

# AMU President Asks Liberal Educational Chances for Natives

Dr. Fred McGinnis, president of Alaska Methodist University, has asked for assistance "in the problem of more liberal educational opportunity at the higher educational level for the Alaskan Native students."

In a letter to Dr. Harold Howe, commissioner of education in Washington, D.C. and Sargent Shriver, director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Dr. McGinnis accused the BIA of "discriminatory practices" in their refusal to allow Native col-

lege students using BIA grants or loans to attend any college or university they wish.

Arguing that "church-sponsorship of a college or university does not make it a 'sectarian' school," Dr. McGinnis said that the BIA's "interpretation in limiting the Alaskan Eskimo, Indian and Aleut to attendance at state universities is in basic conflict with the Civil Rights Act of 1964."

The president quoted Title VI of the Act that reads:

"No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

"All recent federal legislation with programs of assistance to higher educational institutions is on the basis of being extended to both public and private institutions so long as the prop-

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# AMU President Asks . . .

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er safeguards built into the Higher Education Act of 1965 are completely adequate to safeguard the public interest," Dr. McGinnis writes. "I refer to the restriction that 'funds cannot be made available for a department or branch of an institution whose program is specifically for the education of students to prepare them to become ministers of religion, or to enter upon some other religious vocation, or to prepare them to teach theological subjects.'

"We are in wholehearted agreement with that exclusion provided for in the Higher Education Act of 1965."

Dr. McGinnis pointed out that "normally the young people being assisted under the Higher Education Act may choose the institution in which they may enroll — the Native young people of Alaska aware that scholarships granted by the same federal government to other students, under other programs, do not have such restrictions placed upon them.

"They see other young people accepting federally-underwritten scholarships and using them in the col-

leges of their own choosing. As a result, they cannot help but feel they are victims of a subtle form of discrimination by the very agency which is supposed to be looking after their best interests."

Dr. McGinnis said he had sent the same letter to Alaskan Senators Bartlett and Gruening in January of this year.

"I wish I could report that some creative and determinative action was forthcoming, but this, unfortunately, is not the case," Dr. McGinnis said.