

Editorial Comment—

Two Big Claims Hurdles Overcome

The resolution of the Alaska native land claims seem definitely in sight after overcoming two giant steps—the passage of the House version of the bill and that of the Senate. Each bill passed with resounding “ayes” in both houses overwhelmingly defeating some opposition that was offered. The action was historically convincing and one that could become a brighter highlight in the history of the nation.

The next giant step is the process through the free conference committee of the Senate and the House. This will be watched with intense interest as differences will be weighed against one another and, we hope, those differences will be resolved for the good of the future of the Alaska native people. The convincing action of both houses should weigh heavily on the outcome of bill through the conference committee.

What will be sent to the White House out of that committee will be given a hard look by President Richard Nixon. The President is known to desire a good bill. Anything less than that could endanger the resolution of the land claims. This would be a bitter pill to swallow after the glittering performances of the Senate and the House.

At any rate, the action of both houses is being received with calm elation by Alaska's native people. They have not yet seen a true reason for rejoicing. Their anticipation for equitable solution to the claims is still intense in the final outcome of the bill. They are, also, thinking of the enormous job that will face them in the future should the bill be signed by the President. We hope that they will face this task calmly without rushing for quick results. After all, the great effort for the solution of the Alaska native land claims is for the good of the present generation and for the good of the native people far in the future.