

'Trying to Express Deep Concern'

"We were trying to express a very deep concern for the loss of land that is running through the villages in the best way that we knew how."

Such was the statement made Monday by the president of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Emil Notti, in reference to the Senate land claims bill taken last weekend by the AFN board of directors.

Meeting Friday and Saturday in Anchorage, the board approved a resolution urged that the amount of fee simple land granted to natives in the land claims bill at the Senate Interior Committee be increased.

When regional and village native organizations tell the AFN that they reject the bill, then the statewide organization representing them has no choice but to oppose the proposal, Notti said.

The bill is not acceptable, he added, in light of the number of acres that will be granted to natives. The AFN position calls for 40 million acres as opposed to the maximum 10 million provided for in the Senate bill.

The resolution is printed in full on page 2.

AFN Resolution Rejects Claims Bill

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In the preliminary discussion of the following resolution before going into executive session, the Alaska Federation of Natives' board of directors expressed grave doubts about the Senate Committee bill, bordering on anguish, in fact. This was evident during the preceding session and much more in private conversation.)

RESOLUTION

"WHEREAS: For centuries the Alaska Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts have lived on, occupied and dominated substantially all the land of Alaska;

"WHEREAS: The Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska stated in its report that the Alaska Natives have a substantial claim to all of Alaska;

"WHEREAS: The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has held that our rights in the land are superior to the selection rights of the State of Alaska under the Statehood Act;

"WHEREAS: The Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs has stated unanimously in its Committee Report (including Alaska's two senators) that beyond any doubt "Native claims have substance in fact;"

"WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives has consistently taken the position that 40 million acres of land is fair, just and equitable amount of land to be retained as Congress takes action to extinguish our property rights;

"WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives does not recede from that position and now expresses its complete and unalterable opposition to the land provisions in the Senate Interior Committee bill reported as S. 1830 on June 10, 1970.

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska Federation of Natives:

"1. That the AFN by telegram request Chairman Henry M. Jackson and other members of the Senate Committee to support the amendments on the Senate floor to increase the total of fee simple land to a level that Alaska Natives can accept as fair, just and honorable.

"2. That the AFN General Council be requested to prepare specific amendatory language to accomplish this objective.

More anger and stronger opposition to the bill as a whole was shown in the Arctic Slope Native Association resolution which read:

"We, the North Slope Eskimos have lived on and exercised dominion over the 56.5 million acres of the great Arctic plains for for centuries.

"Recently the State of Alaska without having a patent to one square inch sold oil rights to less than one per cent of our lands for \$900 million.

"The Senate Committee bill pays us \$16 million over the next 12 years or so which includes our share of the two per cent royalty and gives us some surface rights.

"This is our land and, if it were possible we wish the whiteman would stay away.

"But it looks like on the North Slope alone, there will be 10,000 miles of roads and of pipelines. Millions of acres of our lands will no longer be useble and our culture will be destroyed in the process.

"We recognize the oil of our lands will assist our government in its own protection, especially in view of the Mideast crisis. We want to help our government just as we did and do in our own Alaska Scouts of the United States Army.

"But we thought that the United States was founded on justice, that it protected the rights of the minorities both here and worldwide.

"We ask how can this miserable settlement be called just. No one will every compete for our surface rights and so giving us 500,000 acres of surface rights is a sham and fraudulent and can and will be used by those who support the Committee bill, to convince the uninformed that the results are generous.

"We are outraged at the manner in which the United States Congress is extinguishing our property rights. Long ago the Congress adopted a policy to treat this Nation's aboriginal people fairly and honorably. This policy has been ignored more often than not. Now when it appears that the last chapter is about to be written, once more the property rights of the American Native people are being obliterated, accompanied by a flow of rhetoric about justness and fairness that simply does not exist.

"We therefore request that Senate 1830 be defeated.

"We would consider, however, modifying our condemnation if the fee simple land provisions were increased.