



## STATE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE HIT



PLANNING BOARD—Members of the planning and development board were joined in Fairbanks last month by newly appointed AFN executive director Harry Carter (second from left). He is

shown here with James Wells of Noorvik (left), Luther Nagarok of Elm and Henry Kanayurka of Barrow (right), all members of the soon to be defunct board. (See story on Page 5.)

### Former Bush Legislator Raps Benefit Inequities In Urban, Bush Areas

By MADELYN SHULMAN  
Staff Writer

Last spring, increases in welfare payments voted by the state legislature raised Adult Public Assistance benefits an average of \$40 per case.

Old and/or disabled people in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks received substantial increases in their APA benefits under the new bill.

Old people in Galena and many other rural areas found their benefits cut—by as much as \$100 per month for a husband and wife both receiving old age benefits.

Why? This question disturbed former House representative from Galena John Sackett who found these conditions in his home village.

"When we were in the legislature last year, we increased aid to dependent children and old age assistance by a good amount for an overall 25 per cent to 35 per cent across the board, thinking full well that everyone would benefit.

"As it turned out, when the Department of Health and Welfare started making the payments in July, all rural recipients were cut, while all city cases were increased."

Mrs. Carla Nyquist, the regional welfare worker for Galena (a district which includes Koyukuk, Hughes, Allakaket and Anaktuvuk Pass as well) found about 50 per cent of her APA cases cut.

On a statewide basis, her cases are hardly "statistically significant." As individuals, however, she feels her people are treated unfairly. Two major regulations contribute to this problem in rural areas.

First, there is Rent. Rural recipients usually do not pay rent. They own the uninsulated frame buildings, the small cabins they live in. They may pay \$100 per month for fuel, but welfare regulations set separate benefit scales for people who pay rent above \$35 per month. These scales are as much as \$65 per month higher per family.

(Top benefit for an "original recipient" paying rent above \$35 is \$250 per month; for a person who does not pay rent the top is \$185 per month.)

One solution to this inequity could be to pass legislation to allow the increased rate for rent or fuel expenses, suggested Mrs. Nyquist.

In Alaska, welfare rules are set in the state legislature—and changes can only come about through legislative action. In order to accomplish this, concerned people must put pressure on their representatives.

Another reason for the cut  
(Continued on page 6)

### McGovern Calls for Equitable Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.) last week told the Senate that the administration should submit a bill settling the Alaska Native land claims which fully recognizes their lawful rights.

McGovern stressed that "the settlement they request...can avoid for Alaska Natives the exploitation, the abuse, and the attempted cultural genocide of Indians which blots our national heritage."

"The legislation we enact to settle the land claims of 60,000 Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts of

Alaska can stand as a unique and classical example of enlightened government acting in good faith.

"Or it can simply continue a long and tragic record of actions to deprive the American Indian of his land and resources, and to further his desperate economic and cultural impoverishment," remarked McGovern.

"It is not a question of what Congress will give the Alaska Natives; it is one of determining how much of what is theirs they will be allowed to keep," he added.

McGovern noted that, while Natives make up 20 per cent  
(Continued on page 5)

### Wright Asks Agnew to Intervene

WASHINGTON, D.C. — (Mar. 7) Alaska Federation of Natives President Don Wright, in a letter released to the Tundra Times today, called upon Vice President Spiro Agnew to intervene in the administration position proposed by Interior Secretary Rogers Morton for settlement of the Alaska Native land claims.

AFN President Wright stated in the letter, "The Native people of this country fear that your administration is about to commit the greatest betrayal of Native people in the history of

this nation. I refer to the likely proposal by the administration for settlement of the 184 year old Alaska Natives land claims."

Wright explained that the AFN sought a settlement of 60 million acres, \$500 million and a two per cent mineral royalty. In this proposal, introduced as Senate Bill 835, "we are willing to give part of our land to the United States in return for just compensation," said Wright.

The new administration proposal, as outlined by Secretary  
(Continued on page 5)

### Sobering Analysis Of Aspinall Bill

#### REPORT

TO: Executive Committee and Delegates of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska  
FROM: John Borbridge, Jr., President, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska.  
SUBJECT: Alaska Native Land Claims

On February 1, 1971, Congressmen Aspinall and Haley introduced a bill in the House of Representatives to settle the claims of the Natives of Alaska. It is designated H.R. 3100.

While I have not completed my analysis of the bill, I must say that its provisions are very disappointing.

First of all, certain of the statements made in Section 2, the declaratory section of the bill, indicate that the draughtsman does not understand the nature or the substantive aspects of aboriginal or Indian title. As a consequence, the dignity of the title that the Natives of Alaska now possess to virtually all of the land in the State is disparaged to the extent where it is hardly recognizable as the same thing that the Supreme Court has said is as sacred as the white man's fee.

Contrary to what is inferred by the declarations of the bill,  
(Continued on page 6)

### Commissioner Bruce Wishes BIA Alaska Services Will Not End

By THOMAS RICHARDS, JR.  
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Bureau of Indian Affairs Commissioner Louis R. Bruce told the Tundra Times during an interview last week that he did not wish to see an end to BIA services in Alaska.

Speaking of proposed legislation now before Congress which would terminate federal services to Alaska Natives within a five year period, Commissioner Bruce stated, "I am afraid of any termination clause of any kind."

The Commissioner indicated

that he did not favor any policy which would eventually commit the Bureau to termination.

A bill introduced by Rep. Aspinall (D-Colo.) on February 1 in the House of Representatives contained a termination clause which read, "Within five years from the date of this Act, the United States shall cease to provide services to any citizen of Alaska solely on the basis of racial or ethnic background."

The Commissioner also commented on the contracting out of BIA functions to Indian groups. He was asked whether, in light of the Bureau's contract

with the Tlingit and Haida Central Council, further contracts could be anticipated in Alaska.

"I think so. We are doing it every day...negotiating, exploring, assisting. Alaska Natives should feel free to do it," he responded.

The contracting out of Bureau functions was one of four main policy changes announced by Commissioner Bruce on November 24 of last year.

He said that funds earmarked for Alaska programs are not being channelled into other areas. "We are working with Indians  
(Continued on page 6)