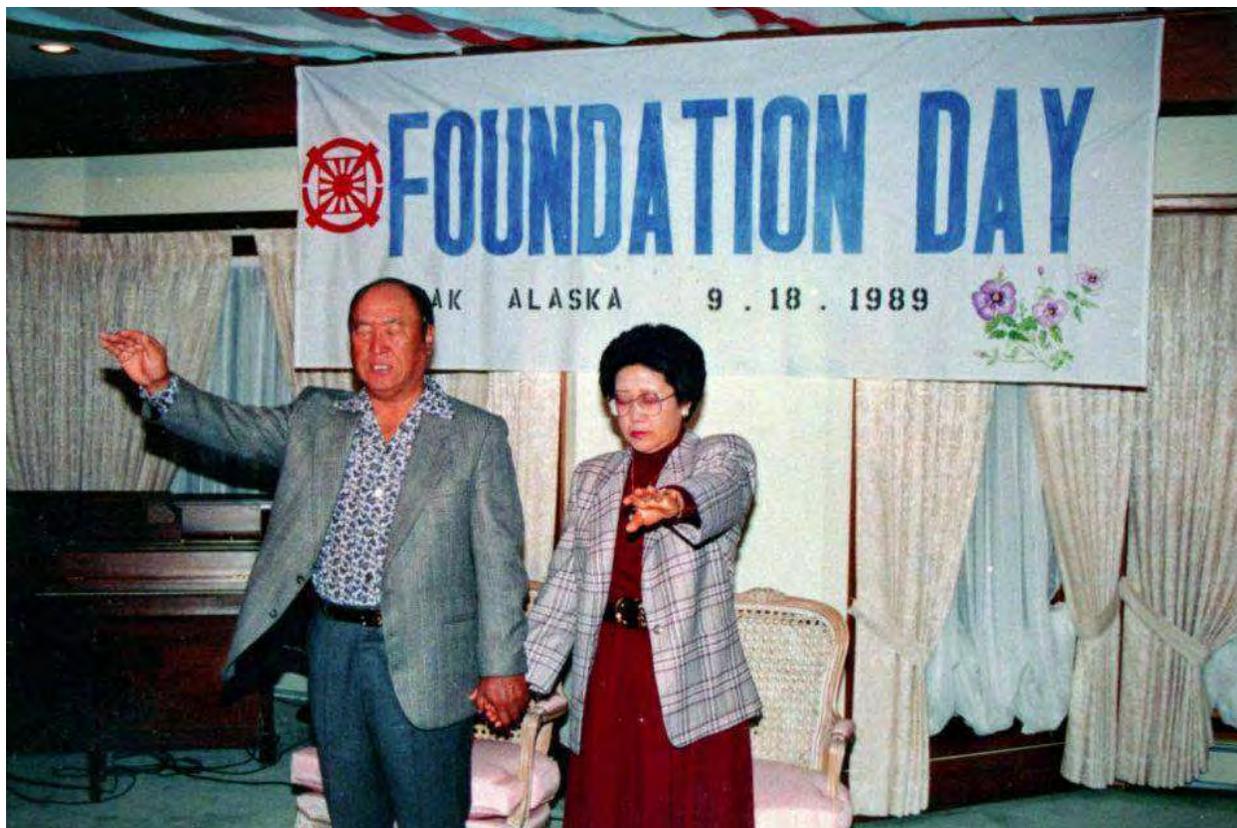


Up North: Chapter Fifteen - That's a Wrap

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Regrets? I've had a few, as The Chairman of the Board sang, but too few to mention. In writing this book, I've relied mostly on my own memories. I have endeavored to tell stories about things that I saw and experienced. Of course, it is not a full telling of my ten years Up North. I had to pick and choose which stories to include and which people to tell about. The primary criteria for my choices were to tell stories that the reader would find interesting, informative or amusing and give the flavor of life in Alaska at that time. For anyone whose memories of people and events differ from mine, I fully understand the limitations of my own memory and look forward to reading your book.

After almost ten years in Alaska, I walked away, as they say, to pursue other interests. A decade is a big chunk of a guy's life by any estimation and the Alaskan lifestyle was so different from any I have experienced before or since that it has stayed with me and as affected my life in a profound way.

Wherever I go, if I tell folks that I've lived in Alaska, they are always curious and usually the first thing they ask is about igloos. Well, the fact is I have never seen an igloo and I have to explain that an igloo is really only an emergency shelter constructed by Native Americans when caught in blizzards on hunting expeditions out on the tundra or ice. Excuse the pun but it is an icebreaker.

Now days, as a guy who earns his daily bread talking to others, my life in Alaska has become a rich source of stories and material that people find exotic, interesting or at least fun. At the drop of a hat, I can stand up and talk about the salmon fishery, big game hunting, Eskimos, bush pilots, commercial fishing gear or a myriad of other topics connected to the great Alaskan outdoors. As a writer, Alaska has been a treasure trove of ideas for characters, settings and other material. It was ten years well spent.

I often think of Alaska especially during the almost unbearable hot, muggy summers where I live now. In the cool of the early morning, I recall and long for the smells and feeling of Alaska. Someday I will go back again.

THE END