DEVOLUTION AND NORTHERN STATEHOOD: THE CASE OF ALASKA

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presented at

First Kluane Conference
Kluane Lake Research Station
Kluane Lake, Yukon Territory, Canada
September 9, 1989

Revised: December 1, 1989

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> The distrust of "foreigners" is so pervasive here that I can imagine a candidate for political office promising to secede from the Union and expropriate the oil. Everybody refers to the United States as "the outside," and they incline to think of it as an evil place.
>
> Lewis Lapham, Harper's, 1970

In 1980 twenty-one years after statehood, Alaska voters created an Alaska Statehood Commission to study "the status of the people of Alaska within the United States, and to make recommendations on that relationship." It was, as the Commission stated, "the first time since the Civil War that citizens of a state have by their vote indicated unease with federal union."[1] This occurred after several years of intense conflict over control of federal lands in Alaska, and just as a new federal threat-- restrictions on the state's share of the revenues from the bonanza strike at Prudhoe Bay--loomed on the horizon. Alaskans seemed to be opening their windows, sticking their heads out, and shouting, "We're mad as hell, and we're not going to take it any more."

But after more than two years of study, the Commission completed its business with a whimper. When all was said and done, the Commission concluded that, whatever the benefits and liabilities of the alternative statuses--including territory, commonwealth, and independence--

"none is preferable to statehood." It called for a lifting of various federal restrictions and for continued vigilance against the forces that would have Congress limit or tax state resource revenues. (The restrictions weren't lifted and the revenues weren't limited or taxed.) Nobody, including most Alaskans, paid much attention to the Commission's final report which was issued just as the great Alaska oil boom crescendoed. For the moment at least, Alaska's future seemed limitless despite the federal government.

This was not a bizzare, isolated episode in Alaska's statehood history. "Fed-bashing" is part of Alaska's political culture. If the federal government were not around to blame for their ills, many Alaskans might lose hope for the future. For many of them, it appears that the real problems and obstacles confronting Alaska's development are too elusive and complex, or simply too persistent and intractable, to recognize and deal with directly. In September 1989, a leading member of the state senate was scheduled to speak before an Anchorage resource development group. The title of her talk was "Alaska's Story: Striving for Economic Survival in Spite of the 'Feds.'"

Alaska, more than any other state where the federal government is prominent, has the strongest claim to the distinction of being called a "federal state." The federal government owns over sixty percent of Alaska's lands, controls the harvesting of fish and marine mammals from the oceans off the state's coast, exercises a special trust responsibility for the Alaska Native population, and uses the state's strategic military location in the northern Pacific and Arctic ocean regions. Further, annual federal expenditures in Alaska--to maintain its vast operations, pay thousands of civilian and military personnel, assist

Alaska Natives, and help support state and local programs--exceed those of the state government itself.

Alaskans are extremely ambivalent about their relationships with the federal government. They generally realize that Alaska receives great benefits from its status as a state in a rich and powerful nation. The federal government has bestowed resources, rights, and authority on the state government and people of Alaska. At the same time, many feel that Alaska never has achieved the full promise of statehood because of the controls that the Congress and federal agencies continue to exercise over Alaska's land, resources, and people. These controls are considered especially vexing when they restrict Alaskans' access to fish and wildlife and commodity resources and prohibit them from discriminating against "outsiders" and newcomers in the distribution of public benefits.

The story of federal-state relations in Alaska highlights three themes reflecting basic controversies and conflicts. First is the exercise of colonial power in Alaska's territorial days and its transformation into more legitimate forms of constitutional federal power with statehood. Second is the competition for control of Alaska's resource wealth, from fur seals and gold in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to timber, fisheries, and oil today. And third is the continuing demands by Alaskans for rights and entitlements from both state and federal governments, demands that sometimes set the two levels of government against one another.

The following sections of this paper elaborate on these themes, emphasizing their evolution and current forms and sketching the background of Alaska federalism in the period since statehood. First is a general discussion of the benefits and constraints of statehood for

Alaskans. This is followed by a profile of Alaska as a federal state against the background of its status as a colonial territory. The final section comments on the state's political culture, suggesting how the colonial heritage, and Alaskans' reactions against federal power, continue to shape Alaska institutions, policies, and political behavior today.

BENEFITS AND CONSTRAINTS OF STATEHOOD

For most Alaskans, statehood brought tremendous benefits in the forms of resources, authority, and rights. It also brought new federal constraints and extended older ones over Alaska residents-- constraints primarily of federal laws and land ownership. Although many Alaskans take the benefits for granted and think that the constraints are unfair and onerous, it appears in retrospect that Alaskans got a very good deal in their statehood transaction with the federal government.

The statehood land grant of 104 million acres and the transfer of control over most of the fish and wildlife were a resource windfall. Of course, the commercial potential of Alaska's fisheries and oil provinces wasn't as clear in the late 1950s and early 1960s as it is today. But within the first decade of statehood, the Prudhoe Bay bonanza was discovered, and soon after, the salmon fisheries were restored and became more productive than they had been for many years. Together with the government and defense "industries," these resources are the foundation of Alaska's economy and the ultimate sources of most of the employment and income in the state. In the late 1950s, proponents of statehood gambled that the statehood land and resources grants would eventually provide much of the financial support needed for state government. This was a bet that paid off in huge returns in the 1980s.

In addition to providing Alaskans with natural resources, statehood also gave them the institutions and legal tools needed to capture and redistribute benefits from their exploitation. During territorial days, most of the benefits, including jobs, incomes, and profits, went to "outsiders" or were exported. Largely in reaction to this colonial experience, the writers of Alaska's Constitution, in its Article VIII on Natural Resources, proclaimed that the new state's goals were to settle land and develop resources for the maximum benefit of Alaskans.

State government itself was the institution now available to the people of Alaska to pursue these objectives. As a state, Alaska now had the regulatory power to control resource development activities and the tax power to extract a share of the profits from them. It also had the power, and it soon had the revenues, to establish many kinds of programs for distributing benefits among its citizens. Although the new state needed a lot of help from the federal government during its first decade--including special transition grants and massive reconstruction aid after the 1964 earthquake--the promise of Article VIII was fulfilled beyond anyone's expectations with the billions of dollars that the state extracted from the Prudhoe Bay oil fields in the 1980s.

Finally, statehood endowed Alaskans with state's rights--the means of defending and expanding their claims to resources and their uses of state government authority vis-a-vis the federal government. As part of this endowment, statehood conferred on Alaskans the political opportunities available to citizens of all of the states through representation in Congress. Alaska realized a great advantage from the Connecticut Compromise that had been crafted by the nation's founding fathers: one of the least populous states, Alaska elects two U.S. Senators just as the largest states do. Alaska's two senators represent a population of

500 thousand, which is one-fiftieth the size of the population represented by California's two senators.

Except for some second thoughts by the statehood commission in the early 1980s, statehood is now taken for granted as part of the Alaska political landscape. But, reflecting a traditional attitude from territorial days, many Alaskans--particularly non-Native migrants to the state--are distrustful of the federal government and believe that it is the main obstacle to Alaska's development and progress. Alaskans have always liked having the benefits of statehood, but political leaders and activists typically express mixed feelings about the constraints associated with federalism. "Give us our resources, institutions, and state's rights," they seem to be saying, "but don't try to tell us what we can and can't do with them." This attitude of having your statehood cake and eating it, too, seems to be ingrained in Alaska's political culture.

What are these federal constraints that Alaskans complain so much about? There are two sets of them, one deriving from federal constitutional and statutory powers and the other based on federal land and resource ownership.

The interstate commerce clause of the first article of the federal constitution underlies one persisting conflict. The clause restricts state legislation in this field, and it has been an obstacle to popular action by Alaska state government several times in recent years. It is the basis of the Congressional prohibition on the export of Alaska's North Slope oil to Japan, where it would earn higher taxes and royalties for the state. For many years, Congress's preemptive powers in this field have required that Alaska's maritime trade with other parts of the U.S. be conducted with the use of more expensive American

vessels and crews, rather than cheaper foreign ones, which raises the price of everything shipped to or from Alaska.[2]

Another area of federal constitutional law that has been particularly vexing to Alaskans stems from the "equal protection" and "privileges and immunities" clauses of the fourteenth amendment. Because of these restriction on state action, the courts have stopped Alaska policymakers from imposing "durational residency" requirements before a person could qualify for special state benefits that petroleum wealth has made possible: annual "dividends," now approaching a thousand dollars a year for every state resident, from Alaska's Permanent Fund, and the monthly "old folks," or longevity, bonus of two hundred fifty dollars for all Alaska residents over sixty-five years old. The benefits of neither of these programs are based on need or any other condition except Alaska residence.[3] Courts have also overturned Alaska local hire laws that favor longer term Alaska residents over transients and newcomers, such as those who flocked to the state in search of high paying jobs on the Alaska pipeline in the 1970s. State as well as federal courts have consistently struck down Alaska laws that try to discriminate against newcomers.

Even if they have lived in the state for only a few years, many state residents favor restricting the access that other, more recent arrivals might have to the benefits and opportunities of living in the state. Moreover, state politicians are often eager to respond to this sentiment. Among the more familiar political appeals in the state, especially prominent during election campaigns, are candidates' boasts of their years of Alaska residence, various kinds of "Alaska first" rhetoric, and, regardless of what the courts say, persistent calls for "local hire."

Another important federal constitutional constraint is imposed by the power of Congress to make laws affecting Native Americans.[4] In Alaska, Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts have a "special relationship" with the federal government, which has ultimate authority and responsibility for policy decisions affecting Native welfare. The federal relationship is the basis for the Native "sovereignty" movement under which Natives are asserting inherent, self-governing powers that rival those of the state. The state government and most of Alaska's non-Native population strongly oppose these political claims.

Currently the conflict focuses on Native "subsistence" rights to fish and wildlife, which is also a land ownership issue. On federal and Native lands in Alaska, which account for over 70 percent of the total, federal resource managers can preempt state management if the federal government determines that the state is not protecting Native (and other rural) subsistence rights as required by federal law. This threat of a federal takeover was in fact the stimulus for a state "subsistence preference" law enacted in 1978. Subsequently, it was embodied in a provision of the federal Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980.[5] Then, a few years later, in 1982, the takeover threat was a major factor in the failure of organized groups of recreational hunters and fishermen to repeal the subsistence preference law in a statewide referendum.

Many Alaskans in fact look upon federal land ownership as the greatest federal constraint on their personal freedoms. With ownership goes the power to write the rules determining what may or may not be done on the land. Many of these rules, particularly those applying in wilderness areas, parks, and wildlife refuges, can be quite restrictive. They affect where and how mining claims may be staked, gold may

be dug out of stream beds, trees may be cut, hunting may be conducted, and access roads may be built. These restrictions are considered especially burdensome in a place that many people think of as the last frontier.

The federal government's proprietary authority is not confined to the land. It also covers the waters and related resources surrounding Alaska from three to two hundred miles offshore. This places further practical limits on what the state can do in regulating the fisheries in the interests of its citizens as distinct from the interests of the citizens of other states, or even of other nations, who also participate in the Alaska fisheries. Thus, the State of Alaska cannot unilaterally prohibit the harvesting of certain offshore resources, such as high seas salmon, by "outsiders." Nor can it control the harvesting by Alaska Natives of marine mammals or birds that are regulated under federal laws and international treaties, not under state law.

Beyond federal land ownership, Alaska has special characteristics that tend to magnify the feelings of alienation from federal institutions and even from the rest of the country. Alaska's physical separation and remoteness, sparse settlement, and small population tend to reinforce the notion that Alaskans not only are different, but that the larger states are discriminating against them in national councils of government. Further, the state's natural resource export economy, like that of recent third world colonies (and that of the Territory of Alaska), is susceptible to exploitation by outsiders in big business and their allies in big government. Finally, many Alaskans retain memories or have acquired images of federal mistreatment and neglect during the territorial period.[6]

The founders and faithful followers of the Alaskan Independence Party are one small group that won't forget, and they see evidence of federal usurpation all around them. In the state's official election pamphlet in 1988, the party reiterated the main plank in its platform: "We seek the vote we were entitled to in 1958--three choices, to remain a state, commonwealth status, or to become a separate and independent nation. This was due us as a non-self-governing territory of the United States."

Despite the occasional idiosyncratic call for secession, statehood is no longer an issue in Alaska. Few Alaskans would dream of giving up the benefits that are available to them as citizens of a state and a nation that are so richly endowed with resources and opportunities as are Alaska and the United States. But as sure (or complacent) as they are about the benefits of statehood, many Alaskans complain regularly about the constraints. For many of the state's residents, the political game of federalism--the competition for control and advantage, the bargaining and compromise--is part of their everyday lives. The realities of the game often conflict with their ideas about how the world works or ought to work, and they don't like it. In Alaska, where the game seems to be played more seriously and for higher and more visible stakes than in other states, the players take both their real and perceived losses especially hard.

FROM COLONIAL TERRITORY TO FEDERAL STATE

In pre-statehood times, Alaska was essentially a colony. Reflecting the classic characteristics of a colony, the region was systematically controlled and exploited by external forces. There was little power, and a very limited local basis for building power, in the territory

itself. The immigrant white population was too small and unstable, the land too remote, and the environment too hostile to justify significant federal efforts to develop a locally controlled and oriented governmental system. Moreover, there were powerful vested interests in maintaining the territorial status quo.[7]

Alaska officially became a federal territory in 1912. (For nearly two decades after the 1867 purchase, Alaska was a neglected appendage to the U.S. In 1884, it became a minimally organized federal "civil and judicial district.") As a territory, Alaska was authorized to elect its own legislature, but in keeping with the established pattern, federal law restricted territorial authority and prescribed the specific form, powers, and responsibilities of the legislature. The territory was denied authority over its fisheries and wildlife, it could not assume any debts without permission of Congress, no provision was made for land legislation, taxing powers were strictly limited, and the judiciary remained under direct federal control.

Thus, the territorial-colonial system was designed to limit local power and to serve as a vehicle for external control of Alaska's minerals, fisheries, and other natural resources. In those days, and nearly until statehood, Alaska resource development policy was made through a series of accommodations between federal officials and absentee private interests in Washington, D.C., Seattle, and other centers of corporate and governmental power. The colonial nature of the natural resource export economy was manifest: Capital, labor, and virtually all goods and equipment were imported, while products and profits were exported. Conservation practices, particulary in the declining salmon fisheries, were ignored or inadequate. Finally, there was little or no development

of local economies beyond the levels needed to support extractive and export enterprises.[8]

Colonial Alaska was transformed into the State of Alaska primarily by global events and by technology, and only secondarily by the political movement for statehood. The chief global event was nothing less than the Second World War, which put Alaska on the map strategically, and flooded the territory first with soldiers and then, after the war, with returning veterans and other immigrants from the lower forty-eight states. The cold war supplied further momentum when an arctic defense line was staked out across Alaska and the Canadian north. The post-war residents of the territory brought with them their families and expectations for political rights and public amenities they were accustomed to back in the states. With major technological advancements in air travel and electronic communications that emerged in the fifties, effectively linking Alaska with the rest of the country socially and economically, the conditions were present for Alaska statehood by the end of that decade.

The Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 incorporated Alaska into the union of states. As the population grew, and the state became increasingly integrated into national political and economic systems, its status in the federal union became entrenched as well. Alaska changed politically and economically with the discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay at the end of the 1960s, the Native claims settlement in 1971, construction of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline in the mid-1970s, related battles over land conservation and environmental protection at the end of that decade, and the state's spending of billions of petroleum revenues in the 1980s and 1990s. At the same time that these events mark Alaska's development as a state, they also underscore the continuing interdependencies of

they also underscore the continuing interdependencies of the State of Alaska and the federal government. In all of these events, the federal government has been a key actor because it has had significant national interests to protect in Alaska.

Construction of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline was blocked for five years after the Prudhoe Bay discovery because of Alaska Native land claims, which resulted in a federally imposed freeze on all Alaska land transactions. Another obstacle was the federal environmental standards that had to be met under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which Congress passed a year after the Prudhoe discovery. In part because of the land freeze and in part because of the merits of Native demands, Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. Then, to remove the NEPA environmental barrier, and in response to the Arab oil embargo, Congress enacted the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act of 1973.[9] Finally, delivering on a promise made in the Native claims act, Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980 to dedicate over 100 million acres of Alaska lands to federal conservation systems--parks, refuges, forests, and wilderness areas.

Virtually the entire history of Alaska as a state has been shaped by federal actions and national interests. The statehood act in 1958 provided the new state with its resource and land base, including the lands selected by the state at Prudhoe Bay. The Native claims act in 1971 recognized and equipped Alaska's Natives as major players in the state's economy and politics. The pipeline act in 1973 brought Prudhoe Bay oil to national markets and signaled the beginning of a decade long economic boom in Alaska, powered by billions of dollars of state petroleum revenues. And the Alaska lands act in 1980 was the culmination of

a long battle between environmental and developmental interests nationally and in the state for control of Alaska land use policy.

Viewed from even a broader, longer term perspective, Alaska's development is shaped by global economic and political forces that are often mediated by federal policymaking institutions. As a natural resource export economy, Alaska has always been exposed to the volatility of world commodity markets in furs, minerals, fisheries, and timber. This linkage has become even stronger with the emergence of Alaska's oil economy and the booms and busts in world oil prices beginning in the 1970s. Consequently, federal policies affecting the development, transport, and pricing of petroleum have been crucial to Alaska's economic fortunes. Thus, Alaska state government has a major stake in federal land and resource policies affecting the economy, and Alaska's representatives in Washington are expected to be particularly vigilant players in federal policymaking that may affect the state's economic interests.

It should now be clear why many Alaskans are ambivalent about their state's relationship to the federal government. They are ambivalent because they like the benefits that the federal government brings and fear that these benefits may be reduced or taken away, and because they dislike the federal constraints and fear that these constraints may be increased or may directly interfere with their interests. Although many Alaskans think of themselves as independent individualists, they resent their dependence on the federal government, and this is a constant source of tension. Not everyone pays that much attention to the public's business or feels that way about the federal government. But there are a great many Alaskans who do, and state political leaders

continually call attention to federal threats, keeping the matter alive and at the center of Alaska's public life.

Federal-state issues are covered constantly in the newspapers and on radio and television news. The most visible and controversial of these issues involve federal policies and decisions affecting rights to natural resources, including land ownership and use, Native subsistence rights, fisheries enforcement on the high seas, export of North Slope oil, and regulation of mining. In recent years, other federal-state battles have been fought over issues of opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, east of Prudhoe Bay, to oil exploration; limiting the harvest of timber from the Tongass National Forest in southeast Alaska; and federal leasing of petroleum exploration and development rights in the area of one of the world's most productive salmon fisheries in Bristol Bay.

Of these latter three cases, it is only in the Bristol Bay fisheries that the state is identified with the anti-development side of the conflict. This is mainly because of the economic importance of the fisheries and the political strength of organized fishermen in Alaska, and not necessarily because the state is more sensitive to environmental issues than are the federal agencies involved. Further, the federal government, not the state, would realize most of the economic benefits of petroleum development on the submerged lands of the outer continental shelf, and the fishermen and fishing communities of Bristol Bay would likely bear most of the potential costs. In the case of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, on the other hand, oil exploration and development would require substantial onshore construction activity, lots of jobs, and a state share in royalties not forthcoming from federal offshore leasing.

Federal and state governments tend toward conflict over resource development policies in Alaska when their economic interests differ or, more precisely, when important interest groups at state and national levels take different sides. Despite appearances in specific cases, such as the Prince William Sound oil spill in 1989, neither the state nor the federal government give priority to environmental values in Alaska when significant economic values were at stake.

POLITICAL CULTURE AND THE COLONIAL HERITAGE

For many non-Native Alaskans, statehood meant freedom from federal controls they believed had held back Alaska's development for the better part of a century. The mission of the state government was to lead the way toward growth and progress based on natural resource exploitation, and to assure that the benefits flowed to Alaska residents. These hopes and expectations, however, were balanced and even contradicted by an interest in preserving the "Alaska lifestyle"--a northern frontier social life associated with the state's remoteness, isolation, small population, scenic and wilderness areas, and relative underdevelopment.

Before the petroleum boom of the 1970s and 1980s, it was still possible to view Alaska's political culture as small town, populist, and parochial. But the non-Native newcomer population, while cultivating the Alaska lifestyle, had also brought north the values and expectations they had acquired in the south. While they liked Alaska's small town, open frontier character, they were also interested in making money, improving their standards of living, and generally rising as high as they could on the economic ladder. This meant that Alaska's mostly new, young, and ambitious population widely shared the objective of economic development, and they looked to the state to lead the way.

The interwoven threads in Alaska's political culture--development versus preservation, hostility toward the federal government, and the state as a vehicle for economic development--have remained remarkably constant. They are continually renewed as succeeding generations of Alaskans construct their images of the political world in response to material conditions and perceived self-interests that are not significantly different from the conditions and interests of those who came before them. Although Alaska has changed in many ways during the statehood period, it is still remote, sparsely populated, and mostly undeveloped. Its residents are still relatively young and economically ambitious. For many of them, Alaska continues to be the land of opportunity--if the state will prepare the way and the federal government will not create obstacles.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the continuities in popular attitudes about the state's relationships with the federal government were evident in the conflicts surrounding the Alaska lands act and in related political movement questioning the very legitimacy of federalism in Alaska. The dedication of over 100 million acres of Alaska's lands to federal conservation systems under the lands act struck many Alaskans and their political leaders as another in a long history of federal "lock-ups" intended, among other things, to thwart the settlement of Alaska's lands and the development of her resources. It was natural for many Alaskans to associate this conflict with the older perceptions of oppressive federal land policies during the territorial period. There were protests and demonstrations in Alaska, and a long, hard-fought battle in Congress that many Alaskans believe they lost. With ownership rights settled by the lands act, many Alaskans now

contend with federal land management agencies over more specific questions of land use such as hunting rights, mining claims, and transportation access.

Provoked by the 1980 Alaska lands act, the larger conflict over federal land ownership flared up again in the "Tundra Rebellion," Alaska's version of the "Sagebrush Rebellion" that had begun in the western states a few years before. By almost a three to one margin, Alaska voters in 1982 approved an initiative that claimed state ownership of all remaining federal lands in Alaska, with the exception of Mount McKinley National Park, certain national monuments, and other special federal reserves. Because of constitutional-legal barriers to such a claim, the vote was little more than an expression of sentiment. It nonetheless demonstrated Alaskans' continuing opposition to federal land controls and their persisting belief that Alaska's economic development problems were largely attributable to federal government action or inaction.

It is a constant in the history of the federal-Alaska relationship that Alaskans tend to exaggerate both the fears and the hopes they have about federal activity affecting their state.[10] This is one of the political cultural elements that can be traced back to Alaska's colonial heritage. In territorial days, Alaskans popularly believed that the federal government deliberately promoted the exploitation of Alaska by powerful outside interests. The fish traps, owned largely by Seattle processors, were the most hated example. At the same time, they felt that federal officials neglected Alaska or dismissed its importance when Alaskans wanted federal support for activities that would benefit residents, not outsiders. Most of all, residents of the territory

increasingly believed that statehood was the solution to their public problems, most of which they could trace to unfair, undeserved, and unwanted federal controls.[11]

Statehood did not solve Alaska's development problems, and it did not remove the federal government's dominating presence. It did, however, make it possible for Alaskans to structure their own state institutions, capture resource rents for their own uses, design their own policies for development, and have their own representatives in Washington. In structuring and directing their state government as an instrument of development, Alaskans have reacted against their colonial past but they have not escaped it. This is apparent in the state institutions they have fashioned, the development strategies they pursue, and the role that their representatives play in Washington.

Setting out to design their new state government as a model of institutional simplicity and unity, Alaska's constitution writers were only in part following the contemporary 1950s trends in constitutional theory. They were also reacting against their territorial experience with a government of numerous agencies, boards, and commissions, a profusion of elected and appointed administrative officials, a weak but vocal legislature, and a federally appointed governor with little formal control or influence over any of this institutional sprawl. This pattern concentrated power in Washington and scattered it in the territory, and the constitution writers wanted no more of it. They replaced these colonial-territorial structures with a unified executive, a strong legislature, and a single statewide court system. Here, they hoped, was a set of modern institutions capable of setting and consistently pursuing state development goals.

Throughout the period since statehood, development strategies have also followed a pattern in reaction to real and perceived federal policies of the colonial past. The broad goals of settlement and development were set out in the natural resources article of the constitution. Strategies to pursue these goals have consistently included promotion of resource exports to Japan and other Pacific rim nations, incentives and requirements for processing of raw materials in Alaska before they are exported, and the development of infrastructure--energy, transportation, and communications--to support industrial activity.[12] These strategies depend on federal as well as state action. It is not surprising, then, that the lands act, the oil export limits, and the restrictions on maritime trade, and other federal policies remind many Alaskans too much of the federal controls of territorial days.

The main functions of Alaska's congressional delegation in Washington are to minimize or overcome such federal obstacles and to advocate other federal policies that actively promote Alaska's development, particularly when that means increases in jobs, incomes, and profits in the state. During the first couple of decades of statehood, apart from casework (practical services for individual constituents) little else that Alaska's senators and representative did mattered if they could deliver federal funds and projects, while visibly fighting federal restrictions and promoting pro-development policies. This has changed somewhat as Alaska's population has grown and become more diverse and as the state has been permeated by national communications media. Now, many Alaskans pay attention to national and international issues as well, but like people elsewhere, they have limited time for and interest in public affairs, and Alaska state and local issues have first priority. Among all potential issues of public concern in Alaska,

the state's development, or lack of it, continues to stand out clearly above the rest.

Like most other states, Alaska is also represented in the nation's capital by a state office. Alaska's office is an extension of the office of the governor, and it is headed by a director of state-federal relations, who is assisted by a small professional and clerical staff. The main functions of the office are to lobby Congress and administrative agencies, assist the governor and other state officials in their Washington relationships, and do casework for the state.

Although dealing with a wide range of issues, the staff devotes most of its energies to problems of resource development.[13] Whether the objective is to stop petroleum exploration in Bristol Bay or to promote it in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, or to achieve a larger timber harvest in the Tongass National Forest or to impose more stringent safety standards on oil tanker traffic, the State of Alaska continually petitions the federal government for action on issues affecting its natural resource environment and economy. This has been one of the constants in Alaska's federal relationship since the 1867 Purchase, and it is not likely to change in the future.

CONCLUSION

Alaska's explorers and immigrants have sought to exploit the region's natural resource wealth and to reap the rewards ever since the first Russian came ashore in the mid-eighteenth century. In those early days, the Czar's central administrators made demands on officials stationed in the Russian-American colony for shipments of furs and other resources, and the latter responded largely at the expense of the Native peoples of the region. After the Alaska Purchase, temporary and

longer term immigrant residents in the territory struggled against an alliance of big government and big business in Washington, D.C., and other metropolitan centers for control of fisheries, minerals, and timber, and again, it was the region's indigenous peoples who paid most dearly. Statehood and the state's subsequent political development changed the legal statuses and relative powers of the players, but the federal-state struggle for control of Alaska's resources--the terms of their exploitation and the distribution of the benefits and costs--can be viewed as an extension of the conflicts of the past.

Alaskans have exaggerated the parts that federal and state governments play in achieving long term economic development, and they have denied and ignored Alaska's economic and geographical handicaps. Their development policies are based on the premise that, in addition to federal opposition, it is primarily lack of capital and will--not remoteness, climate, and high costs--that holds back development. They have tried to shape and direct their state government institutions as instruments of resident-oriented development, and they have tended to ignore their inefficiencies and failures. They expect their representatives in Washington to carry on a constant struggle against shadowy figures, and they are particularly impressed with politicians who make a good show of doing so.

Many questions about this central-local, or federal-state, relationship remain to be explored elsewhere. Among them are the persistence of the colonial mentality and its consequences for the political development of Alaska as a state. The colonial mentality is an attitude that blames the federal government for Alaska's development problems and, at the same time, depends on the federal government to

solve them. The massive federal presence in Alaska reinforces and validates this attitude for many Alaskans and their political leaders.

Not even the Prudhoe Bay bonanza and the unprecedented riches it provided the state did much to change this orientation. Nor do the material conditions of Alaska as a remote, high cost, resources export economy seem to have much effect on Alaskans' understanding of the real sources of their economic and political limits. Instead, Alaskans blame the federal government and other "outsiders" for their economic ills and grievances and credit themselves and their independent spirits for their good fortune.

NOTES

1 Alaska Statehood Commission, More Perfect Union: A Plan for Action, Final Report, Anchorage, January 1983, p. 1.

2 The Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act of 1973 and the Export Administration Act of 1979 prohibit the export of North Slope oil. The Merchant Marine Act of 1920, also known as the "Jones Act," prohibits registration of foreign-built ships as vessels of the United States and bars foreign-registered ships from carrying passengers, vehicles, and cargo except U.S. mail between U.S. ports.

3 The longevity bonus is being phased out because of its high and growing costs. The bonus is paid from general funds, while dividends are paid from the earnings of the Alaska Permanent Fund.

4 This power of Congress is also derived from the commerce clause, in this case as it refers to the regulation of commerce with "Indian Tribes."

5 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Public Law 96-487, 96th Congress, H.R. 39, December 2, 1980, Sec. 805 (d).

6 The classic statement of the mistreatment and neglect case is Ernest Gruening, The State of Alaska (New York: Random House, 1954). Also see Clause-M. Naske, An Interpretative History of Alaskan Statehood (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., 1973).

7 See William H. Wilson, "Alaska's Past, Alaska's Future," Alaska Review, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1970), pp. 1-11; also, Claus-M. Naske and Herman E. Slotnick, Alaska: A History of the 49th State (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), pp. 61-66.

8 George W. Rogers, The Future of Alaska: Economic Consequences of Statehood (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1962), pp. 80-92.

9 Mary Clay Berry, The Alaska Pipeline: The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1975).

10 Cf. Wilson, "Alaska's Past, Alaska's Future."

11 See Gruening, The State of Alaska.

12 These development strategies, and particularly their limits, are examined in detail in Thomas A. Morehouse, ed., Alaska Resources Development: Issues of the 1980s (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984).

13 Communications with John W. Katz, Director of State/Federal Relations, State of Alaska, Office of the Governor, Washington, D.C., October 29, 1986 and November 15, 1988.