

Other voices —

There are indications that some reasonable people administer programs of the U.S. Department of the Interior and that with the change of administration, the reasonable view will prevail.

Secretary of the Interior Thomas Kleppe this week gave the state a three-month extension of its preference right for selecting land. Kleppe realized the unfairness to the state of reducing its preference time for selection because of a delay in settling the native land claims. The state now has until April 1 to make its selections.

After that date, and until the state's right to select federal land under terms of the statehood bill expires in 1984, the state takes its chances in selecting while every other agency also has a crack at the land.

Kleppe has been accused by environmentalists of being pro-industry. We are inclined to believe that he is just fair.

The incoming secretary, Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus, has been labeled a conservationist by industry representatives. But if his statements mean anything, we'll probably find that the label fits him no better than the pro-industry label fits Kleppe. Andrus talks like a fair man.

He plans a "critical balance" between environment and industrial growth. He believes the federal government has a responsibility for predator control, not eradication. He believes that clearcutting is a forest management tool in some forests. He believes strip mining is practical if the land is reclaimed after the mining.

Andrus sounds like a reasonable man. We hope he can maintain his equilibrium through the barrage of baloney that will be hurled at Washington by national conservation organizations that have formed the Alaska Coalition. Their goal is to lock up 120 million acres of Alaska—one third of the state—in reserves.

The governor of Idaho, however, is said to be a strong man. He has worked in the woods as a logger. And he reorganized the government of the state of Idaho during his time as governor. He plans to reorganize the interior department. Working for a president who reorganized the government of the state of Georgia when he was governor, Andrus just may do what he intends, "Take some of the fat off the top and spread it down through the bottom" to get some of the jobs done. A reasonable solution.

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