

# Questions to BIA area director

The following letter was sent to Jake Lestenkof, Director, Juneau Area Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Dear Mr. Lestenkof:

At the United Tribes of Alaska (UTA) meeting held in Anchorage on 6/16/83 a number of concerns were raised about Bureau of Indian Affairs programs in Alaska. As Director of the Juneau Area Office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs we feel that you are in the best position to respond to these concerns.

One major, overriding concern that cuts across all of the issues confronting Native tribes in Alaska is the lack of a clearly defined tribal consultation policy by your office. Without constant communication and consultation with village level tribal leaders there will always be polarization and misunderstanding. United Tribes of Alaska hereby formally offers to assist your office to develop

a meaningful tribal consultation process for Alaska.

The concerns raised at our recent meeting are as follows:

1. What is the status of the Small Tribes Core Management Program? It is our understanding that Congress intended this program to assist tribes with enrollments of 1,500 or less to strengthen core management abilities because of the relatively small amounts of funding those tribes receive from self-determination grants.

2. What is the status of the realignment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs? How will Alaska tribes be affected by this alignment?

3. Are special anti-recession programs such as the "Jobs bill monies" and the "Gas Tax road construction monies" being used to justify corresponding cuts in ongoing, banded programs?

4. What, if any, cuts are being made in banded programs? It is our understanding

that banded programs are not to be cut once contracts are entered into with tribes.

5. We feel that it is critically important to have an Alaskan in the B.I.A. Central Office. Are there any plans to fill the Special Assistant for Alaska Programs position in D.C.?

6. What is the status of the 1985 evaluation report of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act? Where will the funding for this report come from? In the AFN May/June Newsletter, Joe Donahue of your staff stated that the RFP for this report will be out "on the street" by June 1, 1983. Who will be serving on the review committee to select the contractor?

7. Does the State of Alaska influence B.I.A. policy on Federal recognition of Indian tribes of Alaska? If so, how? As you are aware, the administrative freeze on review of Alaskan tribal charters and

(Continued on Page Nine)

## Games make us proud

"Let the Games begin."

Throughout history some of the finest examples of man's positive potential have been elicited from the games they play. Before the age of instant communication and media-hype that is upon us now, in which the heroics of sport are analyzed and magnified, and instant legends are created for the hungry spectator, sport was truly sport.

Sportsmanship was a trait that was honored and practiced by participants in those games, and although winning was a thrill, the greater thrill was in being able to partake of that competition in a friendly and supporting atmosphere.

Today's international Olympics — indeed much of what is called "sports" — is a far, far cry from the original Olympics. The modern "games," because of nationalism and greed, have become "big business," consequently the emphasis has changed to

a greater degree than we would wish. Too often today, victory is the only goal and the number of gold medals won or lost is distorted to indicate some intangible superiority of one nation or state over another.

Such should not be the case.

Which brings us to this week's World Eskimo-Indian Olympics in Fairbanks.

We feel greater pride in witnessing the WEIO, and the manner in which the athletes, dancers and contestants handle themselves, and have handled themselves in the past, than in watching the United States "bring home all the marbles." Much of this pride we feel is because these games are just that: games.

So to all the participants, we wish you well and we wish you fun. And regardless of whether you "win" or "lose," remember that you have "won" by the simple act of being there and participating.

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(Continued from Page Eight)  
constitutions and amendments thereof has been officially lifted by B.I.A. Central Office. Have any new or amended charters or constitutions been processed since the freeze was lifted in March of this year?

8. What is the B.I.A. policy on taking Indian land into

trust on behalf of Indian tribes in Alaska?

Thank you very much for considering the concerns of United Tribes of Alaska. The

United Tribes of Alaska officers will be meeting again in August. You are cordially in-

vited to participate at this or any future meetings. Please contact me at any time if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,  
Willie Goodwin,  
Chairman, United  
Tribes of Alaska  
P.O. Box 333  
Kotzebue, Alaska