

# Hickel Answers Pertinent Questions

Governor Walter J. Hickel has been asked by the Associated Press to answer the following questions in connection with the Governor's Conference at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va:

1. In your opinion can Vietnam war costs be offset by federal spending reductions, or is a federal tax increase needed?

2. Is there need for new federal civil rights legislation? If so, what kind?

The Governor replied as follows:

1. An honorable peace in Vietnam would be better than war. But if we must continue to fight, then Vietnam war costs can be offset if the Johnson administration sees to it that there is greater efficiency in the fighting and back-up work there. That efficiency will also save many American lives and bring a quicker victory.

Of course, the Johnson administration may not be able to improve the quality of the war effort in Vietnam. Then, I feel that the people of Alaska and the lower 49 states would favor a cut in spending for non-essential domestic programs to support the war. Few Americans want a tax increase when snipping off the domestic boondoggle will provide the money that will be needed to win the war.

2. Alaska, with its large population of Eskimos, Aleuts and Indians, has its own, unique civil rights problems, along with those it shares with the rest of the nation. We have already moved to meet these problems. Our laws, and the Civil Rights Commission of our new State, have been created to deal with them. We feel that the machinery is adequate, and the spirit of

our people will make it run.

On the federal level, I feel that there is enough civil rights legislation for the time being. I wholeheartedly agree with the concept behind present civil rights laws. Heavy abuses of certain Constitutional rights, such as the right to vote, provoked those laws. Now the people of the United States must make them work. But that will take time, patience, fair thinking and sincere effort by everyone. Centuries of tradition and custom have molded many feelings and beliefs into the people of America. Perhaps more civil rights legislation will be necessary in the future if present abuses do not die out. I am afraid, though, that if we push too hard now with more civil rights legislation, people may honor the letter of the law and not the spirit of the law.