

## **editorial column —**

# **The lease sale**

Last month, Governor Hammond and Secretary of Interior, Cecil Andrus announced a joint agreement to go ahead with the oil lease sale scheduled for December 11 on the North Slope. The lease sale will include options for off shore drilling which is potentially dangerous to seals, whales, and the marine life upon which those mammals and the Inupiat hunt them for survival.

The government officials did this with full knowledge that the Inupiat will go to court to block the sale. In fact, their legal departments have already disclosed the information that litigation and appeals are already drawn up in case an injunction is ordered to stop or postpone the sale. The Governor is in his last term, and the Interior Secretary is an appointed official in what is now labeled a "caretaker" government until the next Presidential election. And they have chosen to ignore the public again.

The state and federal government's announcement was premature and probably illegal. Their actions will prove to be costly, to the taxpayer, and to the consumer. Another expensive example on wasting time and money....