

Sen. Ted Kennedy Enters Our Stories in Congressional Record

Upon the request of Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., two Tundra Times articles on native land claims were printed in the Sept. 16 Congressional Record.

The news items were: "AFN Plans Fight for Fair Land Claims Settlement in U.S. House," Aug. 12 and "Survey: 'We Want More Land,' Statewide Check Shows Overwhelming Want for More Land in Claims Bill," July 29.

As Kennedy reiterated in his message to the Senate, he supported an amendment to the Senate land claims bill to provide for a land settlement of 40 million acres for the Alaska natives.

When the amendment failed to pass, he voted against the Senate bill because, he later said, he felt the 10 million acre settlement in the bill was inadequate.

"I believe then and believe now," Kennedy told the Sen-

ate in September, "that for Alaska natives to share fully in the development of that State—their State—they must have more than the 10 million acres presently reserved to them by the Senate bill."

Kennedy added that it was clear to him that the natives are using over 80 million acres for their livelihood and sustenance and thus have a valid claim to well over the 40 million acres they are requesting.

Kennedy said that he hoped the House, as it considers the land claims issue, "will keep in mind that what is involved here is not a grant of land to the natives, but a retention of land by them."

"Congress must not allow this bill to become but another step in the historical process of stripping native Americans of an adequate land base through governmental action. The monetary settlement provided in the Senate bill, large as it may seem, is minute by comparison with

the value of native lands to which the natives will be relinquishing title.

Kennedy concluded that native leaders have said that only a 40 million acre settlement will be considered a fair one. "And a fair settlement is what Congress should be prepared to provide."

In addition to the two Tundra Times articles, the Senator also had a statement by Earl Old Person, president of the National Congress of American Indians, read into the record. In the statement, Old Person emphasized the need for at least 40 million acres for Alaska's natives.

Appearing in the Congressional Record Sept. 23 is a statement by Rep. Tunney of California in which the Representative joined Old Person and Emil Notti, president of the AFN, in calling for a land settlement of 40 million acres. He included a joint statement of Notti and Old Person in the record.