Main Indians Eye Alaska Natives-

Leader John Stevens Keeps Wary on Claims Settlement

By LAEL MORGAN

AUGUSTA, ME.-Alaskan natives will pack a lot of power nationally once their land claims are settled by the U.S. Congress.

"The land's important but so is the money. If they're going to deal it out as a one shot deal-no power!" That's the prediction of John

Stevens, commissioner of Mai-ne's Department of Indian Affairs, and former Governor of the Passamaquoddy Indians. He's watching the Alaskan settle-ment with interest because In-

ment with interest because in-dian power-any Indian power-is important to his own people. There are just over 2,000 Indians in Maine: Passamaquod-dys, Penobscots, Maliskeets, Micuss, renoiscots, mainskets, Mic-macs and Cherokees. Today the statistics on their health and income read about the same as the dismal national Indian ave-rage but the Mainers consider this a vast improvement over the past two decades.

"We never came under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government because we made our treaty with the colonists," Ste-vens explained. "In fact, we supported the colonists. The vens explained. "In fact, we supported the colonists. The ones who were hostile got a better deal." From 1820 to 1927, Maine

Indian affairs were directly un-der the state governor and counder the state governor and coun-cil. Then, after being briefly shuffled to the Forestry Depart-ment, BIA was turned over to the state Health and Welfare Department which regarded it simply as a welfare program. "A lot of New York tribes are pretty well off," Stevens notes. "We didn't get much land and we were even worse off than other tribes because we were controlled policially

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by one agency." After serving in Korea with the Marines, Stevens returned to his reservation determined to

to his reservation determined to strive for Indian independence. "Tribal organization was more token than anything else. The tribal government was given a subsidy by Health and Welfare to be like a token thing." Steven's father had once been

a tribal representative. "But he was no longer inte-rested. He was disillusioned by his fight with bureaucracy. He'd given up and that made me even more determined. I campaigned door to door and became governor at the Peter Dana Point Reservation."

He served nine consecutive terms, generated considerable federal funding and finally hel-ped wrest BIA from the welfare department.

'We realized we could utilize white people, too, in our fight,

he smiles. In 1965 the BIA became a separate office under the gover-nor but Stevens was disappoin-ted in the results. Indian hire was at a minimum and there was a lot of deadwood within the

agency. Last fall, when the position of commissioner was open, Ste-vens applied because he didn't like the looks of the other appli-There were 85 and only two Indians.

He took a drop in salary (from his job as a Community Action Director) to take the post and has recently made headlines by threatening to re-sign if the Maine Legislature refuses to carry out his programs

To the surprise of the bureau crats, he stated firmly that he does not want more welfare but matching money for self help

programs. "We've got little industries going on all the reservations-

basket weaving-which is the most common thing with my people. We're working on a people. construction company trying to keep our money within the reservation. But we can't get a cent from the state."

Within the last year Maine tribes have begun issuing hun-ting licenses to outsiders and requiring Indian guides for reser-vation hunts. They're also in-terested in establishing their own marinas, snowmobile dealerships, motel facilities and service stations

They have been more successful than most Indians in preser ving their languages and traditions

"We still have our ceremonial dances and speak our own lan-guages," Stevens reports. "For guages, Stevens reports. Foot five years we've had teacher aides in the school and it's worked well. In fact, the kids today are nore Indian than I was

"I can femember when I was about 10 and went to a cowboy and Indian movie. I came home and third in hove. I can hove and to be movie to the hove and to be movie to be movie to be movie the second secon That do you think you are

"It was a shocking experience to find out I was an Indian but there are people who never let you forget it."

Today he believes Indians are generally taking the right ap-proach to maintain their indivi-duality and gain their independence

"It's going to take 20 years," he predicts. "It's been very vague who owns this land. We're going to see the reserva-tions turned over to the Indians. The government is going to deal

with these communities like any" other town. We're going to generate the wealth to be on our own National Indian movements

weak, he admits. "But there's a

movement afoot to reorganize N.C.I.A. and N.C.I.O. It's all right to be N.C.I.O. It²s all right to be radical but you're got to know what you're doing. A lot of older people got shoved aside by the young radicals but the tide is turning again. They're listening to people with good, constructive advice."

His hope is for one strong national Indian organization, not a number of weak ones.

"It's time we started really working together in order to survive," he maintains.

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Registration will begin Mon-day for a graduate-level psycho-drama seminar at the University of Alaska, Anchorage on January 8-9.

Tundra Times, Friday, December 17, 1971

Graduate-Level Psycho-Drama

Steve Daggett, who taught classes at the university twice before while he was administra-tor for the office of vocational rehabilitation at Alaska Psychia-tric Institute, will return to Alaska to conduct the seminar.

Daggett, a psychodrama ex-rt, now is a therapist for pert, mental health clinic in Olym-Washington. pia,

The one-credit seminar will 3

be held from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 8 and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 9 with outside work required.

It will be a combined didactic experiential course for graduate dents who would like to deve-their understanding and etu skills in regard to psychodrama techniques in counseling or psychotherapy.

Interested students may regi-ster Monday through Friday and the following Monday at the University registrar's office from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

ALEUT LEAGUE wishes to congratulate the AFN, its past and present leaders, all Alaska's aboriginal peoples and all who have made the land claims settle-ment a reality. To each and every one we wish you a **MERRY CHRISTMAS and a** Joyous NEW YEAR. >< NOTICE OF REGISTRATION THE ANCHORAGE CHAPTER OF THE TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDI-ANS OF ALASKA WILL BE OPEN-ING ITS REGISTRATION ROLLS BEGINNING DECEMBER 18, 1971 AND CLOSING ON FEBRUARY 15, 1972 FOR ALL ELIGIBLE ADULTS OVER THE AGE OF NINETEEN VEARS OF AGE WHO WISH TO BE INCLUDED ON THE ANCHORAGE COMMUNITY ROLLS. THOSE WHO QUALIFY MUST BE PERMANENT RESIDENTS WHO LIVE NORTH OF YAKUTAT AND WHO ARE REGI-STERED WITH THE CENTRAL COUNCIL. APPLICATION FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED BY WRITING THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

The

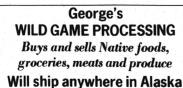
TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIANS OF ALASKA

ANCHORAGE REGISTRAR 8040 CRANBERRY ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99502









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