

# TLINGIT-HAIDA FUED BOILS

## Bartlett Favors Partial Per Capita Distribution Of Land Claim Judgment

By TOM SNAFF  
Asst. Editor

A heated controversy that has embroiled the Tlingit-Haida people of Southeast Alaska over how a multi-million dollar judgment from the U.S. Government should be spent was described here last week by Senator E. L. (Bob) Bartlett.

And in a special interview with Tundra Times, Bartlett let it be known that he favors one of two camps into which the people are divided—the camp seeking partial rather than full per capita payments of the judgment.

Bartlett said he favors the proposal by the Tlingit-Haida Council headed by Andrew Hope over a proposal by a group headed by Roy Brown.

Representatives of both groups recently testified in Congress regarding how a judgment estimated at not less than \$3 million nor more than \$80 million should be distributed among the Tlingit-Haida people.

Bartlett said the Alaska telegraph had supported a bill proposed by the Tlingit-Haida Council which would allow roughly 25 per cent of the funds to be distributed per capita and the remainder of the funds to be used for such things as housing, education, and future betterment.

An amendment to the original Tlingit-Haida bill was required to allow for per capita payment, he said, because a bill passed in 1935 prohibited this.

"The situation is quite different now from what it was then. Now quite a few people have moved from the villages into Ketchikan and Juneau and to Los Angeles and other places."

"If all the money were to be spent in the villages a lot of people who are entitled to some measure of assistance would gain nothing."

An amendment to the bill also make a crucial change from previous procedure. Instead of the Department of Interior sitting in the administrative capacity, the responsibility for distribution will be upon the Tlingit-Haida council under the administration of Congress itself.

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# Tlingit-Haida . . .

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Roy Brown, using his Tlingit name of Da-Keen-Xheen testified before the House of Representatives with a tribal headdress and a Tlingit blanket. In this dress, he placed a wreath on the grave of President Kennedy in Arlington National Cemetery.

Bartlett said Brown and his group were "rather new on the scene" but that the Tlingit-Haida Council under Andrew Hope had been working on the measure for some time.

Recently, Brown and members of his group have appeared on TV in Juneau propounding full per capita distribution of the claim money.

The Court of Claims handed down a judgment in 1949 in favor of the Tlingit-Haida for the taking of the principal parts of Southeast Alaska.

"It is a very unusual situation. Most claim cases that have been found in favor of Indians have been because of the physical taking of land later judged as their own.

"In this situation practically all the land was placed in the Tongass National Forest held by the United States. Nevertheless, the court held and I believe wisely that this was equivalent to the taking of their property," Bartlett said.

"I don't think that Congress will ever go for 100 per cent per capita distribution," Bartlett stressed.

"That opinion was voiced by the chairman of the subcommittee in the Senate, Lee Metcalf, of Montana, and I think this would go across the board."

"It might be politically advisable for me to go for the per capita distribution, but I will not because I do not think it wise.

"I am confident the people of the caliber of Andrew Hope and others on the council will prevail and will be able to convince the people that it is best that some of the money is left for the advancement of the people later."