

# **Impact Draft Changes Asked**

Compensation of persons living on the pipeline route in case of environmental damage and Native consultation are the main provisions of Don Wright's suggested changes in the Environmental Impact Draft statement for the trans-Alaska pipeline.

Wright, the AFN President, suggested the changes on Feb. 17 at the Washington environmental impact hearings held by the Interior Department. He submitted his proposal in writing last week to Boyd L. Rasmussen, Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

In his letter to Rasmussen, Wright suggests that provisions be made to compensate natives and other persons living along the pipeline route which will "provide consideration in human terms of the terrible possibilities of loss and of what is to be done to relieve human suffering and to meet human needs in the event of an accidental spill or of long term changes in the ecological balance brought about by the very existence of the pipeline."

The environmental damage provisions make the permittee (the pipeline company) liable for any loss of economic or environmental resources. Until determination of liability is made, the permittee must also provide subsistence, shelter and medical care or other necessities for those people whose homes or livelihood is damaged.

The second provision requires assurance of "Native consultation in matters involving the planning, location, construction and operation of the pipeline and its facilities."

Wright bases these provisions on the fact that "the Native people know much more than anyone else how the land, animals, and plants live together and (that) they could, therefore, supply information, suggestions, and assistance unavailable from any other source and (that) provision should be made requiring consultation with the Native people on means and measures for protecting and restoring subsistence and other natural resources."