

Committee May Meet Next Week...

appointed to a conference committee by Representative Aspinall in Aspinall's long tenure as Interior Committee Chairman. Other members of the committee include Representatives Aspinall, Haley, Taylor, Edmundson, Kyle and Udall.

Sources indicate the House bill will be used as a basis for the conference bill at the insistence of chairman Aspinall. The Alaska delegation has indicated that they will not argue against the use of the House bill and Senator Jackson is believed not to wish a fight over that point.

Lobbying on the claims is as intense as ever, with representatives from the mining industry and Alaska Chamber of Commerce as well as the State of Alaska present in Washington. The most noticeable difference in the present lobbying effort is a reduced AFN lobby.

State Senator Willie Hensley and Governor's aide Eben Hopson are conspicuously the only Alaskan natives in Washington at this time.

The Alaska Congressional delegation is puzzled at the absence of the Alaska Federation of Natives. They believe that absence to be deliberate, occurring as it does during the most crucial period of the claims.

AFN President Don Wright sent a memo to AFN lobbyists and lawyers last week ordering them to cease all efforts on behalf of the AFN except for those specified in his own directives.

The AFN lobbying machine is, in effect, shut down.

AFN Board Members here last week were surprised to find out that that organization had recommended inclusion of the Tsimshian Indians in the settlement. The decision to include the Indians, native aborigines originating in British Columbia,

was made without board approval.

Fears were voiced by AFN board members that if the Tsimshians, excluding those that have married into Alaska Native blood lines, are made eligible to participate in the settlement, anyone arriving in Alaska prior to the turn of the century can sue to become eligible in settlement proceeds.

The State of Alaska, assuming an 11th hour position on free floating land selection by natives. The proposed free float selections would be made available to native communities that cannot feasibly select land in their immediate vicinities and other villages who would select land for economic development.

Attorney General John Havelock has attempted to harness top native officials of the Egan administration during this period, one of the most crucial in the outcome of the land claims legislation. Havelock informed Health and Welfare Deputy Commissioner Emil Notti and Rural Affairs Director Byron Mallot that their presence in Washington was unnecessary.

One other state official, Human Rights chief Robert Willard, who traveled to Washington to attend the AFN Board meeting last week is currently hospitalized in a Washington hospital center with a ruptured blood vessel.

Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) this week indicated that he was misquoted on a recent announcement of a land claims conference committee meeting. He said that he was quoted in Fairbanks as saying the conference committee would meet Thursday. However, he indicated in Washington that he meant they could not meet before Thursday.

Senator Mike Gravel (D-Ala.) was misquoted in the recent issue of the TUNDRA TIMES. A story on the Senate passage of the land claims bill reported him as saying the Senate bill "would not" give natives a chance to get a piece of the action. The Senator actually said the bill "would now" give natives a chance.

Deep Seabed

Senator Stevens is cosponsoring legislation proposed by the American Mining Congress to authorize the development of mining in the deep seabed beyond the continental shelf off the United States.

ASNA Granted \$85,000

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the self-development of people.

\$25,000 will be paid to the ASNA immediately with the balance in three payments over the next year.

On learning of the grant, Joseph Upicksoun, president of the ASNA, said in an interview in Seattle, "Your Christian morality is more than words. It's as simple as that."

Charles Edwardsen, ASNA executive director, added that the grant "exhibits a substantial amount of trust and confidence in us and that people really do care about native Americans. This relieves us of an enormous emotional and psychological burden and gives us new hope in society."

Upicksoun outlined the uses of the grant: 1) to prepare a comprehensive land use plan for ASNA, 2) to hire technical personnel for geological and land surveys and 3) to identify lands the ASNA wishes to select under provisions of the land claims settlement soon to be made by the U.S. Congress.

He pointed out that the land use plan and geological surveys must be conducted BEFORE lands can be claimed under provisions of the federal legislation now in congressional conference committee.

"These are awesome tasks for us Eskimos," Edwardsen pointed out. He added that the grant would also be used for information education programs in native villages "to ease the impact of the impact of the invasion by western society on Eskimo culture."

The internal distress of our people is huge." A special library project will also be funded. The Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, Inc., the economic arm of ASNA, will also become a reality through the grant.

Upicksoun made it clear that no part of the grant would be used for legal fees in the ASNA suit recently filed in Washington D.C. against the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The grant will enable the ASNA to facilitate organization of the North Slope Borough which will provide powers of taxation for a school system, zoning to implement effective land-use planning, protection of subsistence living, and a means for population enrollment for land claims settlement, Upicksoun explained.

Action on the Borough plan is presently stymied until Alaska Governor William Egan directs the Boundary Commission to hold hearings setting effective boundaries of the borough.

Synod of Washington-Alaska executive, the Rev. W. Wilson Rasco, D.D., said, "this grant is the kind of thing the church has been trying to do for the past 100 years. We now have



HEALTH HEARINGS—Commissioner of Health and Social Services Fred McGinnis (center) and two members of his staff conduct hearings on health care and welfare in the State of Alaska in Fairbanks. In past weeks the Commissioner has blanketed the state collecting testimony on its health and welfare problems.

Jobs for Natives

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Twenty five thousand dollars has been allotted by the United States Department of Labor, Manpower Division, under the Emergency Employment Act to the State of Alaska for the creation of public service jobs to native persons on Annette Island, according to Congressman Nick Begich.

Representative Begich said that the public-service jobs on Indian reservations, as in other communities throughout the country, will range across the whole field of public services such as health care, education, fire protection, law enforcement, housing, recreation and administration.

The Alaska Democrat was careful to note that Indian officials themselves will determine the kinds of jobs to be filled.

Welfare Criticized...

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A confusing system of state, public health service, military and private health care facilities overlap in their attempts to serve various segments of the state's small population.

"With only 300,000 people," Sullivan reported, "this is one place new systems of integrated health delivery should be workable."

The North Star Borough is now working full speed to develop a proposal for federal funding for integrated health delivery in the Tanana Chiefs region. The proposal must be submitted by the end of this week.

If it is funded, a Health Director in the area will work to provide more comprehensive health delivery to the area's population and probably form a basis for similar plans in other parts of Alaska.

However, in a state whose health care system is dependent on such unassociated factors as recent draft calls (PHS doctors join the health service as a substitute for the draft. The military strength in Alaska determines how much of the load military hospitals will handle) this is difficult.

Meanwhile, facilities to house and care for Alaska's old people and invalids, especially natives, are severely lacking. The elderly are shipped hundreds of miles from their friends and families or housed by already overcrowded relatives. Friendless and alone, they often sink into apathy and hopelessness.

Village old age or nursing facilities are impractical according to the health officials. However, nursing homes are going up in Fairbanks, new hospitals in Ketchikan and Kotzebue to help relieve the pressure on nursing facilities.

"Native old people are not accepted in the Pioneer Homes," reported Georgeanna Lincoln of the Native Health Board. "Traditionally, our people have provided for their old people. Yet, sometimes this isn't possible and they need somewhere to go for care."

On the Welfare side, 25,000 residents of Alaska obtain some form of state aid. Of this number, 70 per cent are native. Others are often job seekers who came to Alaska following promises of plentiful employment on the pipeline.

"I sat in the Alaska State Booth in Seattle Airport and personally discouraged two families from getting on the plane," reported McGinnis aide Mike DeMan of Ketchikan.

The State's offices in Seattle and its airports and at Canadian ferry terminals last summer saved the state hundreds of thousands of dollars in welfare payments, the Department of Health and Social Services estimates. At these offices and booths, Alaskan staffers tried to give potential job seekers an accurate picture of the job situation in the state.

Why have hearings across the state? According to Commissioner McGinnis and his staff the days of hearings will provide a written record of testimony. This testimony will go into legislative recommendations.

When the state legislature convenes in January, the Department of Health and Social Services hopes to have a full set of recommendations, and the testimony to back them up.

Also, the hearings provide a background upon which state officials can judge pending federal legislation to see where they should take a stand.

Native Preschoolers...

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"The important thing is parent training and participation," Wood explained.

In some villages, where children know little English, Children's Cache will help them to learn English. In many Indian villages, it will introduce them to their native language or to traditional stories, crafts or music.

"This program is not competing with Head Start," said Wood "It is a parallel program."

Children's Cache aims to help the pre school child develop his own sense of identity, social skills, simple concepts of space and time.

At the center of the Cache is a set of educational toys developed by Far West Laboratories at Berkeley, California. The set of eight toys is presented to Aides in Training at Nome, Fairbanks, Bethel and Anchorage by specially trained workers from the laboratories.

In Fairbanks, Stan Johnson spent five days teaching the methods of using the toys to village aides from Interior Alaska—Koyukuk Arctic Village, Circle, Anaktuvuk Pass, Stevens Village, Chalkyitsik, Rampart and Minto.

As the program drew to an end, aides traded roles, playing alternately the role of teacher and student, concerned parent or hostile onlooker.

"What if my child opens the little can and eats the cornflakes," challenged Stan as one student finished explaining the uses of little metal film cans filled with common food articles. "Will you punish him?"

"No I won't, she retorted, "I can always get more corn-

flakes." "Fresh cornflakes," responded the pseudo-parent. "I don't want my child eating stale ones."

An estimated 250 children in 27 villages will find Children's Cache this year. For the first time, the State of Alaska is reaching out to children before first grade, when educators have begun to recognize most learning takes place.

"Pre school education is being acknowledged nationally as the most needed area in education," explained Wood, a veteran of Head Start in Alaska. "We are now recognizing the significance of children learning and developing things at an early age."

"There are things that a child must learn between birth and five years that if he is not exposed to he will have difficulty compensating for. For example, a child learns to walk and talk before school. He must develop eye, hand coordination before he can possibly learn to read or write."

"We are gradually working to incorporate pre school into the total education system."

Not bound by all the rules of Head Start, Children's Cache has more freedom in its program and in which villages it will go to. For example, Stevens village this year has only three pre schoolers but will have a Children's Cache program.

"Our goal is to involve parents with their young child's education and continue this involvement throughout his schooling," said Wood.

So far, the enthusiasm has been contagious.