

INDIAN NEWS NOTES

Senator from Alaska writes about need for alcohol, drug abuse bill

Writing in a January issue of the *Tundra times*, an Anchorage-based newspaper published by an Alaska Native corporation, Senator Frank Murkowski cited a comment made by a representative of the Alaska Federation of Natives to the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs that "alcohol and drug abuse is the major health care problem faced by Alaska Natives." Julie Kitka, who made the statement, described the problem as "clearly the most threatening to our health our lives and our culture." Murkowski reported that another witness told the committee about emergency room statistics in one Alaska community where 90 percent of the admissions were alcohol related. that witness also said that seven of eight deaths in the community, over the preceding two years, were alcohol or drug related. Murkowski said this kind of information and other "alarming statistics" from the Indian Health Service made it clear that Congress needs to "step in and provide programs to combat this growing problem." He said he intends to keep working to help the Juvenile Indian Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Bill become law. The bill was passed in December by the Senate Indian Affairs Committee.

Ceremonies Celebrate Translation into Navajo of Complete Bible

Dedication ceremonies were held December 19 on the Navajo Reservation for a new translation into Navajo of the complete Bible. A group called

the Navajo Bible Translators had been working on the project for more than 40 years. A translation of the New Testament was completed and published in 1955. This New Testament translation underwent major revisions while work was completed on the Old Testament. According to Mrs. Geronimo Martin, whose husband was one of the first Navajos to join the translators, the only other complete Bible published in an Indian language is in Chol, a Mexican Indian dialect. The *New York times*, reporting on the event, said the translators had "to struggle to convert the English of the King James into the language of the country's largest tribe, and they kept a keen eye out for pitfalls." One of the translators, Faith Hill, said, "The easiest parts were anything about sheep and lambs. Navajo people know everything about sheep."

1986 Gramm-Rudman Reductions for BIA will be about \$43 million

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has directed federal non-defense agencies to reduce 1986 spending by 4.3 percent to comply with the requirements of the Gramm-Rudman act and the national effort to limit the deficit spending. For the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which received a 1986 appropriation of \$1.002 billion, the reduction would be \$43,314,000 spread across all the programs. These cuts must be made within the balance of the fiscal year which ends September 30, 1986. Interior Assistant Secretary Ross Swimmer said he would seek recommendations from BIA officials and Indian leaders about the effects of the cuts and the desirability of seeking reprogramming authority from Congress to avoid special hardships.

INDIAN NEWS NOTES

(Continued from Page Seven)

Report on Indian Tribes of Washington Published by Seattle Times:

A lengthy report on the Indians of the State of Washington was published by the *Seattle Times* in December. The six-part series has been re-issued as a twenty-six page special section available by mail for \$1.25 from the *Seattle Times*, P.O. Box 1926, Seattle, Washington 98111. Reporter Bill Dietrich, who did the report, worked for more than a year researching and writing the articles. He visited most of the state's 26 reservations. Photographer Alan Berner visited nine of the tribes over a period of several months. The report includes statistical information, historical background and information of the problems and progress of the state's Indians. The

report also gives considerable attention to the conflicts in the state between the Indians and anti-treaty-rights organizations. The following is from the introductory article: "Washington is in the midst of an Indian renaissance. Thanks to legal decisions, a switch in federal policy and a new generation of sophisticated Indian leaders, there has been more change in the state's tribes in the past ten years than in the previous 100. Washington has also become the nation's leading state for native American political activism, courtroom battles, congressional Indian legislation and an anti-Indian backlash...For today's Indian, such positive and negative currents circle each other in a dizzying whirlpool. Also swirling are the old debates — assimilation versus cultural survival, equal rights versus treaty rights, redneck racism versus bleeding-heart guilt, independence versus welfare."