

# CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MAN APPALLED BY JOBLESS NATIVES

## Gremley of Defense Dept. Sees Jobless Situation Serious

William Gremley, of the Contracts Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Defense, has just completed his inspection tour of village employment situation in connection with the non-discrimination clause in government contracts let in Alaska.

Gremley visited Nome, Selawik, Kiana, Noorvik, Kivalina and Kotzebue. He was scheduled to go to Point Hope but heavy fog conditions prevented his trip there.

"My own impression of the employment in villages is appalling," Gremley told Tundra Times this week.

"As you know," he said, "the people in those villages live on subsistence and BIA

welfare checks but there are no jobs there.

"In village after village, there were 30, 40 to 50 able-bodied adult males out of work with no more than one or two jobs available per village."

Gremley had wanted to go to Point Hope to look into the job situation in that village in connection with a construction project in that part of Alaska.

"We tried to get in there but there was thick fog at the village. We had to turn back and spend overnight at Selawik," he said.

Gremley earlier this month had traveled to Alaska from the field office of the Department of Defense in San

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Francisco to conduct a compliance review and to assist the government—contractors to achieve compliance with the non-discrimination clause in their government contracts.

"What I tried to do to indicate the intention of my office was to assist—to encourage the hiring of natives in the villages where possible," Gremley said. "My own impression of the employment in the villages is appalling."

"I was tremendously impressed by the willingness of the people who want to work," he added. "They don't want to have to live on BIA welfare checks. And the other thing—there are people there who are skillful and able to work."

Earlier this month, William Gremley told the press in Fairbanks that recurring

complaints and reports of discriminatory job hiring had impelled the contract compliance department of his office to make a review of the situation in Alaska.

The clause in question is not a law but an executive order. It prohibits discrimination in hiring on the basis of race or religion.

Gremley said that his tour through the villages was his first one.

"I found the people extremely friendly and warm. They're wonderful human beings," he said.

He said he made "many, many friendships."

"It was a learning experience—warming experience. And one of the biggest—I learned how much I still have to learn," Gremley stated.