

# HENSLEY RESIGNS AFN, INC. PRESIDENCY

President Willie Hensley of the Alaska Federation of Natives, who took office in October, 1972 during a stormy reorganization of the AFN, Monday announced his intent to

step down by the end of November.

"I am leaving the federation for personal reasons and with some regret," said the Democratic State Senator for North-

west Alaska.

"My personal commitment to the federation was for approximately one year and I now have served that time. I feel my leaving will give the AFN board of

directors an opportunity to focus more fully on exactly what kind of an organization AFN should be."

Hensley said he felt that the

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federation was now relatively solvent and "the prospects are good for the statewide organization to maintain its viability and to serve the regional corporations in implementing the land claims settlement act.

"During our reorganization a year ago, the federation was floundering and near bankruptcy. I took the presidency with a personal commitment of one year because I firmly believe that a statewide organization is absolutely necessary," he said.

The AFN president is selected by and responsible to the board members, who represent the regional corporations. The board is expected to name a new president sometime before the first of December.

Under Hensley's leadership, the AFN had several notable accomplishments over the past year, including a successful lobby for an amendment to the Interior appropriations bill which allows regional corporations to assist the federation in paying off the indebtedness incurred during the land claims battle.

Through Hensley's efforts, the AFN obtained a General Accounting Office decision on interest for Native funds in the U.S. Treasury worth at the minimum \$7.5 million to regional and village corporations.

The AFN board also spearheaded efforts to secure acceptable rules and regulations from the Department on land selection.

As president of AFN, Hensley spent much time in Washington, D.C. lobbying to secure subsistence and damage indemnification provisions and the Buckley amendment to the pipeline right-of-way legislation which will protect Native interests both individual and corporate.

As passed by the free conference committee, the compromise on the amendment will bring in \$5 million every six months,

starting July 1, 1975.

Hensley's rise to the presidency of AFN came during a stormy session in which incumbent Donald R. Wright was ousted amidst reports of mounting financial troubles for AFN. The State Senator from Kotzebue has been active in the federation since its inception and was actively involved in the land claims settlement effort since its beginning also.