

Leaders to Study Hickel's 3 Point Land Title Plan

The land claims problem was widely discussed but nothing definite was decided at the land meeting between Governor Hickel and Native leaders in Anchorage last Sunday.

A three-point plan proposed by Hickel was sent to the land committee of the Alaska Federation of Native Associations and to the various State Native groups for study. Their reports will be considered at a second general meeting,

(Continued on Page 8)

Leaders to Study Plan . . .

(continued from Page 1)

probably in early April.

The governor's plan would grant title to villages for lands needed now and in the future, would provide compensation for other valid claims, and would provide economic development to ease unemployment in the villages.

Surface and mineral rights to the land occupied by the villages, including room for expansion, would be given to the villages. The title could be held by the village as a whole or by the individual residents.

Surface rights would be given for the surrounding areas which are used to support the villages. This "ecological belt" would have to be determined for each village and might vary widely; Sam Taalak of the Arctic Slope Native Association reported "we need 96 million acres for caribou ranching."

All compensation for other lands on which claims were valid would go into a trust fund to be administered for the good of all Natives in Alaska. Hickel said that the trustees would be chosen by the Natives.

The reactions to the governor's proposals varied widely, but many of the Natives were retaining suspicions until they had studied the proposal further. Part of this may be worry over the State getting into what they feel is a matter between the Natives and the Federal

Government.

Several Natives commented that the meeting was a first step rather than a solution. Hugh Nichols of ASNA said "while progress was made, it fell far short of a definite solution of the problem." Sam Taalak said "the only thing we did was to feel each other out."

AFNA director Flore Le-kanof reported that the Natives had not given up anything at the meeting, and that some progress may have been made towards joint action between the State and the Natives on the claims.

He stressed that the governor's proposed legislation would have to be studied by AFNA's land committee before the full results of the meeting could be known.

One other proposal was that the State would sponsor a "summit conference" in Washington among Native Association Board Members, the Governor, and Federal officials to negotiate an agreement acceptable to all parties.

Supporting this idea, Rep. Howard Pollock warned "if we put something forward that only the people in this room accept, we will get no place."