

Wallis outlines problem areas

By SUE GAMACHE

"In civilian life you call that blackmail. In bureaucracy I guess you call it leverage," Doyon Ltd., president Tim Wallis said, concerning the Interior Department's decision to not hand over any land that is involved in legal dispute.

Wallis stated that the land under legal dispute is almost all of the 12 million acres Doyon was to receive by provisions outlined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

In an interview Friday, with the Alaska Press Club, he commented on the major problems facing Doyon. Along with the interim conveyance or temporary title and Interior's land policy he cited the easement dispute as one of the major obstacles in settlement agreement.

"There are certain rights a private landholder has and we intend to protect those rights," he said. "If there needs to be an access somewhere, both the federal and state government have the right of eminent domain. This would mean the government would claim the land and pay for it."

Wallis also cited another problem area as being the interpretation of section 7(i) of the Claims Act. This section requires the 12 regional corporations to place 70 per cent of their subsurface revenues in a pool to be shared with all the corporations. These shared revenues also include timber sales.

The legal disputes according to Wallis center around the interpretation of words such as revenue, surface, subsurface, and gross or net income. Because no two of the corporations agree on all the issues this interpretation dispute has put them in a competing situation.

Roger Lang, past president of the Alaska Federation of Natives now residing in Sitka, was also on hand to answer a few questions about problems facing corporations concerning the Act.

He pointed out that there is no such thing as a floating easement. "Never before in American history have they ever

used such a term. They don't know who's going to use it so they're setting it aside."

Concerning the section of the act that allows easements around rivers and streams and coastline Wallis said that some of the bodies of water they're reserving easements around are way out in "no mans' land". This will only encourage trespass by hunters and fisherman.

Wallis discussed some of the exploratory ventures that Doyon is involved in.

Concerning the Kandik basin he would not release any information on how successful they have been. When questioned about rumors that they have struck oil he denied that they had.

Doyon's other business ventures include a mineral exploration, an asbestos mining operation with ASARCO the I-Tech surveying and engineering firm in the Purcell Mountains area.

Doyon is also part owner in the United Bank of Alaska, which he said has reached the \$21 million mark in assets.

Wallis ended saying that at this time Doyon supported no candidates in particular, and they have not taken a position for or against the eventual opening of the haul road.

One of the more frequently asked questions concerned the gathering of information by the media from different corporations. Wallis answered that he feels the corporations have been a window glass situation where everybody is always trying to look in to see our operations. Quite frankly, he added, "we feel that's nobody's business."

He said "If you want any information come to me."