied at an apartment building where they had seen vacancy signs. They stated that upon going to the manager's apartment they were at first told there were no vacancies. Complainant then asked why the signs were still up, whereupon the lady who answered in the manager's apartment is alleged to have said, "We do not rent to Negroes. These are orders from the Manager."

Upon investigation, the manager said he had been out that day, and did not know anything of the incident. Further questioning brought answers which substantiated the complaint. At a meeting of the owner, manager and investigator, the complaint was resolved with the terms of conciliation, to which respondents agreed. The complainant would re-apply for an apartment and would be shown any apartment vacancy available. Further, respondents agreed applicants for apartments would be accepted without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin.

Case B

Complainant, a Negro, charged that respondent discriminated against her unlawfully because of her color, by discharging her from the position she held as Snack Bar Manager.

The Commission investigated and found probable cause, as the reasons given for her dismissal in themselves did not seem to warrant termination. However, it was found complainant had not applied to her grievance board for a hearing which the Commission helped her to do.

At the hearing complainant was absolved of the charges, and given back her job.

Case C

The Commission initiated a complaint against a cafe, after information was received by the Commission from the Department of Labor, that the owner of said cafe had attempted to file a discriminatory job order with the Department. The employer in question had stated she did not want Negroes to be referred. The order-taker advised the employer this was discriminatory and tried to get the provision removed, but was unsuccessful.

The investigator found probable cause for believing a discriminatory act was committed in this instance and has so advised respondent. The case is still under investigation.

Case D

Complainant, an Indian, alleged that he was chairman of a school advisory board which had petitioned for the removal or transfer of a teacher due to her seeming inability to maintain discipline, disregard for attendance, etc. When the petition was investigated by the proper authority, the person doing the investigating is alleged to have behaved in a discriminatory manner toward the board. His recommendation was to let the teacher remain.

Investigation by the Commission established the following facts:

The advisory board had petitioned twice for the removal of the teacher; copies of records indicated conditions which would tend to support the complaint; the department responsible did conduct its own investigation and had decided not to remove the teacher.

To resolve this complaint, the Commission recommended the Department review the case in light of the latest developments. This was done, and the teacher transferred. Case closed.



Educational Activities

The Commission's purpose as stated previously is to eliminate and prevent discriminatory practices in employment, public accommodation and housing.

In its endeavor to achieve these goals, the Commission attempts to:

- (1) eliminate discrimination in the processing of complaints in its regulatory work.
- (2) prevent discrimination in its educational work by bringing to the attention of the citizens of Alaska the need for equal opportunities for all.

By itself, the Commission could have little effect in changing the accepted patterns of intergroup relations throughout the State. But experience by other states shows that marked success has been achieved when community leaders who have a strong impact upon the climate of opinion in their communities are approached, and their influence is enlisted to share the responsibility in the endeavor toward the common goal of equality of opportunity.

This community participation is designed for the following basic reasons:

- (a) To gain awareness of the Commission for Human Rights and the acceptance of its responsibility for insuring equality of opportunity by the total community.
- (b) To inform those against whom discrimination is practiced of the existence and the powers of the Commission.
- (c) Commitment, on a voluntary basis, to the policies and procedures of the Commission by those who come within its jurisdiction.
- (d) To dispel the apprehensions of those who fear the employment or housing of minorities will adversely affect their businesses or neighborhoods.

To further these ends, members of the Commission and staff continued to address groups, participated in local and statewide conferences, and appeared as panellists on radio and television programs throughout the State.

Following is a list of those activities in which the Commission took part as speakers, panelists, or interested observers:

Laborer's Union Local # 341 (Anchorage)
Layman's Religious Class A.M.U. (Anchorage)
Episcopal Women (Anchorage)
Greater Anchorage Democratic Club
Presbyterian Women (Anchorage)
Human Relations Committee (Fairbanks)
K.T.V.F. - N.A.A.C.P. Program (Fairbanks)
Anchorage Republican Club
Lutheran Churches of Anchorage
Anchorage Unitarian Fellowship
Cook Inlet Native Association (Anchorage)
N.A.A.C.P. Labor Conference (Fairbanks)
U.S. Civil Rights Advisory Committee Conference (Fairbanks)
Assembly of Baha'is (Anchorage)
National Conference of Commissions for Human Rights (Minnesota)
National Conference of State Advisory Committees to U.S. Civil Rights Com-
missions (Washington, D.C.)
Y.M.C.A. Men's Club (Anchorage)
M.D.T.A. Meeting (Anchorage)
K.F.Q.D. Rand About Town Show (Anchorage)
K.T.V.A. Viewpoint (Anchorage)
A.F.L. - C.I.O. State Convention (Anchorage)
Anchorage Inter-Agency Council
Civil-Military Advisory Committee Meetings (Anchorage)
Alaska Native Brotherhood Annual Encampment (Hoonah)
Bureau of Indian Affairs State Meeting (Juneau)
K.J.N.O. "Focus" (Juneau)
Assembly of Baha'is (Douglas-Juneau)

In June 1964 the Commission was invited to attend the Sixteenth Annual Conference of Commissions for Human Rights at Brainerd, Minnesota. The Alaska Commission for Human Rights was accepted as a member of this organization which is restricted to those states and cities having enforceable civil rights laws. There were over 20 states and numerous cities also represented. The Executive Director attended as the representative for the Commission.

Also in June the Executive Director was invited to and attended the three day conference of the fifty State Advisory Committees to the United States Civil Rights Committee held in Washington, D. C.

The theme of both conferences was "Teamwork in Equal Opportunity, State and Federal", and workshops were organized where ways and means of implementing these cooperative agreements were explained and discussed.

Progress Report

... IN PICTURES



Mr. Pete Aiken, (left) first of his race to be elected to public office in Alaska, chats with three other assemblymen of the North Star Borough. Mr. Aiken and his wife, Velma, long time residents of the Fairbanks area, have been very active in civic affairs in their community.



RCA, one of Alaska's largest private employers, has been a leader in the field of equal employment opportunities for all. Mr. Floyd Tetpon, here working in the drafting department, exemplifies the need for qualified people in today's industry.

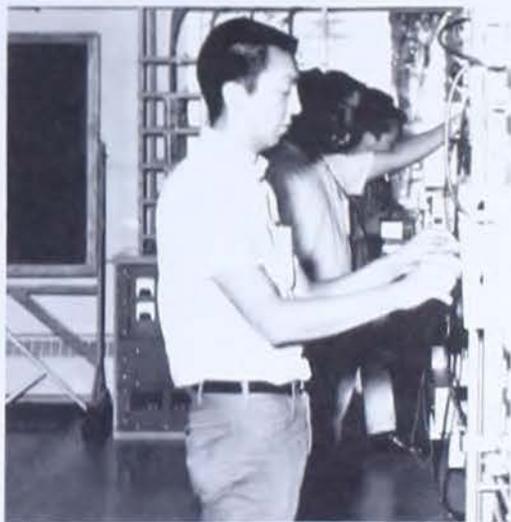


Mrs. Nellie Jackson, another RCA employee, discusses office matters with her supervisor at the home office in Anchorage, where she works as a member of the clerical staff.

Filling the airways with the latest news and music from Station KTVA and KNIK-FM radio is Anchorage's own Les Parker. Les, whose face and voice are well known to viewers and listeners alike, won an award last year for his outstanding news in-depth coverage.



Dispatcher Claude Lindsey (seated) and Scott Groninger, Administration Manager, confer in the Anchorage office of IBM. Another national firm seeking qualified minorities, IBM offers unlimited opportunities to those who are willing to prepare themselves.



In seeking ways to combat high turnover ratio, RCA, with the help of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, instituted the training of Alaskans of Eskimo and Indian descent as electronics technicians to help man the White Alice and BMEWS warning systems. Mr. Aaron Bell, one of those who has successfully completed the training, works at an undisclosed site.

Recommendations

A.S. 18.80.150 states, "The Commission shall at the beginning of each legislative session, report to the legislature on civil rights problems it has encountered in the preceding year, and may recommend legislative action."

In accordance with the above statutory directive, the following legislative action is hereby recommended for 1965.

1. Law Against Discrimination

The Commission believes that legislation should be enacted which would allow for more efficient administration of the civil rights laws by placing these various titles and sections under one title and chapter to be called "Law Against Discrimination."

The problem which confronts the Commission is that at present the Fair Employment Practices Act (A.S. 23.10.190), Wage Discrimination Against Women (A.S. 23.10.155), and Discrimination Because of Age (A.S. 23.10.255) are under the joint jurisdiction of the Commission for Human Rights and the Department of Labor.

Though the Department of Labor has had jurisdiction prior to the creation of the Commission, it was the intention of the 1963 legislature that jurisdiction in civil rights matters would rest solely with the Commission for Human Rights. Not only will this eliminate duplication of effort, but it will bring Alaska's statutes more in line with those of other states which have created laws against discrimination, and with the provisions of the newly enacted Federal Civil Rights Act.

II. BUDGET

Though the Commission is acutely aware and completely in accord with the directive calling for the maximum return for every dollar of state revenue, it is also sorely pressed by the difficult task of carrying out the human rights program for the State of Alaska within the present limited budget.

This has been brought about because of the great increase in work and case load which in turn is due to the natural growth of our agency, and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

These factors make it physically impossible for one person to carry out the increasing functions of the Commission throughout the entire State. Some indication of how much the overall work load of the Commission has grown in just the last six months of 1964 can be ascertained by citing the agreements we have been called upon to make with Federal agencies.

Prior to the passage of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, our Commission worked with Federal agencies only if the agency in question had a specific case of discrimination they needed help with. Even then the Commission acted merely as an informational source. Since passage of the Federal Act, the Commission has signed cooperative agreements with the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in Housing, Department of Defense, which includes all branches of the armed forces, and is now in the process of negotiating agreements with the agencies under the Housing and Home Finance Agency, (FHA, URA, CFA).

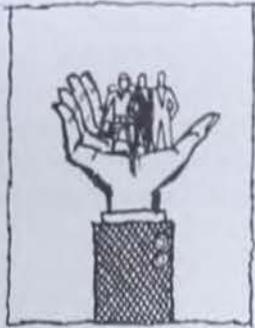
These agreements call for mutual aid and assistance between the two agencies signing in matters relating to discrimination and outlines the steps to be taken by both. Further, in regard to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Civil Rights Act states that an aggrieved individual may not file a charge with the Federal Commission until 60 days after the beginning of the proceedings under the state or local law. This gives the state an opportunity to act upon the complaints and to keep jurisdiction in its hands unless it is shown they are unable to cope with it, whereupon the Federal Commission can and will act.

On the case load side of the ledger, we have found that our Executive Director is being called upon more frequently to participate as a member of various advisory committees seeking to hire, promote, upgrade or retrain minorities. With the newly enacted "War on Poverty" about to commence, this too will cut quite heavily into available staff time.

Last but not least, with the final passage of the Civil Rights Act, there is expected to be a marked increase in complaints filed in view of the new militancy, greater awareness of the law by minorities, and less fear of retaliation.

These are but some of the reasons the Commission feels its present staff is inadequate, and recommends legislative approval and budgetary appropriation for one additional professional staff member.

Conclusion



After a year and a half of actively working in this important field of human rights, we members of the Commission, feel the organization has demonstrated its ability to make a vital and much needed contribution to improving relations among ethnic groups in Alaska. As we became involved in the program this Commission was created for, and as those who bear the brunt of discrimination became aware of our existence, we were called more and more into the problems which have beset and plagued America for so long. The curse which sets race against race, group against group, and class against class.

Since the Commission for Human Rights is the only Alaska State agency in this all important field of race relations, we feel we have the responsibility of carrying out the State policy of equal opportunities for all, without regard to age, race, creed, color, sex, or national ancestry. In our endeavor to carry out this program, we of course have encountered many problems. We found that over the months we have made many friends and gained many adherents to the cause of human rights. Conversely, we have lost friends and made enemies, but all must agree, no matter which side they were on, the Commission has attempted at all times to be fair and equitable in its deliberations. We have tried not to injure anyone, but have remained firm in our commitments to the equal opportunity program.

In our work throughout the State, we found Alaskans prone to pride themselves on their attitude toward minority groups, and quick to suggest that in their opinion there is no discrimination in Alaska.

It is time we Alaskans faced the simple truth. There is racial discrimination rampant in Alaska, and it stretches across the spectrum of man's economic endeavor.

In employment, we have the statistics of the University of Alaska in its 1963 publication "Alaska's Population and Economy" to point to. On page 134 of Volume I, it states, "The distributive industries (transportation, communications, utilities, trade, finance, insurance, real estate, services) increased steadily in importance from 30% of all industries (total employment) in 1940 to 61.1% in 1960. This is perhaps the most significant continuing trend in the consideration of Alaska's future (employment) pattern." Hence, out of a total work force of over 54 thousand engaged in the distributive services alone, there are relatively very few minorities employed though Alaska's total population is over 20% non-white.

Another area of our concern shows that though Alaska Statutes specifically cite trailer parks as places of accommodation, (Sec. 11.60.230), there is almost wholesale denial of minorities wishing to place trailers. In Anchorage, this has created a hardship on military personnel, and efforts of the military authorities to correct this have only lead to frustration and subterfuge.

Discrimination in Alaska takes many forms, and rarely is displayed in overt acts. Instead it manifests itself in subtle ways, such as the employer who states, "I would hire you but you must belong to the Union," and the union representative who says, "I would take you into the union, but you must have a job first," or the motel operator or trailer park owner who tells the minority person, "Sorry, we are filled" after the person has phoned to find there was a vacancy. Also, it is manifest in the many who suffer discrimination quietly or resentfully, the unmotivated minority student, the drop out, or the delinquent.

This then is the pattern of discrimination in Alaska. A pattern which is fast becoming so imbedded into the practice of living and doing business in our State, that it has taken on the mantle of social acceptability. Acceptability which is exemplified by almost universal acclaim, "There is no discrimination in Alaska." This attitude, in spite of the economic boycott evident on all sides, is stifling a large segment of this State's human resources.

As Alaska continues to grow, we must expect this moral problem to grow also, unless we seek the obvious solution. We must all share the responsibility of eliminating and preventing discrimination if we are to avoid the costly racial conflicts which have taken place in other parts of America.

If our State is to prosper and progress, every citizen must be given the assurance of economic security and equality of opportunity. As we look forward to 1965, we once again ask for the cooperation and assistance of the many citizens throughout the State as the Commission seeks to reach the goal of equal rights for every person.

