

tundra tattler

NO VEEP YET AT AFN — AFN President Morris Thompson is giving careful deliberation to filling the number two post at the statewide Native organization. AFN's Executive Vice President is charged with responsibility for management of extensive governmental contracts in the arena of social services and human resources. The position has been vacant since the resignation of Clifford Black at the end of January. Thompson offered the position to Kodiak Area Native Association president Frank R. Peterson in February, but the two were unable to agree on issues of administrative authority and salary, the Tattler hears. Former Tanana Chiefs Conference President Mitch Demientieff was also a strong contender for the job, but Thompson appears sensitive about the prospect of two interior Athabascans holding down the top AFN positions at the same time.

MERRILL'S BACK — Senior Wien Air Alaska Captain Merrill Wien was one of the first Boeing pilots to requalify for flight duty following the settlement of the 21-month long strike against Wien by the Air Line Pilots Association. His first trip was to the Eskimo community of Barrow. After a perfect landing at the Barrow airport, the passengers were advised that Captain Wien was in command of the flight and accorded the veteran aviator a resounding round of applause. Wien is one of six senior airline pilots to return to flight duty thus far since the strike settlement.

BROWN, ORTEGA MAY HEADLINE BANQUET — California Governor Jerry Brown and Apache singer A. Paul Ortega are considering invitations to appear as special guests at the 1979 Tundra Times Banquet to be held in Anchorage this fall. Brown is considered a likely candidate for the 1980 Democratic presidential nomination. Ortega is regarded as one of the finest Indian performing artists in the nation. The Tundra Times is considering an offer from the Calista Corporation to hold the 14th annual banquet in the Howard Rock Ballroom of the Anchorage Sheraton on Calista Square.

KONIAG'S RESPONSE — Syndicated columnist Jack Anderson recently published several articles which were highly critical of certification of several Koniag villages as eligible for land selections under the Native Claims Act. The columns also criticized the activities and views of Koniag leader Karl Armstrong. Following the national publicity about Koniag's land entitlement, the regional corporation board met and reaffirmed their faith in Armstrong's leadership role. He is now the chief officer of the corporation replacing former President Jack Wick, who remains board chairman and who resigned to become more directly involved with Koniag's fisheries programs. Armstrong is not interested in the job on a permanent basis, the Tattler has learned, but agreed to assume the top executive position on an interim basis.