

ICC names judge to study ANCSA

The Associated Press

Frobisher Bay, Northwest Territories — A Canadian judge was named Saturday to study the results of the 1971 settlement of Alaska Native land claims.

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference, which represents Eskimos in Canada, Greenland and Alaska, chose Justice Thomas R. Berger for the two-year review, which is to begin in August immediately after Berger's resignation from the British Columbia Court of Appeals takes effect.

Berger's resignation, announced in April, stemmed from controversy over his public support for stronger

constitutional protection for Native rights in Canada.

"The ICC is asking me to conduct a comprehensive review of the way in which the 1971 settlement worked out," Berger told reporters gathered in Frobisher Bay for the council's general assembly, which opens Monday.

He said he believed his conclusions "will be of importance not only to Alaskans but to Canadians and Greenlanders."

In a letter to Berger setting out the terms of study, council member James F. Stotts of Barrow said more and more problems are emerging from the application of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

The act "was intended to improve the quality of Alaskan Native life, yet it has now come to threaten the very people it was intended to help," Stotts wrote.

"How? Why? What must be done to prevent our dreams from becoming social nightmares?"

Berger said at a news conference that he understands he may be viewed in Alaska as an obtrusive outsider.

"I can imagine there will be people in Alaska and in the United States who will say, 'We don't need this guy,'" he said.

"I should think in the United States the recommenda-
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ANCSA studier may get little help

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tions that are made will be received on their merits."

Sam Kito, chairman of the Alaska Federation of Natives, agreed that the judge may find a cool reception in Alaska.

The ICC hadn't contacted the AFN with the proposal before announcing it, said Kito, who said he learned of the proposal from a Tundra Times reporter. Janie Leask, AFN president, said she had learned of the proposal from a newspaper

account.

Kito said he believed that Hans-Pavia Rosing hadn't consulted with the Alaska delegation other than Stotts and "I think that the delegates from the NANA region and Bering

Straits might have something to say about it."

Kito said that the proposal seemed to be loaded against the ANCSA and therefore the Alaska reception might be cool.

AFN is a non-profit organization whose membership is made up of the 12 for-profit Native Regional corporations and non-profit corporations formed under ANCSA.

Hans-Pavia Rosing of Nuuk, Greenland, president of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, said funds for Berger's inquiry would be placed in a trust fund to insure his independence from the ICC.

But Rosing said the budget for the review had not yet been set and he declined to say what the sources of the money would be.

Inuit is a term many Natives of the far north prefer to Eskimo, which they consider derogatory.

The land claims settlement gave Alaskan Natives 44 million acres of land and \$962.5 million, while assuring right-of-way for the trans-Alaska pipeline.

Some Alaskans fear that the Native corporations set up to hold the lands will soon be controlled by non-Natives.

"It has been hailed as landmark legislation; from one aspect it is," Stotts wrote.

"But when you consider the corporate structural design underlying the settlement, its more frightening aspects become clear: 1991, taxation, stock alienation, corporate bankruptcies, massive land transfers, corporate takeovers and loss of local control and title to traditional lands."

Eskimo leaders from Alaska, Canada and Greenland opened their week-long meeting Monday, and a key issue is likely to be defense of the fragile arctic environment against proposed energy projects.