

Big Cash Settlement, Less Lands Proposed

Both the Nixon administration and Sen. Henry M. Jackson have voiced support for a generous cash settlement rather than a large land grant for Alaskan Natives.

Interior Secretary Walter Hickel, supported by the Bureau of the Budget, recommended a \$500 million cash settlement with the payments spread over 20 years rather than 10 as proposed by the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Also, the Interior secretary said that his department opposes suggestions for a two per cent

overriding royalty in addition to the \$500 million. Hickel told the Senate Interior Committee that the fixed amount of \$500 million would be "far superior" from the Natives' standpoint to a settlement based on an overriding royalty of an unknown value.

The AFN had asked for both the \$500 million and the 2 per cent overriding royalty.

Concerning land grants to the natives, Hickel stated that 15 million acres would be sufficient to meet the subsistence needs of the Natives when coupled with the right of the Natives to use the vast holdings of public land in Alaska for subsistence.

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Claims . . .

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The AFN has requested title to 40 million acres.

Jackson, in opposing a large land grant, said that he did not want to see large Native enclaves in Alaska.

"That would be bad for the Natives and the growth of all people in Alaska.

This is not to deny the conveyance of some land, he added, but how much is the question.

Jackson is the chairman of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs which is now considering the native land claims issue.

The budget bureau told the committee that spreading \$500 million over 20 years would insure a steady flow of capital into the proposed Native corporation at a rate which will give the Natives time and opportunity to adjust to the problems and demands of operating such an enterprise.

Hickel and his department voiced support for a single statewide corporation for this purpose rather than a multiplicity of such groups.

The AFN has requested regional corporations that would vary in operation with the needs of the region.

Jackson's target date for getting the bill out of the Senate committee and passed by the Senate is before Easter, March 29.

The bill must then be approved by the House and a final compromise bill approved by both the House and the Senate.