

NCAI Mid-Year Convention will address Anti-Indian Backlash

By NANCY HARVEY

Anti-Indian backlash and policies of the Carter Administration affecting American Indians will be among the topics of discussion at the mid-year conference of the National Congress of American Indians. The conference will be held on June 22-24 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

According to Gordon Jackson, NCAI Area Vice President for Alaska, "The purpose of the convention is part of our annual plan for action. Our Executive Committee felt strongly that a mid-year conference was crucial to up-date Indian tribes and organizations on the Carter Administration, the 95th Congress, and the activities of the national anti-Indian organizations," Jackson said.

"I suspect we'll spend a considerable amount of times discussing the two main issues," Jackson continued. "The anti-Indian forces under the leadership of the Interstate Congress on Equal Rights and Respon-

sibilities in growing in number and sophistication daily, and the conference needs to advocate sound funding of the newly formed National Indian Alliance. If we don't respond with dollars and commitments, our Alliance dies and the anti-Indian forces will thrive." Jackson said.

"Our second agenda item is the policies of the Carter Administration concerning American Indians. Carter's position toward Indians has so far been unknown. We are hopeful the new Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs will have been named before the convention and will clarify the administrations position and inform us of their plans before they become too firm."

During the meeting the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold oversight hearings on the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638).

"Alaska has a number of problems implementing P.L. 93-

638," said Jackson. "I expect a large contingency of Alaska Natives to attend armed with testimony and rubbing elbows with our brothers and sisters in the South 48."

"our annual Benefits Dinner and Dance will be held on the final evening of the convention. This year we are honoring

Sidney Yates, Chairman of the Interior and Related Subcommittees of the House Appropriations Committee, and Ernest Stevens, Director of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs and former Director of the American Indian Policy Review Commission. We had an awful time getting anyone

to accept the award due primarily to the backlash situation. However, the people who finally accepted turned out to be pretty good choices."

The National Congress of American Indians is the oldest national Indian organization, and their principle offices are located in Washington, D.C.