

# BUSH JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETS IN BETHEL

## *Group to meet in Fort Yukon next*

The Bush Justice Implementation Committee (Gordon Jackson, Phillip Guy, Timothy Towarak and William Tegoseak attending) met in Bethel on the 30th and 31st of October. The committee held hearings and conducted investigations of the juvenile group home and jail in the community.

The committee adopted resolutions supporting village hearings by the Marine Mammal Commission prior to transfer of federal jurisdiction to the state, and supporting placement of a Native Fish and Wildlife Protection officer for the Bethel Service Area.

The committee adopted a resolution based on its jail investigations advocating a grant from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to construct a second group home in Bethel to eliminate the present practice of lodging juveniles in the jail due to lack of room in existing group home facilities.

The commission staff followed-up these resolutions with testimony before the Marine Mammal Commission in Anchorage and a presentation before the Human Resources Committee of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

The staff has learned that the Departments of Interior and Commerce will hold formal hearings on the transfer of jurisdiction sometime after April 1976.

Those persons or organizations who want hearings held in their area should write Mr. Robert Eisenbud, General Counsel, Marine Mammal Commission, 1625 Eye Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

The committee staff also testified before the Governor's

Commission on the Administration of Justice in Sitka on Nov. 26 regarding the Bethel Group Home.

As a result of that testimony, the Criminal Justice Planning Agency will send a technical assistance team of three to Bethel to assist the community in development of a grant application to renovate an existing structure as a group home.

Since the Bethel Committee meeting, the Bush Justice field workers, Joe Curran and Evan McKenzie have made a 10-day field visit to Ft. Yukon and the village of Chalkyitsik.

Joe and Evan are now in the Nome and Kotzebue area and will remain in the area until Dec. 19 visiting the villages of Kivalina and Teller. Joe will spend Christmas with his family in Nome and return to Anchorage via Unalakleet.

The project expects to put out its reports on the Dillingham and Ft. Yukon field visits during the months of December and January.

The committee's next meeting will be in Ft. Yukon during Jan. 10 and 11. There will be public hearings and the public is invited to attend to inform the committee of the particular criminal justice problem of the area. Kathy Wood of Gwitchin Ginhyke is co-ordinating arrangements for the committee meeting.