

# Hydaburg Presents Massive Testimony On Cannery

The village of Hydaburg has presented voluminous testimony in opposition to a Bureau of Indian Affairs decision to combine cannery operations of Hydaburg and Klawock at the latter village.

Witness after witness appeared at a hearing at Hydaburg on March 11 before Max N. Edward, assistant to Secretary of Interior Stuart L.

They literally "tore to

pieces" an explanation dated Feb. 18 by BIA Deputy Commissioner Robert L. Bennett of why it had been decided to consolidate the cannery operations at Klawock instead of Hydaburg.

Not only did the witnesses challenge the accuracy of the information on which the decision was based, but they charged the Bureau of Indian Affairs had acted in a dictatorial manner.

They specifically asked that the decision be reversed and emphasized if it were not, trust would be broken and co-operation, a necessary ingredient in a joint cannery operation, would be shattered.

In a mountain of information, presented by members of the Hydaburg Cooperative Association Council and others, they charged that the Hydaburg cannery was newer and

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better equipped than the Klawock cannery and they brought out misinformation, untruths and half truths which they said had been used in breaking an agreement that the Klawock and Hydaburg canneries would operate on alternate years.

A week after the hearing, on March 18, the council of Hydaburg Cooperative Association wrote a letter to the Hon. Henry M. Jackson,

Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, asking him to investigate Robert L. Bennett "in relation to his appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs."

The Council specifically recommended that he not be given the position.

"In his past dealings with us when he was Alaska Area Director and recently through correspondence, he has shown that he is not truthful or a qualified administrator," the council charged.

On March 19, the council wrote to Owen Morken, Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, asking that two employees of the BIA's Juneau credit staff be "transferred into jobs they can handle" and be replaced by "competent, trustworthy men."

Among those testifying were: Fred Grant, Jr., President, Hydaburg Cooperative Council, Sylvester Peele, Sr., Vice President; Robert Sanderson, Secretary; Virginia Morrison; Mrs. Clara Natkong; Ed Sanderson; and Robert W. Frye II, Intern Pastor, United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Hydaburg.