

Degnan Blasts 'Fink' Democrats

A rural lawmaker has charged that Anchorage Rep. Dick McVeigh was primarily responsible for handing the Alaska State House to Republican control, and effectively freezing out the bush and almost every other area of the state.

Degnan said McVeigh was a publically declared opponent of any bush leadership very early in organization, and further charged that McVeigh had been working with Republicans to engineer a Republican leadership before the November election.

The veteran rural lawmaker said that the present Republican McVeigh House "has granted positions of leadership and power only to the Anchorage-Southcentral areas." "In addition," Degnan said, "conditions are almost as bad in the State Senate."

Degnan pointed out that virtually no key position now stands in the way of a capital

(Continued on page 6)

Degnan Blasts . . .

(Continued from page 1)

move bill, or a dramatic shift of the University of Alaska emphasis to Anchorage.

"My point is," Degnan said, "Fink and McVeigh have not just washed out the rural bush areas, but also effectively all areas outside the Anchorage/Southcentral region."

Degnan cited that in the House Anchorage/Southcentral controls the speakership, the Rules Chairmanship, the Finance Chairmanship, the majority of the Finance Committee, the chairmanship of the Legislative Council, as well as other key committees.

"Southeastern received the majority leadership, but that position has no inherent power," Degnan pointed out.

Degnan stated that the proposed Democratic House had reflected regional balance in the key leadership positions, and that the dissident Democrats which ultimately went over to the Republicans had broken off negotiations within the Democratic caucus prematurely.

"We really had yet to reach the point of serious compromise," Degnan stated.

Degnan said that the present House organization is openly hostile to the needs of much of Alaska, and that the one chief concern of House Speaker Tom Fink and Finance Chairman Earl Hillstrand, is to cut funds, reduce funding of programs, and retaliate for their own opposition to the federal settlement of the Alaska native land claims.

"The Fink-Democrats have made a mockery of political parties, and are apparently serving notice that they wish the development of parties along the lines of Anchorage vs. the rest of the state."

"A certain amount of regionalism is natural," Degnan stated, and stressed that rural Democrats had supported such urban programs as Fairbanks flood control, southeastern waters and harbors, University of Alaska needs, urban state school support, and many others.