

Publisher's Notes

HODEL: A PREDICTABLE CHOICE

It did not take long for President Reagan to find someone to replace William Clark as Secretary of the Interior, and his choice of Donald P. Hodel was predictable. The Environmentalists are not happy about the selection, but when have they been happy about anything? Our Congressional Delegation seems overall to be ecstatic about Hodel, but when have they every really been unhappy with Reagan's actions?

After all the confirmation hearings have taken place, and the real work begins, what can we expect from Hodel? Probably, he won't be as flamboyant as former Secretary Watt, who visited Alaska a few times, was even photographed dancing with the Noprthern Lights Eskimo Dancers in Kotzebue. Watt was too much a zealot to be an effective leader at Interior, but one could not help but admire his spunk.

Former Secretary Clark didn't make much of a splash during his tenure, but he wasn't there very long either. During his one visit to Alaska, he made some statements about "sovereignty" which caused a few raised eyebrows, but later seemed to retract those statements.

Now comes Hodel, who will have a chance during the next four years to make some changes in the Department of Interior, whose philosophies are not unknown, whose effectiveness as an administrator are respected at least in some quarters.

With the agenda that Alaska Natives have for the next six years, which includes ironing out the "Sovereignty" question and getting some amendments to ANCSA, Hodel could turn out to be a friend, let's hope so.

VILLAGE CONFERENCE: IMPORTANT LINK

Village delegates will be gathering in Anchorage on January 31 to begin the arduous process of working out the problems, if there are any, in the amendments to ANCSA, more often called the "1991 amendments."

A Village Steering Committee will be selected at this month's conference, and that group will have an important role in the months ahead of us. The perspective of the people who live in the villages has often been missing in Alaska Native political activities lately. Having the village perspective on ANCSA matters provides an important link, and only the time will prove how important.

THE DENALI AWARD

Not too many nominations for the 1984 Denali Award have been coming in, according to Bonnie Bernholz, who is in charge of coordination of the 1984 Alaska Sportsperson of the Year Award. Ten finalists from across the state will be picked and one will be name the "1984 Alaska Sportsperson of the Year."

We have a lot of people who participate in traditional Native sports, and they are eligible for the Denali award. We'd like to encourage our readers to get busy and make some nominations. Incidentally, the Denali Award commemorates Walter Harper, an Athabaskan Indian, who was the first person to reach the summit of Mt. McKinley.