

Arctic Eskimos Lable Senate Bill As 'Tragically Inadequate'

The Eskimos of the North Slope described the land claims settlement bill currently proposed by the Senate Interior Committee as "tragically inadequate and totally unacceptable" in a telegram this week to every mem-

ber of the committee.

Sent by Joe Upicksoun, president of the Arctic Slope Native Association, the telegram urged that the Eskimos be fairly paid for property taken from them and that they be allowed to keep

enough of their ancestral homeland to preserve their culture.

This message, and also one from Sam Taalak, executive director of ASNA, were sent to the committee members to encourage them to adopt changes in the proposed bill recommended by the Alaska Federation of Natives.

An attorney for the association said that the committee was expected to consider the AFN's recommendations Tuesday or Wednesday.

"If the total package were adopted," he said, "the Arctic Slope Eskimos would be much happier than they are now."

The proposed bill, which has not officially come out of the Senate committee yet, would give natives surface rights to 7.5 million acres of land, a \$500 million cash settlement, and a total of \$500 million in royalties from oil and gas leases.

In reaction to the bill, the AFN has requested instead, 11 million acres—seven million of which would be for village lands, two million for timber selection, one million for mineral lands, and one million for hardship lands.

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ARCTIC SLOPE ESKIMOS CRITICIZE BILL . . .

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Half of the mineral lands, the attorney explained, are to be selected north of the Brooks Range and 50 per cent of the proceeds from them would go to the North Slope Eskimos.

Also, he continued, the AFN requests that the North Slope natives be able to select 100,000 acres of land from anywhere on the North Slope including Petro-Reserve 4.

Other parts of the AFN pack-

age call for protection of native subsistence rights, continuation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Public Health Service pending the results of a five-year study, and one township for every 400 persons in a village rather than a maximum of two townships for over 400 persons.

Just increasing the land grant, the Arctic Slope attorney said, without adopting these other changes would benefit the Arctic

Slope people little.

As pointed out by Upicksoun in the telegram, the North Slope natives "have used and occupied 56 million acres" for years and under the proposed bill will be left with only 138,000 acres.

Special consideration should also be given to the Arctic Slope group, the telegram implies, because of the known value of the land claimed by them and because the North Slope Eskimos are the ones who will suffer the ultimate consequences of oil development, such as pollution of rivers and the Arctic Ocean and damages to hunting.

Both telegrams will be printed in next week's paper.

Turning to matters on the state level, the attorney for the Arctic Slope natives said that the association has written Secretary of the Interior, Walter Hickel, protesting the disposition of sand and gravel on any land located north of the Brooks Range.

The State has applied for free gravel along the route of the proposed road to the North Slope for which the Governor has asked the legislature to appropriate \$120 million.

At the present time, he added, no suits have been brought on this matter but that does not mean that tomorrow one or more will not be brought. The Secretary, he continued, has the authority to dispose of sand and gravel on public lands but is prohibited from doing so on Indian lands.

The Arctic Slope natives claim Indian title to the land from which some of the gravel is desired.