

# Another view of NCAI election

To the Editor:

Your recent newspaper stated that Alaska lost a seat on the National Congress of American Indians Board because of "misunderstandings and concern" about the bloc of votes from Alaska, and about how they were to be cast.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Mr. Eluska lost the election because of two things — the fact that Eddie Tullis worked hard to gain the seat, and the fact that Joe De La Cruz had promised his support to both Ralph Eluska and to Gordon Thayer.

It so happens that I am friends with all four of them, and hope to remain so. I was

also a floor manager for Carl Waln during the convention, in his run for the presidency of NCAI. I spent many hours with Chairman Waln during the week of the NCAI meeting, and know what conversations happened during the week of his asking for votes.

It is unfortunate that the loss of the First Vice President's seat is being blamed on Jackie Guzialek. Nothing could be further from the truth. I was with Carl Waln during the entire time he was talking to Mrs. Guzialek, and know what happened.

He said to her, as he did to many people, that he wanted the votes of the Alaska dele-

gation, and of the individuals and the tribes from Alaska, because he wanted to represent their interests. She on her part made no promises, except to say he should visit with the Alaska delegation during their caucus, which he did. I went with him.

I know Eddie Tullis very well. He is well respected throughout Indian country, and is the president of the National Indian CETA Coalition. He has served in many other organizations, and has served NCAI well. This is probably the crucial factor in the election. The votes of the Gordon  
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Thayer "bloc" did not swing the election.

He also made his position clear on international indigenous issues. He feels that more effort needs to be put at home. Apparently many people agreed with him.

Finally, I really feel you should talk to Mrs. Guzialek, and get her side of the story. From my perspective, the loss had nothing to do with "Alaska," as an area delegation at the convention. It was more over the issues.

Yours truly,

Dean Chavers, Ph.D.