

# ***AFN Tentatively Discusses Reorganization***

ANCHORAGE — Meeting in a two-day closed executive session, the board of the Alaska Federation of Natives tentatively discussed reorganization and redefinition of the state natives' central body which was instrumental in obtaining the Land Claims Settlement.

The role of the AFN in the post-settlement era has never been clearly defined by the member regions and the two-day discussions do not appear to have settled the issue completely.

Finances play an important part in the overall problems facing the AFN which received no direct funds under the settlement for its continuance.

Regional representatives at last week's session ordered a post audit of all debts and expenditures of the AFN. Sen. Willie Hensley, D-Kotzebue, proposed the post audit, effective as of Aug. 4. All regions would then assume immediate

(Continued on page 6)

# AFN Reorganization...

(Continued from page 1)

responsibility on land claims costs.

Present indications are that the AFN will be reconstructed to deal solely with matters pertaining to all 12 regions jointly.

Criticism erupted recently over the AFN's housing program, which did not have the total support of all regions, several of which plan to operate their own housing programs without AFN help.

Fred Notti, president of the Calista Corp., demanded that the board go on record with a statement that the AFN housing authority be an entirely separate entity from the central organization.

Under the terms of the Land Claims Settlement Act the state of Alaska was divided into twelve Native regions for administering the act. Each region was instructed to form profit-making corporations. Monies and lands from the settlement go directly to these separate legal entities and are not administered through the central organization of the AFN.

Since final settlement of the act more and more autonomously, setting up separate offices, programs, service organizations, etc. and hiring their own lawyers and consultants.

President Don Wright and executive director Harry Carter of the AFN, mapped out plans for sharing of leadership skills and resources.

The AFN Housing Program was one of the first major attempts to coordinate a large

undertaking on behalf of all the regions.

AFN's plans, however, met with disinterest and non-participation by several key regions, and the question of authority to act for the whole addressed itself to the AFN leadership.

The total absence of representatives from either the Tlingit-Haida Central Council or the Arctic Slope Native Association, two of the most powerful Native regions in Alaska, at what was to have been a significant and definitive meeting was a further indication of the weakening power of the central body.

At Friday and Saturday's sessions in Anchorage, it was decided that each of the twelve regions would send a corporate representative to the Sept. 12 meeting. The AFN bi-annual convention is scheduled for Oct. 18.

Lack of support from the individual regions may hurt not only AFN's housing program but also current plans for the utilization of the deactivated Air Force base, Wildwood.

John Sackett of Doyon, Ltd., requested a detailed report on AFN's plans for Wildwood. It has been proposed that the property be turned over to the Kenai Native Association within the Cook Inlet Region, with the AFN acting in an advisory capacity.

Plans to use Wildwood as a boarding facility for Native students must be implemented before the advent of the fall school term.