corporations that control the direction of the Alaska fisheries.

If these new signs of organization become real, then there will be a whole new dimension to the Alaskan future.

(Those coastal workers interested in getting in touch with the organizing effort of the Alaska Coastal Workers Association can write Larry Cotter, President of ILWU Local 41, P.O. Box 2336, Juneau 99803.)

--Van Champagne-Veselka

Hard Times Ahead for Atwood

Robert Atwood achieved a short-lived victory January 20 with the setback of union organizing efforts at the Anchorage Times. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), which had petitioned to represent the workers, lost an election at the Times by four votes.

Many employees claim that Atwood engaged in unfair labor practices before and during the election. The union challenged twelve of the votes, and IBEW lawyers are planning to file ten indictments against the Times with the National Labor Relations Board. A new election is likely.

For weeks before the election Times employees received personalized letters from "Bob" containing distorted interpretations of the union constitution and other attacks on the IBEW.

One letter contained a "Checklist of Times Benefits" -- "all of them provided without controversy, friction or negotiation." The "benefits" included free coffee, vending machines, a men's softball team, a Christmas party, and a free daily newspaper to each employee.

In another letter to the workers, "Bob" notes "how discouraging it is to have a foreign agency such as the electrical union inject itself into our affairs and try to drive a wedge between the employees and management, and especially me... (The union) couldn't hope to improve the quality of the paper or the happiness of its employees by making them discontent and suspicious of their leaders or by debunking me. This makes it obvious that their motivation is selfish."

Atwood claimed that the union conducted a "smear campaign" and tried to convince workers that by joining the union "you are surrendering a good chunk of your individual freedom." Paychecks before the election contained a note stating that "if you were a member of the IBEW, the Times would have been asked by the Union to deduct from your pay $257.06 for this year, for dues."

Immediately before the election Atwood granted a 40¢ raise to one department. Despite the illegality of threatening job loss if the union is elected, Atwood allegedly had individual talks with certain employees claiming that the paper might have to cut back its operations if unionized. And despite a "hiring freeze" which had been in effect, several new workers were brought in previous to the election, including the managing editor's teenaged daughter. Many employees claim these new workers were hired to vote against the union. They also claim two cases of job termination for pro-

union activities.

Atwood and the Anchorage Times have a long history of anti-union activity. While keeping his workers unorganized and underpaid, Atwood used the newspaper to advance his own financial interests. The January 6 issue of the Alaska Advocate estimates Atwood's worth at between $25-$30 million.

It is unlikely that Atwood will be able to obstruct the unionizing drive much longer.

"We are not listening to your demands until you agree to accept what we offer."

What's Behind the Safeway Strike?

On July 2nd, Safeway shut down its bakeries in Anchorage refusing to meet the baker's demands for parity with Sunrise Bakers. The only difference between the two shops is that Sunrise is essentially a machine operation and Safeway was essentially a hand operation making doughnuts, sweetrolls, cookies and decorated cakes. Sunrise Bakery, a Teamster shop, now does the baking for Safeway. Since August 13, 1976 there has been a picket line at all Safeway stores. The Alaska Department of Labor said that Safeway had locked out its employees and those who qualify for unemployment insurance benefits are collecting. In addition, bakers get Teamster strike benefits of $135 a week. Pickets who are not in the bakers local get $30 a day for 8 hours duty. Some of the pickets are in the bakers local; some are Teamsters, others are local hire. Safeway did not let its customers know what was happening and closed down the bake shops in all its stores even though the contract with Teamsters would have expired on May 1, 1977. Safeway in Fairbanks has not closed its bake shops. Bakers there are organized with the retail clerks.

When asked if there was a tie-in between the baker Teamster picket line and more jobs for Teamster drivers, Richard Sant, shop steward and strike captain, said " There are union and non-union drivers who deliver to Safeway. Local produce from Palmer is brought in by non-union drivers, so is Pepsi-Cola, but fresh bread and milk are carried by Teamsters." He further explained that Sea Land delivers to all Safeway stores hauling piggyback loads direct from the docks. Sea Land drivers who are Teamsters do not cross the picket lines to make deliveries. Instead, Sea Land management stands by and drives the loads from the parking area to the Safeway loading platform.

Teamster strategy in continuing the baker picket line to help the drivers bargaining position and challenge Safeway's anti-Teamster bias is clever. However it just gives an inkling of what might happen if an entire grocery chain was organized in one big union. Then for example, the Retail Clerks would not be working while the bakers and truck drivers were getting the shaft; all contracts would have the same expiration date and workers would think in terms of their power in their particular store. When clerks, meatcutters, produce men, bakers and truckers understand that an injury to one is an injury to all, they will accept the need for solidarity and total job control and there will be more input from the rank and file membership.