

Resolutions deal with cutbacks, justice, fishing

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A plea to the federal government to "correct" a budget cut which will slash BIA expenditures in Alaska by \$25 million was made last week by the Tlingit and Haida Central Council.

In a resolution submitted by John Hope, Raymond Paddock, Myron Igtanloc and Gordon Jackson, the Tlingit noted that "out of a reported \$100 million reduction" \$25 million would be taken out of Alaska. This, they said represented "a disproportionate share of planned Bureau of Indian Affairs cuts as part of President Reagan's economic recovery plan."

Specifically, it was pointed out that \$5.6 million would be cut out with the closure of Mt. Edgecumbe High School, \$10 million from the closure of 20 BIA day schools, and \$6 million from the elimination of General Assistance.

"This," the resolution claimed, "is a very real burden on a people who will have no other recourse and the effect will be instant human misery."

The resolution called on Alaska's Congressional delegation to "do all in their power to restore budget cuts that unfairly treat their constituents."

The resolution was one of approximately 30 passed during the council meeting. Others

called on the state of Alaska to help fill the gaps created by federal withdrawal of funds, greater service by the council to Tlingits in Anchorage, California and Washington, fishing laws more equitable to trollers, and they addressed many other matters of importance to the Native people of Southeast Alaska.

The Sitka chapter submitted a resolution which sparked some angry discussion. It called for THCC to create a file on the severity of sentences and fines, noting that Alaska law provides for public input on the appointment of judicial positions. It further called upon each chapter of Tlingits and Haidas to "supply documented information to the Central Council of any court decisions they feel are adverse or detrimental to serving justice."

Not long ago, a Tlingit fisherman from Hoonah, Phil S Sharclane, was in Sitka. According to Frank O. Williams, a Sitka delegate, Sharclane apparently exchanged some words with a local youth who had recently graduated from high school in Sitka, and who had been a star center on Sitka's basketball team.

The youth allegedly drove away from the scene, circled back, and ran over Sharclane. He stopped his car, and once again, ran it over the Tlingit fisherman. He then left the

scene.

"This was a serious crime!" Williams stressed. "The State of Alaska considered it a crime against the state, and sent a district attorney to Sitka to prosecute it." The district attorney then negotiated a plea bargain with the youth, reducing the charge to "reckless endangerment," and the judge let the youth off with a six-month sentence, all of which was suspended except for 21 days. This could be served by the boy during vacations home from college. He was also fined \$1,000.

"If it had been the other way around," Williams said, "we believe the Native would have been locked up until it was

settled, and then would have received a stiff sentence!" The resolution passed unanimously.

Two resolutions passed called for better conditions for hand troll fishermen. One appeal for all salmon caught by purse seine fisheries to be recorded as such and not as troll caught fish. Current regulations allow some to be recorded as troll caught, and this cuts down on the number actually allowed true trollers. The other resolution noted that six-and-eight-day closures already had been imposed on open fishermen to insure salmon escapement, and that a 10-day closure also has been added.

The resolution, submitted by Marlene Johnson of Hoonah, called for an end to the six-to-

eight-day closures. Troll fishermen especially have been having a hard time in Southeast Alaska lately.

Other resolutions called for increased ferry service to Kake, particularly in light of terminated Indian Health Service flights to the hospital in Sitka, the continuance of the Mount Edgecumbe High School and of the Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital, funds to help preserve historical Tlingit/Haida documents, opposition to proposed plans to move the capital, opposition to move the Office of Indian Education out of the Department of Education and into the Department of Interior, and for many other measures.