

14 Native Villages to Have Telephone Service First Time

JUNEAU—Governor Keith H. Miller's Office announced this week that plans are underway to provide 14 native villages with modern telephone service for the first time.

According to Governor Miller's Office, the service would be established on a pilot basis under the provisions of a proposal made jointly by the Alaska Communication System and RCA Global Communication, the firm that has purchased ACS from the Federal Government, effective next year.

Colonel Jack D. O'Dell, Commander of the 1929 Communica-

tions Group in Seattle, told the Governor that representatives of both ACS and RCA recently visited 13 villages to make arrangements for setting up the pilot program. They were unable to visit Little Diomed.

Other villages included in the proposal are Buckland, Deering, Elim, Golovin, Kaltag, Koyuk, Selawik, Shaktoolik, Shismaref, Stebbins, St. Michael, Wales and White Mountain, according to the Governor's Office. Facilities at Nome would serve as the central exchange for the villages located on the Bering Sea.

Base station equipment will be installed this winter. The village telephones and antennas should be delivered and installed by early spring. The pilot program should be in full operation by 1970, according to Governor Miller's Office.

The proposal calls for the village council in each village to be the basic subscriber for the plan before preparations can begin.

In keeping with an earlier

RCA proposal to serve 141 additional small communities in Alaska and the rates proposed by RCA for the service, the ACS rate will be \$35 per month per telephone for dial service to and from Nome and villages on the same system.

"We believe that the villages will collect enough from individual users of the service to pay the \$35 monthly charge and, perhaps, have something left over to pay their attendants," Colonel O'Dell said in a letter to Governor Miller.

The village councils will be in charge of attendants to watch over the system and make the necessary collections. The villages also will furnish the small amount of electricity that will be required to operate the system.