

Second roll draws to a close

From our Anchorage Bureau

"I feel confident that we are doing the best we can with what we've got."

Those are the words of Pat Hayes, the man in charge of seeing that Alaska Natives who did not enroll for land claims benefits the first time around do not miss out again. Alaska Natives who missed the first filing have until January 2, 1977 to sign up for a share of the benefits from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Although the rolls were supposed to have been open for a full year, Hayes said his office could not actually begin enrolling eligible Natives until August, a loss of seven months. Hayes said it took that long for the Department of Interior to adopt regulations for the enrollment, even though they were "very

similar" to the ones adopted for the first enrollment. He suggested that two months would have been a more reasonable time in which to prepare regulations.

Hayes also said he had been asked by several of the regional corporations if the deadline would be extended again. Although he would support an extension, Hayes said, he knew of no effort to open the rolls a third time.

Hayes said of 8,000 applications for benefits mailed out by his office, 2,000 have been returned and he expects another two to four thousand before the rolls close. December, he added, "is going to be our heaviest month."

Of the 8,000 applications mailed out, 3,000 were distributed to regional corporations, BIA offices across the

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enrollment . . .

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nation and enrollment enumerators in major Lower 48 cities. The other 5,000 were mailed to people who sent in requests.

Kish Tu, Inc., the firm hired to publicize the reopening of the rolls, reports that applications for enrollment have come in from all over the world.

"The latest I have is that we have been receiving enrollees from exotic places like Iran, Saudi Arabia, 30 in the State of Kentucky," says Irene Rowan of Kish Tu. Responses have also been received from the Phillipines, Mexico, West Virginia, Hawaii, Florida, South Dakota and Washington, D.C., and six hundred enrollees have reported from Canada.

Kish Tu has informed outsiders of the land claims enrollment through newspaper ads, press releases and press conferences in major cities. The firm has also enlisted the aid of senators, congressmen and governors in the Lower Forty-eight who have encouraged social services agencies to spread the word.