

Pribilofs Fight for Themselves

The tiny Pribilof Island community of St. Paul, with 450 persons whose subsistence is drawn from a single hard pressed industry may be on its way to incorporation as a fourth

class city and economic self sufficiency.

Early in December, a Task Force of 20 representatives of State, Federal, business and Indian organizations went to St.

Paul to outline the various services each could perform for the island community and discuss the problems confronting the two tiny communities of St. Paul and its neighbor St. George.

The Task Force was organized in part by Patrick Pletnikoff, a student at the University of Washington and a native of St. Paul with the aid of BIA Administrative Manager Gordon Tracy.

The Pribilof Islands encompass two Aleut communities who draw almost all their cash income to the harvesting of fur seals.

Currently, St. Paul and St. George are putting up a fight against the Friends of Animals, who are trying to stop the industry.

One of the reasons for the task force, according to Village Council representative Pletni-

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koff, was to explore alternative economic operations for the islanders in case the adverse publicity from the Friends of Animals drove the prices of fur seals down.

As a result of the task force visit, the Village Council of St. Paul has filed a petition for a charter to establish the village as a Fourth Class city.

St. George, the even more isolated second Pribilof community, submitted a resolution requesting the St. Paul council represent them in all legal problems and developmental plans.

St. George is reached only a few times per year by boat, making it almost impossible for the smaller community to participate directly in most development program meetings—or receive mail.

Also as a result of the task

force discussions, the councils will petition their Congressmen for funds for Army Engineers to construct a small boat harbor at St. Paul—in order to aid the community in developing a fishing industry.

An economic study to promote industrial and commercial development at the Islands was funded with \$2500 from the Economic Development Administration and the State completed action necessary to complete a Food Stamp Program at the islands, as a result of the Task Force visit, according to Anchorage BIA Superintendent Roy Peratrovich.

Other plans on which action was taken included increases planned in tourist and transportation facilities and other small businesses which might provide added income to the islanders, Peratrovich said.