

Claims Settlement Soon to Be Reality

By MIKE GRAVEL
U. S. Senator, Alaska

Nearly everyone in Alaska knows by now that the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act will provide land and money for Alaska's Natives. This week, though, the Bureau of Indian Affairs here in Washington has given me a more detailed breakdown of the funding plan, which is to begin less than a month from today.

THE ALASKA NATIVE FUND... PLUS INTEREST

The basic \$962.5 million — known as the Alaska Native Fund — comes from the Federal government (\$462.5 million) and from royalties coming to the State of Alaska from mineral and petroleum development (\$500 million). The trans-Alaska pipeline, finalized last week, will provide the bulk of this money.

There is also a so-called interest "bonus" for Alaska Natives. About \$6 million, over and above the \$962.4 million, already has accumulated on the appropriated funds in the form of investment interest.

Originally, the Department of the Treasury argued that the Native Fund was ineligible to collect any interest. Later, at my urging, it was determined that the monies in the fund are indeed eligible for interest payments.

That was the intent of Congress — it would have been grossly unfair for the Natives to lose interest to their Fund.

FIRST FUND PAYMENT

Next month, the actual dispersing of the Alaska Native Fund will begin with a check of about \$130 million (the exact amount won't be known until the precise amount of interest is calculated).

That long-awaited first payment check will coincide with a December 17th Anchorage banquet sponsored by the TUNDRA TIMES. In a related event, the Alaska Federation of Natives will be holding their Convention on December 16th.

I'm looking forward to participating in all these events that are so important to the Alaska Native Community.

Minto Road

JUNEAU — Governor William A. Egan said today the state has awarded a \$106,293 contract for improvements to Minto Road and local service roads in the Minto area, about 120 miles northwest of Fairbanks.

The project, let to C. R. Morse Co., Anchorage, includes clearing and grubbing work along 11.8 miles of roadway.

It is scheduled for completion by March 31, 1974.



KIANGA PEOPLE — During the process of the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, there are great many Native people who are concerned, listening and

watching the people in charge. The process is a difficult one but one that could spell assured future if handled right.

— Photo by JUDITH AYRES

Land Claims Implementation—

Natives Will Acquire 1/12th of Land Mass, Cash

Alaska Natives will begin to get one-twelfth of the land in their State, and a sizeable chunk of cash as well, under terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in early 1974. This will come about through a system of corporations that is uniquely Alaskan.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is now making up a roll of United States citizens who are or one-fourth or more Indian, Aleut or Eskimo ancestry or combination of these born on or before December 18, 1971.

The roll will show each person as a resident of a region and in most cases a village and thus eligible to become a stockholder in village and regional corporations.

Alaska now has 12 Alaska Native Regional Corporations. They reflect 12 geographic sections of Alaska and are com-

posed of Native people with a common cultural heritage and common interests.

Alaska Natives who do not claim to be permanent residents of Alaska are being enrolled in one of the 12 regions of Alaska with which they have personal or ancestral ties.

The 12 corporations were established by June 30, 1972. Each was advanced about \$500,000 or more from the Alaskan Native Fund — which includes \$462,500,000 to be appropriated from the general fund of the U.S. Treasury and \$500,000,000 credited to the fund by the State of Alaska and Bureau of Land Management of the Department of the Interior on a revenue sharing basis.

After the Secretary of the Interior signs the roll of the Alaska Natives December 18, the regional corporations will:

1. Identify their stockholders;
2. Issue shares to stockholders;

3. Elect a board of directors;
4. Receive their first major distribution of moneys from the Alaska Native Fund;

5. Select lands for conveyance to them;
6. Make investments. Many of these events will occur simultaneously.

The 12 regions have been formed as businesses for profits, and their articles of incorporation and by-laws have been approved by the Secretary of Interior.

A duly elected board of directors will be charged with responsibility for the management of the regional corporation and the investment of corporate assets.

Such investments might include stocks and bonds and business enterprises in construction, tourism, and service industries.

In addition to 12 regions there will be about 200 village corporations. While they, together with the regionals, will get title to a total of 40 million acres of land and a stake in the Alaska Native Fund, the sub-surface rights to the land will go solely to the regional corporations.

Up to 22 million acres of land are available for selection of surface rights by eligible Native villages. The amount each village is entitled to is determined by the Native popu-

lation of that particular village on April 1, 1970.

Where possible, 25 townships around each village have been withdrawn by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. A township is 36 square miles. From these townships, the village will make its selection.

This selection must include townships in which any part of the village is located. In many cases, however, circumstances — such as an ocean, navigable river, national park, etc. — restrict selection. The village must then make alternate selections from "deficiency areas."

Regional corporations are more restricted than village corporations in selecting their 16 million acres. They may, for example, select what have come to be known as "checkerboard lands" in the village withdrawal areas. They will get, in addition, part of 2 million acres of "hardship lands."

Hardship land grants will be distributed to regional corporations for existing cemetery and historical sites. Native groups too small to qualify as villages (less than 25 Natives), individual Natives who apply for a primary place of residence outside of the village withdrawal areas or individual Native allotment, and Natives in Sitka, Kenai, Juneau, and Kodiak.

These were originally Native villages but are now predominantly non-Native.

Havelock Joins ANF

John Havelock, former Attorney General for the State of Alaska, has accepted the position of legal counsel for the Alaska Native Foundation according to Emil Notti, ANF president.

In announcing Havelock as the foundation's choice for the position, Notti expressed pleasure in his acceptance and said he would begin work immediately.

"Mr. Havelock will be giving early attention to the problems and policies related to the village and regional land selection," Notti said.

Indian Husbandry ...

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been developed from the annual "Teosinte" plant. Modern plant breeders have not yet duplicated the original work by the Indian in the basic development of corn.

A wild prototype of corn has never been found, and in its present highly-developed condition, could not exist anywhere in a wild state. All of the changes and improvements which white men have made are insignificant when compared with the work of the Indian with this plant, the noted agronomist said.

In his visits to Mexico and other Latin American countries, Dr. Farnsworth said that he was amazed to see the tremendous varieties of corn. In these areas are found the greatest reserve bank of "corn-germ-plasm" in the world.

He said that in some of BYU agriculture projects in south-eastern Mexico, agriculturalists have attempted to introduce American sweet corn. The insects and bugs literally "feast on the plant" while native varieties appear to be disease and insect resistant.

Historically, Dr. Farnsworth said, early explorers wrote accounts of what they saw that amazed them. Columbus' expedition to Cuba in 1492 reported a great deal of tilled land, some sowed with beans and a corn called maize which tasted well, "baked or dried, and made into flour."

A French expedition in the Iroquois area of western New York in 1687 reported that they spent five or six days cutting down corn with their swords. In the villages nearby, they found plenty of horses, black cattle, fowl, and hogs.

Dr. Farnsworth observed that the horses referred to in this account were evidently developed from the remnants of

those brought to America by the Spanish. The horse has since been an important asset of the Indians, although it has largely been replaced by the "pickup" truck today.

"The Indian was entirely responsible for survival of the early American settlers. They taught the colonists to plant corn with a fish in order to increase the productive capacity of the soil," he said.

One of the plants most generally associated with the Indian is tobacco. It was a luxury to them and was not commonly smoked. However, it was used primarily in religious rites and as a means of welding the "bands of peace and friendship." Some tribes, however, did have both men and women smoking the "sacred" plant.

Many tribes believed that tobacco had unusual healing powers and was used to preserve and maintain good health. Roger Williams reported that it was used extensively to relieve rheumatism and toothache.

Dr. Farnsworth pointed out early Indian use of tobacco was in accord with the teachings of the first LDS Church prophet, Joseph Smith, Jr. In his "Word of Wisdom" declaration, he said that the Lord tells us that "tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and all sick cattle, to be used with judgment and skill."

After congratulating the Indian participants for what their ancestors have contributed to the food and agriculture industry, Dr. Farnsworth described in detail how important the women were and are to Indian life — everything from caring for the fields to the variety of home management and cultural skills found in the home.

LETTERS ...

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Because of the condition of this facility, the custodial worker spends most of his time performing emergency maintenance tasks. No summer preventive maintenance was completed. One building which was moved because of new construction has had temperatures ranging from 38° to 50° during the day. This building is the classroom for the 9th and 10th grades.

Many other schools which have similar enrollments have 3 maintenance custodial positions allotted; and we have only 1 custodial position.

I appeal to you to help eliminate the injustice here at Nulato School which manifests itself in dirty classrooms, filthy out-houses, unshoveled roofs, cold classrooms, dissatisfied staff members and students, and irate parents.

Our system hypocritically professes to provide instructional programs which raise self-image and enhance positive attitudes of oneself, when it can only provide physical facilities that would be condemned by a family of hogs. Poor maintenance and lack of custodial services creates attitudes of disregard for the school and causes vandalism thus slowly eliminating much of what we try to accomplish educationally.

Yours very truly,
Richard Harnett, Principal