

Indian women meet in Sitka

What are the social service changes that Indian women over the United States believe should take place? How can Native Americans cause the changes?

Sitka, Alaska was the site of an Evaluation Conference for the North American Indian Women's Association October 8-11. Participants to the conference came from reservation states over the United States as well as non-reservation states of Oklahoma and Alaska to evaluate possible changes in social services.

Indian women throughout the country have been interviewed about their experiences in trying to obtain needed services from government agencies.

Mary Jane Fate, Athabascan from Alaska, is the project di-

rector, and the national office for this research project is in Fairbanks. However, the research is nationwide with trained volunteer Indian women who have been data collectors now gathering to make recommendations for needed change based upon their research findings.

Information recorded on both personal interview guides and agency interview guides has coded, card punched and run through the University of Alaska and graphs documenting the research findings. From these findings the North American Indian Women's Association will recommend changes in current practices and policies of social service, specifically to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the funding agency. The recommenda-

tions and viewpoints of Indian citizens will also be the basis of a Model Program which will appear in the federal report of the project.

Georgianna Lincoln, an Indian Village president from Rampart and a member of the Doyon Regional Corporation Board, has been the coordinator of the N.A.I.W.A. volunteers. The volunteer who is representing the Alaska Native women is Audrey Armstrong from Huslia and Anchorage.

Forrest Gerard, President Carter's newly appointed assistant secretary of Interior for Indian Affairs, will be the recipient of the final report of this project on special needs of handicapped Indian children and Indian women's problems.