

● Pribilofs Win

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amount, the Commission defended the award total. "The odd-dollar figure of our final judgment implies a precision in fact finding that would be difficult to attain. Many decisions on data and thousands of calculations have been made to give proper weight to the mass of evidence produced here," the Commission stated.

Even if minor errors were pointed out, the Commission said it would be unlikely to change the figure as "it represents a fair judgment on the whole distressing record."

Government Options

Justice Department lawyers have three options for challenging the decision. A motion for rehearing may be filed by either the Government or the Aleuts within 30 days. The Government may submit offsetting claims within 60 days, in which case the Aleuts would

have 40 days to answer those. The third option for the Government is to bring an appeal of the opinion to the U.S. Court of Claims.

If no procedural effort is made to challenge the decision, much work now lies before the St. Paul and St. George Aleuts and the Interior Secretary.

"There is no doubt now that a tremendous amount of work has to take place," Executive Director Pletnikoff told the Tundra Times. "A plan must be developed for use of these funds which is to be submitted to the congressional committees by the Interior Department," he added.

The next step is to meet jointly with the corporate boards of St. Paul and St. George to develop a suitable plan for use of the funds. Pletnikoff reflected, "Most of this money, it will likely be our consensus, will be designated for community development and held in trust for future generations of Aleuts.

On the amount of the award, Pletnikoff stated, "With facts presented by expert witnesses, and on the testimony developed by economists for both communities, the amount is probably fair."

Extreme Pleasure

When asked what his reaction was to news of the award, Pletnikoff said, "Extreme pleasure, that finally this one case, this one chapter in the history of the Aleut population, was being recognized and finally resolved. What it really boils down to is that justice is finally being served after 25 years."

Who is most responsible for this effort, he was asked?

"Iliodor Merculiof, for his wisdom and his integrity, and for his belief that his people were not served right, and for his courage to stand up to his Government under very difficult conditions."

Attorneys for the Pribilof Aleuts in the case were Donald H. Green, Stephen M. Truitt, Leslie S. Bretz, Wald, Harkrader and Ross.

The Tundra Times provided coverage and editorial comment on the relationship between Pribilof Aleuts and government managers of the seal industry in a series of news stories and editorials authored by Editor Howard Rock and Assistant Editor Tom Snapp from 1964 through 1966. Snapp is currently Editor of the All-Alaska Weekly of Fairbanks.