

## Port Must Grow In Pace With City

AN OVERWHELMING victory for the port bond issues today will be in agreement with the actions and spirit that have made Anchorage the state's largest city.

Indeed, there would be no port at all if the people had not taken the matter into their own hands a few years ago and used their own ingenuity and financial resources to build it.

The Anchorage port is a monument to the failure of promises and the futility of waiting.

Fifty years ago when this townsite was first carved out of the wilderness, federal authorities promised there would be an ocean dock to serve it. This promise may have boosted prices when city lots were placed on the auction block by that same federal government.

But somehow, the promise was forgotten. The only existing dock was a private facility owned by the railroad and, strangely, a generation of local residents was reared in the belief that Cook Inlet had silted up to a point where ocean-going vessels could no longer navigate. At least that is what the general manager of the Alaska Railroad said on many occasions.

IT TOOK A WORLD war to debunk the railroad manager. He was debunked silently but soundly when military transports arrived in the Anchorage waterway without announcement. The Seward terminal had proven inadequate to handle the war freight. All warehouses there were full. Cargo was being stored in vacant lots. The Alaska Railroad was at one time 137 trainloads behind in moving freight from Seward north to destination.

The Anchorage dock was opened for military cargo only. But the big lesson for local residents was that Cook Inlet had not silted up as the railroad manager said it had. Ocean-going vessels were here in large numbers.

After the war, local leaders tried to get a good dock for Anchorage. It was the missing link in the chain of facilities which have made this city a transportation

center. The leaders were rebuffed on every hand.

The railroad fought the project. So did military agencies. Little could be done to get federal recognition of the fact that this community wanted a port, needed a port or had a place to build one. Federal funds and attention went elsewhere.

Action came only after the people of Anchorage took matters into their own hands. They voted to issue municipal bonds to finance the port. They found New York bond underwriters who would purchase the bonds. And they courageously built the port without federal help.

A YEAR AGO many things changed after the earthquake, including operations of the Anchorage port. The local wharf was the only operating facility to serve western Alaska's main supply lines. Seward, Whittier and Valdez ports were gone. The Anchorage facility, which had attracted hardly enough business to pay off its debts, was suddenly overloaded with business. Virtually all military as well as civilian traffic converged on it. Petroleum products required new services.

The military transport service found itself in a curious position when it protested to federal authorities because its vessels were refused special privileges at the Anchorage dock. This federal agency had, before the dock was built, contended it was not needed. And the local port authorities found other federal agencies jostling regular customers in quest of dock privileges.

It appears that the increase in traffic is here to stay. It is imperative that the bonds be approved so that the facility can be expanded. The construction will only help provide those services needed immediately. More money and more facilities will be needed for continued growth.

And we might as well face it now — growth is going to continue as long as the people of this city continue their enthusiasm for making their community a better place to live.



### JUST IN TIME —

Anchorage's temporary petroleum dock obviously has given up the struggle to wind, tide and ice which engineers warned last year would carry out the emergency construction this winter. Anchorage voters Tuesday approved a bond issue for \$1,750,000

to build a permanent facility to serve tankers at the Port of Anchorage. The permanent dock will not, however, be completed until October, port officials said. Until it is completed, petroleum products must be moved ashore over the port's municipal terminal.

## Voting Was Light, But Bonds OK'd

Anchorage voters Tuesday approved five bond issues by a healthy majority. The largest sum of money, \$1,750,000, was approved 1,316 to 699. A \$350,000 issue, for parks and recreation uses, passed by a 1,256 to 760 vote and a \$120,000 issue, for expansion of library services, passed 1,192 to 809. A \$110,000 issue, to fund extension of the city's fire warning system and buy a pumper truck, won by the largest margin with 1,427 voters hitting the "yes" lever compared to 505 voting "no." A \$750,000 issue, for construction of a permanent petroleum dock at the Port of Anchorage, involved the largest sum of money. This voters approved 1,309 to 711. The north extension of the Port of Anchorage municipal services, passed 1,192 to 809.

## Port Bond Issues Make Good Sense

ON TUESDAY the voters of the City of Anchorage will have an opportunity to again show their confidence in Anchorage as the Commerce Center of Alaska. On the ballot are two propositions directly related to the economic growth of the city and the entire railbelt.

The Port of Anchorage is seeking a total of \$2.5 million in general obligation bond funds to expand its facilities.

One proposition calls for \$1.75 million to build a permanent petroleum dock. The need for this facility can hardly be questioned. Oil companies have invested millions of dollars in storage tanks in the port's industrial park.

The port's present temporary petroleum dock looks like a roller coaster. It can no longer be used.

Petroleum products are vital to everyone in this area and petroleum products at the lowest possible price are certainly desirable. Water transportation is the most economical method of moving these products.

Only by establishing a permanent petroleum facility can Anchorage be certain of the supply it needs at a price within reason.

EXTENSION OF THE dry cargo dock 150 feet, including a truck turning area, is the second port proposition. This will cost \$750,000.

With Sea-Land Service, Inc., sailing into the port on a regular weekly schedule, berthing space has become scarce. Sea-Land plans to add a third ship to its present fleet servicing Anchorage. Port officials say there are more potential customers than can be accommodated at the 600-foot dock.

On the economic side, it has been calculated that one ton of cargo over the dock generates about \$17 in new money for the community. Direct payroll benefits from the port in 1964 amounted to \$2.5 million.

Specifically, the port hopes to gain the trade of the oil exploration boats with the 150-foot extension. It hopes also to use the extension to berth the state ferry Tustumena, which cannot be guaranteed space this year.

One expert on the economics of Alaska maintains that any industry which employs two or more persons is significant in this state. Anchorage cannot afford to ignore one of its major industries.

These bond propositions represent an investment in an expanding and vital public enterprise, one which is proving successful. Its only requirement is to keep up with its possibilities for growth.

—E. I.



FUEL SUPPLIES, depleted after the long winter, get a boost when the "J.H. Tuttle" steamed into the Port of Anchorage to discharge about 100,000 barrels of

petroleum products. The 525-foot Standard Oil Co. ship was the first tanker of the year to tie up at the city dock. (Photo by Larry Bryant)