

# Begich Warns on Environment

"Alaskans should have the guaranteed right to live in an environment that has not been greatly altered or destroyed either by man's industry or carelessness," State Senator Nick Begich affirmed in a position paper. The U.S. House of Representatives candidate asserted that

"Alaskans have done no better, nor worse, to their land than have other people in other places. There have just been less people in Alaska." Referring to the tailing piles from gold dredging operations that fill many of Interior Alaska's valleys and the rotting logs

that clog many of Southeastern's salmon spawning streams, Begich said that "the desire to develop natural resources, purely for development's sake, is being replaced by a realization that natural resources should be protected and managed, and developed only as they are needed."

## Wright AFN President..

Bean 273 and Degnan 256. On the second ballot, Frances Degnan pulled ahead of her opponent by the vote of 280 to 266. The most popular vote getter of the AFN election was Frank Degnan of Unalakleet for the office of the AFN Sergeant-at-arms. He was opposed by Charles Edwardson of Barrow. Degnan's vote was 517 on the first ballot.

"They have chosen and we now look forward to continuation of our fight as a people for our land rights. We must be unrelenting in fighting for an extension of hte land freeze until the land claims is settled."

Begich said that Alaska can well take the lead and show the nation the true values found in protecting the unspoiled environment, maintaining clean air, unpolluted water and space.

Don Wright is the president of the Cook Inlet Native Association and he succeeds Emil Notti who chose not to run this year.

"We must continue to advance without thought of basic compromise on the AFN land claims bill."

"A great deal of the responsibility for protecting the Alaskan environment lies with the various governments that have jurisdiction over the land and resources," he added.

John Borbridge was the first vice president of the AFN and he is also president of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska. He is from Juneau.

"It has been said that we need a land claims bill that will benefit all Alaskans. The land claims is an issue pertaining to the land rights of the native people. It is to us that justice must be done."

Begich pledged to demonstrate this concern at the national level where it affects Alaska's environment.

First vice presidency of the AFN went to Phillip Guy of Quethluk, a village near Bethel, with the vote of 295 on the first ballot. He was opposed by Joe Upickson of Barrow, Alex Shadura of Kenai and Alfred Ketzler of Nenana.

"Don Wright had the following to say:

## AFN Conference...

Second vice presidency went to Tim Wallis of Fairbanks with the vote of 280. He was opposed by George Walters of Seattle, 156 votes, and Frank Dennis, 86 votes.

"I know how hard Emil, John, Willie and others had worked and I intend to continue the work before us in full cooperation with the existing structure of the AFN and only intend to fulfill my duties as directed by the AFN Board of Directors."

been my position all along."

The office of the AFN treasurer went to Nels Anderson, formerly of Fairbanks, now of Anchorage, with the vote of 468.

Wright was raised in the town of Nenana and lived several years in the village of Minto. He went to high school in Fairbanks. He received his private license in flying at the age of 16.

Egan: Attacked what he called a "rigid, unyielding position of the previous speaker" and said "it behooves the State to maintain utmost flexibility in its position."

Block voting among the regional organizations dominated the AFN election. That in itself was the cause of intense political maneuverings for the presidency of the statewide group.

"Before the Federal Aviation Administration regulations on aircraft became really enforced, I flew as bush pilot serving villages, trappers, prospectors for five years, logging 3,500 hours," Wright added.

Miller: In all the discussions on the land claims, "my position has been clear." He charged that during the past four years his Democratic opponent has been silent on the issue and asked why the opponent had not spoken out during that time. He contended that Egan had yet to state his position on land claims.

Some members of the AFN expressed dissatisfaction with the procedure since the casting of votes was announced as secret.

"So I know conditions in the villages," he added. "I've been working with the native people all my life."

Egan: Did not outline his position on land claims but said that he, Begich, and Kay have taken basically the same stand. He said that since 1968 he has been out making a living and did not have the financial capability to travel around and make his position known.

"When a person tells you how to vote, it is no longer a secret vote," charged Gilbert Olsen of the Chugach Native Association.

Wright said he would be working with the AFN board as structured at the present time.

He added that, if he had, his efforts might have been interpreted by the Republican administration as an attempt to harm passage of land claims legislation.

He made the statement on the floor of the convention saying he would not have done so if the person who asked for the association's block vote did not make strongly worded remarks as the group refused to switch vote.

Twenty-four native associations qualified as bona fide members of the federation. They are: Alaska Native Brotherhood, Alaska Village Council Presidents, Atka Village, Arctic Native Brotherhood, Central Council of Tlingit and Haidas, Chugach Native Association, Cook Inlet Native Association, Copper River Indian Association.

Miller: Reviewed efforts of his administration to obtain a land claims settlement and said, "Repeatedly my administration has demonstrated its concern for a settlement that is fair to all Alaskans."

Emil Notti who did not run for the presidency of the AFN this year, evaluated the post election results partially.

Kuskokwim Valley Native Association, Native Village of Tyonek, Arctic Slope Native Association, Upper Kuskokwim Native Association.

Egan: "As your governor I will approach settlement of the Alaska Native land claims with an attitude for positive action. My efforts will have your best interests in mind and in keeping with my obligations in behalf of all citizens of Alaska."

"We have very capable guys who can take the AFN from where it is and follow the land claims through to final settlement," Notti stated.

Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks Native Association, Washington Chapter of the AFN, Kenaitze Indian Association, Native Association of St. Lawrence Island, Aleut League, Kodiak Area Native Association, Native Village of Eklutna.

(Several candidates for AFN statewide offices contended in their campaign speeches that the land claims settlement is not a settlement for all Alaskans but rather is a settlement of the land rights of the Alaska native people.)

He said that the new slate of officials would build on to the existing programs and "provide more to the services that we have been contracting for."

Kenai Peninsula Native Association, and Bristol Bay Native Association. The only changes from last year's list involved adding the Washington chapter and dropping the Alaska Peninsula Native Association.

U.S. HOUSE Murkowski: "I am not in a position to state whether 40 million acres is adequate. I feel the question will have to be resolved on a unified position and I don't feel that 40 million acres represents a unified voice of all Alaska."

"I have been in the chair for five years and five annual meetings," he continued. "I've been privileged to be the president of AFN as it grew from a young struggling organization to an organization that is administering over \$1 million in programs."

The largest block of votes belonged to the Bethel area with the second largest going to the Tlingit and Haidas-104, Tanana Chiefs and Fairbanks Native Association-65, the Cook Inlet Native Association-45, Kotzebue-39, Nome area-34, Washington chapter-34, Bristol Bay-31, Arctic Slope-22, Aleut League-18, Kodiak-14, Unalakleet-13, Kenai-7, Cordova-7, Copper River-4, Upper Kuskokwim-4, Tyonek-2, and Eklutna-1.

The unified position, he explained, would require a compromise of all interested parties and would constitute a fair land claims settlement that all Alaskans could be proud of.

When asked about the results of the elections, John Borbridge had the following to say:

Delegates were allowed to vote either as a block or individually, but block voting seemed to prevail.

Begich: "Land is basic wealth." It is obvious that the 10 million acres provided for in the Senate bill is not sufficient. He did not say whether he supported a 40 million acre settlement.

"My reaction to that is to extend my congratulations and best wishes to the newly elected president and the executive officers of the AFN."

Murkowski: I do not believe that the State should participate in a two per cent overriding

## NCAI Convention...

the Tyonek Building to honor the Tyonek Indians, and out to the Anchorage Sports Arena. "It was great," said Thomas as he explained that the parade line ran for about 10 blocks and streets were lined all along the route, with onlookers.

with the evening events moving to the Sports Arena.

Never before has Anchorage seen a parade like that one, he added.

Interior Secretary Walter J. Hickel is scheduled to address a luncheon meeting of convention at noon on Wednesday.

The first convention day concluded with a potlatch. Every imaginable Alaskan native food could be found there, Thomas said.

Convention spokesmen are still hopeful that Vice President Spiro Agnew will address the delegates but, at the paper deadline, there was no confirmation.

The schedule for Tuesday included discussions on Indian youth, Indian education and Indian graduate students, followed by the queen pageant in the Anchorage Sports Arena. All of the business sessions are being held in the Anchorage Westward

Wednesday afternoon, a major issue-Indian rights in the lower 48- will come up for discussion. Of particular interest is the Pyramid Lake situation.

royalty. Begich: "I am for an override or some similar participation by the State." The state must participate in a settlement of the land claims issue. This is a federal and state question and "we must join together to solve this common problem. We are trying to improve the life style of a great people."

The lake is within the Paiute Reservation in Nevada, but its water sources are being diverted by the Bureau of Reclamation into nearby urban areas. As a result, Thomas said, the once beautiful lake has been drained of 80 feet and is becoming stagnant.

U.S. SENATE Kay: The only speaker not faced by his opponent at the convention said that he supported the stand of the State Democratic Party which endorsed the AFN position on native land claims. Specifically, "I do not support a fixed termination date of the BIA and the Public Health Service. Secondly, 'I don't think you should have to share your land with Humble Oil Co.'"

The issue is a thorn in the side of any Secretary of the Interior, he added. For while he is responsible for the Bureau of Reclamation, which has the right to take the water, he is also responsible for the Bureau of Indian Affairs which is supposed to protect Indian rights.

Thirdly, "I don't think disputed claims should be tampered with until Congress settles the issue. A law suit is the only thing the State can select before Congress settles the land claims issue."

Due to the resulting confusion, the Paiutes are now suing the Interior Department.

Egan's running mate, H.A. "Red" Boucher was introduced but made no speech. Miller's running mate, Bob Ward was not present.

Legal advisor in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bill Veeder, who is considered the nation's leading expert on water rights, is scheduled to be a panel member for the water rights discussion.

Following the speeches, a telegram from Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts was read to the delegates. The Senator sent his best wishes to all AFN members and said "I am with you and behind you all the way."

On Thursday, the delegates will discuss, in addition to treaty and land rights, taxation, tax exempt status, economic development and land power.

Sen. Mike Gravel of Alaska also sent a telegram saying that he has worked long and hard to achieve a just bill. "You can count on me in the future as you have in the past."

Other possible discussion topics are the Washington State Indian problems dealing with fishing rights and shootings and tear gassing by police in that State.

Also, assisting with the convention is Bruce Wilkie, executive director of the nationwide organization. Wilkie is a Makah of the Makah tribe at the tip of the Olympic Peninsula in the State of Washington.

A windup session will be held Friday followed by a traditional dance competition that night. The convention will close Saturday night with the selection of finalists in queen, olympic, dance group, and individual dancer contests.

The 27th annual convention has been coordinated by Donald R. Wright, newly elected president of the AFN and regional vice president of the NCAI. Many of the 500 delegates to the AFN convention in Anchorage last weekend stayed over for the NCAI convention.

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