

# LAST WEEK IN ALASKA

**A weekly summary of Alaska News prepared for  
the TUNDRA TIMES by ALASKA RADIO NEWS.**

**A CITIZENS' GROUP IN VALDEZ** has completed its survey of unemployed in their city. The survey is the latest incident in a fight between the city residents and the State Labor Department. The Labor Department puts unemployment in Valdez at 13 percent. But the leader of the Valdez group, Tom McIntyre, says their survey showed a rate closer to 50 percent. "We went to every home and mobile home in Valdez," said McIntyre. "In one residence, we found one employed and six unemployed." McIntyre said all residents of at least 18 years of age were counted in the survey, as were housewives.

**THE TEAMSTERS SAFETY COMPLAINTS** ON the North Slope Haul Road have been resolved. The Teamsters stayed off the road for almost two weeks claiming lack of facilities and poor maintenance made it unsafe. According to the plan approved by Teamsters, Alyeska and the Alaska Transportation Employers Association, the drivers will radio into check points. If a driver doesn't arrive, searchers will be sent out. The agreement also allows the drivers to stop at pump stations to eat at regular mealtimes.

**A DELEGATION OF NATIVE LEADERS** met with Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus for two hours. Following the meeting, Doyon President Tim Wallis said transfer of land entitlements, navigability, easements and d-2 were discussed with Andrus. Wallis says they will bring back to Alaska a better understanding of the time they will have available in dealing with land conveyances. "The secretary will take our positions under consideration," said Wallis, "and will notify (us) shortly of his decisions." Wallis said the meeting was significant because it was the first substantial discussion with the secretary since passage of the land claims settlement act.

**THE ALASKA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION** is considering a rate request from the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative. Consumers in the 48 villages now served by AVEC currently pay about 29 cents per kilowatt hour. That compares with about 4 cents per kwh paid by Anchorage customers. The Rural Electrification Administration provided the funds which created the electrical programs administered by AVEC. But R.E.A. field representative Malcolm Cheek says village consumers can't afford to pay any more. "Proposals for increasing the rates as high as 41 cents per kwh may make the project unfeasible," said Cheek, "and the federal government would have no alternative but to withdraw its funding from this particular utility." Cheek suggested that the state subsidize the program. He said such a subsidy would have to be between \$300,000 and \$700,000 annually.

**SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR CECIL Andrus** has presented the Carter Administration's d-2 proposal to the Congress. It would place 92 million acres of land under wilderness designations. Alaska's Republicans in Congress, Don Young and Ted Stevens, accused the administration of not adequately studying the issue before deciding what land to set aside. "Well, that's simply not true," said Andrus. "But I know the side that Senator Stevens and Congressman Young are coming from, and they are entitled to their opinion...Alaska has been quite well studied...it's time now that we make a resolution of the problem or we will see it fall into the same rows as the Lower 48 where they kept chipping away at all their resources until there just wasn't much left."

**GOVERNOR HAMMOND TRAVELED TO WASHINGTON** last week to join Alaska's Congressional delegation in testifying before the Senate Energy and Resources Committee on d-2 legislation. Hammond told the committee that figures on acreage are not the crucial issue. "It's not the total acreage that's important," said Hammond. "It's where the lines are drawn. You could do great violence with only 25 million acres in so far as frustrating rational resource development in the state of Alaska, or you could do virtually no violence at all with 100 million if it were so located to minimize those concerns."

**THE SEIBERLING SUBCOMMITTEE REJECTED** A compromise d-2 proposal by Washington Congressman Lloyd Meeds. The Meeds bill, according to Congressman Don Young, would have allowed more time for study of possible wilderness lands and would have lowered the acreage placed in wilderness categories.