

Editorial —

Gerard is a Good Choice

The Tundra Times was pleased to learn this week of the selection by President Carter of Forrest J. Gerard for the post of Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs. Mr. Gerard has an extensive knowledge of Indian Affairs by virtue of his service with the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. His staff work with the Senate Interior Committee was instrumental to the design and adoption of landmark Indian legislation, in particular the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act and Indian health care improvement legislation. Mr. Gerard's familiarity with the legislative process, working of the Interior Department, and the respect which he has earned from the Indian leadership across the country should place him in a good position to address the challenges of the newly created post.

Of particular interest to Alaska Natives, Mr. Gerard has previously demonstrated concern for problems experienced by Native groups and regional entities, particularly with respect to the question of which Alaska Native groups should be recognized as having tribal status by the Federal Government. While a staff member of the Senate Interior Committee, Mr. Gerard responded to requests from regional Native organizations such as the Tanana Chiefs Conference and advocated that they be recognized as having tribal status for the purpose of contracting for government programs.

The Tundra Times believes Mr. Gerard to be highly qualified for the Assistant Secretary position and encourages the support of the Alaska Congressional Delegation for expedient action to confirm his nomination by President Carter.

—T.R.jr.