

# NEW INTERIOR SECRETARY IN ALASKA

BY: NANCY HARVEY

Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus may decide this week whether to appeal a U.S. District Court ruling requiring the Interior Department to follow easement guidelines established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)

Andrus made the statement last week at a meeting with the Alaska Federation of Natives Board of Directors, winding up a four day visit to the state.

Saying he "came to Alaska to look and listen and reach no conclusions," Andrus did say the department's solicitor was reviewing the easement ruling and that a decision regarding appeal would be forthcoming hopefully upon his return to the nation's capitol this week.

## Land Conveyances

AFN President Byron Mallott voiced concern over statements made last week by Assistant Guy Martin during hearings held by the House Subcommittee on General Oversight and Alaska Lands. Martin told the subcommittee that a substantial part of the 40 million acres should be conveyed by the mid 1980's, fifteen years after passage of the settlement act. To date, Alaska Natives have received title to approximately 4.5 million acres of land.

Andrus said the Bureau of Land Management had advised him that 70-80% of the conveyances could be accomplished within the next three years, providing the Bureau maintains its current staffing level. Andrus went on to say the Department of Interior would start pushing the manpower available, and that there was "no reason for a prolonged timeframe."

"Assistant Secretary Martin's remarks were cautious. Hopefully a majority of the conveyances will be completed by the mid 1980's, Andrus stated. "Right now we're looking at a three year timeframe."

Mallott told Andrus that easements were the biggest stumbling block to implementation of the settlement act.

"There needs to be a new attitude within the Department of Interior," Mallott said. "In the past the Department has regarded ANCSA as a public lands act."

Mallott said Judge von der Heydt's decision made it clear ANCSA was a Native claim settlement.

## Co-Man Policy

Sticking with his policy of "looking and listening" while in Alaska, Andrus asked the Board their opinion of Governor Hammond's cooperative management system for the d-2 lands.

Mallott responded that AFN had no policy yet concerning cooperative management, but they were very concerned that Native corporations not be denied economic development options.

## Subsistence

On other d-2 related issues, Andrus told Board

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members his visit to a southcentral village, which he couldn't identify by name, gave someone from the lower 48 a different perspective. Andrus said he talked with a number of villagers during his hour and a half visit and referred to the experience as a real eyeopener.

Andrus visited the village of Branch River earlier in the week with Governor Hammond to gain a deeper insight into subsistence values in Alaska. Andrus discussed subsistence priorities with villagers and seemed responsive to their needs.

"There's no question that the Secretary is sensitive to and will be responsive to the subsistence needs," Mallott said. "I think it's going to become a matter of language now."

Perhaps the most emotional and most discussed issue with the Secretary concerned land conveyances.

Richard Stitt of Sealaska summed up the feelings of Native corporations when he told Secretary Andrus the delays in land conveyance are damaging Natives and more time is being used to understand all the confusion.

"All we're urging is that conveyances need to be pursued in a priority nature. We urge a commitment (on the part of the Department of Interior) to resolve these conveyances."

### Non-Profits Get a Word In

Gordon Jackson of the Alaska Native Foundation urged Secretary Andrus to meet with the Alaska native non-profit corporations, while he was visiting Alaska, to discuss the implementation of the Indian Self-Determination Act.

"There is another different creature in Alaska called the Native associations," Jackson told Andrus. "They deal primarily with PL 93-638 and are running into numerous problems including the definition of Indian Tribe, as it relates to Alaska, indirect costs, tribal consent resolutions. These problems have effectively stopped self-determination for Alaska Natives."

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## WORLD ESKIMO-INDIAN OLYMPICS

*JULY 28, 29 & 30*

*Patty Gym, Fairbanks*

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## LOGO CONTEST

### SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN FEDERATED COLLEGE

The Federated College is looking for a design to be used as its official symbol. The design must be Indian and a meaning or motto should be given to it. Prizes will be given for the best designs. The last day for entries is August 15, 1977.

Please send all endtries to: Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Classroom Building C-4, University of Regina, REGINA, Saskatchewan S4A 0A2.