

Council demands Watt's resignation

Secretary of the Interior James Watt who has drawn the ire of almost every conservation group in the nation last week saw another foe line up against him - the National Tribal Governments Conference meeting in Washington.

Complaining that Watt was unwilling to meet with the group, leaders of 150 American Indian nations gathered in Washington demanded his immediate resignation.

Speakers for the group also charged that Watt has been unwilling to consult with Indian groups in a manner prescribed by law.

As secretary of the interior, Watt is in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and is supposed to get the advice of national Indian Councils before submitting budget estimates to Congress.

Tribal spokesman, Elmer Savilla, a program director for the National Tribal Chairman's Association said Watt has not been doing this in a meaningful sense.

Also last week, the state of Alaska joined a California challenge against a federal sale of offshore oil and gas leases. Alaska intends to file a friend of the court paper against the lease sales and will not be immediate-

ly affected by the California suit but will be able to offer arguments. The state would be affected by the California suit if it reacted the Ninth Circuit Court

of Appeals which covers Alaska.

Both states are challenging the speed-up of lease sales by Watt.