

# **AFN and RurALCAP Ask VISTA Probe**

Recently, the VISTA Program in the State of Alaska has come under increasing criticism from both Native and non-Natives. The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP, Inc.), which represents 51 villages in the Bethel area, passed a resolution at their last meeting requesting that OEO fund AVCP directly for the operation of the VISTA Program.

The AVCP resolution stipulated that no more volunteers would be accepted in the area unless there was local control over the program.

At the last Board of Directors meeting of the Alaska Federation of Natives, a resolution was passed asking for State and federal

investigation of the VISTA Program. This same resolution was passed by the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. Executive Committee.

Byron Mallott, Executive Director of RurALCAP, and Alfred R. Ketzler, Director of the AFN, are both actively attempting to obtain an impartial state and federal investigation of the VISTA Program.

Eight VISTA volunteers have produced a position paper in which they charge the State of Alaska, the sponsor of the program, with fiscal and programmatic mismanagement.

The volunteers base their charges on the State's non-payment of bills in rural Alaska for a period of six to seven months, and the firing of VISTA volunteers and leaders, and a supervisor who were trying to make some significant changes in the program.

The volunteers asked for a federal and state investigation of the program, reinstatement of the volunteers who have been terminated, a new sponsor for the VISTA Program in Alaska, and formulation of immediate plans for local Native control of the program.