

Aim Is Coalition—

15 Minority Groups Meet to Organize

A "Coalition" of Alaska's various minority groups may be close to becoming a reality following an organizational meeting of 15 minority group organizations in Anchorage on January 25.

The meeting, which lasted all day, brought together 30 representatives of minority groups including Alaskan Natives, blacks, Filipinos, Spanish speaking peoples and other groups. It was called by Robert Willard, Executive Director of the Alaska Human Rights Commission.

Willard termed the meeting "a complete success."

"There has been a lot of talk of 'Coalition' in the last few years," he said. "I'm extremely pleased that it is off the ground."

He said there is a definite need to coordinate the efforts made by each group in such areas as employment, housing, education and legislation.

Most of the day-long meetings centered around organization. Pending further organization and the election of permanent officers, the group unanimously elected Willard as its temporary Chairman and Mrs. Agnes Harrison as Acting Secretary.

It was decided to hold a

second meeting on February 8 at which time at least eight other minority groups will be invited to send representatives. This would bring to 23 the number of minority group organizations seated on the coalition.

While most of the day-long meet centered on organization, the group did decide to recommend to the Alaska Plan Committee that it raise its goals to bring minority group workers into the various construction craft unions from the present level of 100 to 450.

The Alaska Plan is a five year plan to provide equal employment in the state's construction industry. Its committee is chaired by Robert Willard. The committee has been meeting since September on a weekly basis and the Coalition planned to present its recommendation at the meeting on January 27.

Groups represented so far in the Coalition include: the Alaska Federation of Natives; the NAACP, Alaska Native Brotherhood; Matt Hansen Society; Filipino Community; Northern Lights Civic and Social Club, AIM; First Christian Methodist Episcopal;

New Hope Baptist Church; Shiloh Baptist Church; Fairview Council; PRIDE; Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska; Frontier Club, Inc.; and Spanish Speaking Community.

"I'm satisfied there is going to be a united front," Willard added, "and I must commend the representatives attending for their interest, time and cooperation."