

Communications Breakthrough

JUNEAU—In a wire to the chairman of the Comsat Board of Directors, James McCormack, this week Gov. Walter J. Hickel greeted Comsat's announcement that it has applied for authority to build a satellite ground station near Talkeetna as the most important breakthrough in communications in Alaska in a generation.

"The ground station will prove the key to an educational TV system reaching all points of rural Alaska and will provide a breakthrough of major significance in the state's efforts to help rural Alaskans to full employment through education," Hickel said.

Hickel also called the probability of live TV broadcasts an event of major importance to Alaskans.

"Alaskans share with other citizens of the United States a strong desire to learn the news while it is news and a keen interest in the sports events and other programs of national interest TV brings right into the home," Hickel said.

"In this day and age, learning the news while it is news means seeing it happen on the TV screen. Now Alaskans will have the opportunity to join 200 million other Americans in seeing treaties signed, rockets launched, the Olympics and championship baseball games as they actually occur."

Hickel told McCormack he has wired the Federal Communications Commission backing Comsat's application and requesting early approval.

The Governor learned of Comsat's request for the construction permit from McCormack.