

CONFERENCE SUCCESSFUL

Housing Committee Conference Is Marked With Cooperation

In what has been considered a productive session, the Alaska Native Housing Committee met March 5-6 in Juneau to thrash out recommendations and guidelines designed to enhance the chances of the passage of S. 1915.

Senate bill 1915 is the one Sen. E.L. Bartlett introduced in congress which would authorize a \$10 million federal

funding for construction of better homes for Alaska Native people.

As one of the highlights of the meeting, the group elected Emil Notti, president of the Cook Inlet Native Association, Anchorage, as permanent chairman. Sen. Eben Hopson of Barrow was elected vice chairman.

Charles Edwardson, an official of the Arctic Slope Native Association of Barrow was named secretary.

Robert Arnold, special assistant to Sen. Bartlett in Anchorage, was named executive secretary.

GOOD PARTICIPATION

Thorough participation of the committee members and the advisory council was evident throughout the session.

"It was very interesting, easy to follow and understand," said a spectator. "You could sense the seriousness of it and the direction to which it was aimed. All of those people talked sense and I was especially impressed by many of those

Native leaders. One could tell they were talking from intimate knowledge of the housing problem. I'm glad there were so many of them on the committee."

WELCOMING ADDRESS

At the outset, Gov. William A. Egan gave a welcoming address to the group in which he said in part, "... The needs of our Native people go beyond good housing. . . . We must rid Alaska of deplorable housing which breeds despair. . . ."

Gov. Egan took the assembly somewhat by surprise when he declared:

"I'm going to make every effort to see that authority is provided for funding of at least one meeting of the Alaska Native Housing Committee over the coming year, together with providing for funding to send two of your representatives to Washington, D.C. to make presentations on behalf of Sen. Bartlett's bill in the appropriate committees of the Congress."

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ELECTED OFFICIALS—Newly elected officials of the Alaska Native Housing Committee are gathered minutes after the meeting was adjourned in Juneau. Standing is the first elected chairman of the group, Emil Notti of Anchorage. Others from left to right are: Sen. Eben Hopson of Barrow, vice

president; Charles Edwardson, Barrow, secretary; and Bob Arnold, Anchorage, executive secretary. Notti is the president of the Cook Inlet Native Association, Edwardson is the official of the Arctic Slope Native Association, Barrow, and Arnold is special assistant to Sen. Bartlett in Anchorage.

Housing Committee Meeting . . .

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The hearing on S. 1915 is expected to come up later this month or early in April and for which the committee picked Emil Notti and Sen. Eben Hopson as delegates to testify to the congressional committees.

Charles Edwardson was named alternate delegate.

The housing committee deemed it important that Edwardson should also go along with the delegation and made plans to raise money for his travel expenses.

"I will contact Native associations for contributions of money," said Emil Notti.

Fred Notti, Emil's brother, said after the meeting was adjourned that he would try to get some funds from businesses.

"Lots of those firms do big business with our people and they should be able to contribute," he said.

Fred is the president of the newly organized Kuskokwim Valley Native Association with headquarters in Bethel.

MINIMUM FUNDING

During the major part of the meeting, the committee and

its advisory council thrashed out recommendations and guidelines with the thought in mind that \$10 million was the very minimum with which to fund Native housing and that the appropriation, if the bill passes, should apply in areas where it was most desperately needed.

It was pointed out that in order to do a more thorough job, \$50 million or more would be needed to adequately house the Native people of Alaska.

ENDORSEMENTS

Sen. Bob Blodgett of Teller and Speaker of the House, Mike Gravel, were given time to tell the group about bills concerning education in Alaska.

Sen. Blodgett talked about Senate bills 305 and 306 and received endorsement from the housing committee. Gravel addressed the meeting about the packet of bills and resolutions on regional high school concept and also received endorsement.

Having heard some discussion on pockets of poverty, especially in lack of adequate housing in cities like Nome and Fairbanks, Sen. Blodgett said that people of

those cities were remiss in their responsibility to the Native people in their localities.

WELL-CONDUCTED

The meeting was ably conducted by the temporary chairman, Willard Bowman, Executive Director of the State Commission for Human Rights. During the two-day session, he repeatedly stressed that time was of the essence and conducted the meeting accordingly.

Near the conclusion of the first day's session, one committee member requested that the group adjourn until 1:30 p.m. the next day (Sunday) so that the people at the meeting could attend church.

"Hey look! I don't know—we need all the time we can spend on this meeting. We haven't got much time," said Bowman impatiently.

Someone suggested that the group meet very early in the morning and recess in time for church. Another person said that calling for the time of the meeting should be left at the pleasure of the chairman.

Finally, one of the committee members said, "Mr. Chairman, I would like to say this: I think this group is here performing a Christian duty in trying to help to improve Native housing. I wish the people here would think about this a little.

The discussion stopped and the chairman said in a loud voice, "The meeting will come to order at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning."