
Seminar Backs Native Oriented Proposals

Chairman of the Alaska State Legislative Council, Rep. Gene Guess: "This conference is an experiment in democracy."

James M. Mitchell, director of advanced study program, Brookings Institution: "All of our conferees are to help Alaskans to make decisions for themselves."

John Osman, senior staff member, Brookings Institution: "The decisions you make today will influence tomorrow."

Joseph L. Fisher, president, Futures, Inc.: "In the next few years, the oil revenues can equal all the revenues in Alaska since 102 years ago."

Arlon Tussing, Associate professor of economics, University of Alaska: "in 1970, the state can spend \$300 million annually and keep it up."

The above remarks set in motion the Conference on the Future of Alaska on the first of four such conferences in Anchorage to be held from last Sunday, November 9, till December 14, all of them for the duration of three days.

The outcome of the first of four seminars under the auspices

(Continued on page 6)

Backs Native Oriented Proposals . . .

(Continued from page 1)

of the Alaska State Legislative Council and conducted by the Brookings Institution of Washington, D.C., came out in good percentage toward a surprising trend of native oriented proposals for the future.

The most mentioned need for Alaska was the improvement of education in the state, in some cases stressing that schools in villages were important, at least through high school where the family relationships were deemed important.

The seminar also came strongly that the state should work toward helping the resolution of the native land claims and that an appropriation from the state general fund to be used for a positive state position on the settlement of the native land claims directed toward equitable

settlement for all Alaskans.

Other areas were mentioned such as vocations, working with adults, fisheries and oceanography and again, a special emphasis on rural schools.

Well over a hundred prominent citizens of Alaska from throughout the state assembled in Anchorage in an attempt to lay foundations for future Alaska based on the \$900 million the state received from the oil lease sales last September.

"Employment impact of industry does not do much for local hire," Arlon Tussing pointed out. "... There is a philosophy for development's sake."

He cited as an example the southeastern lumber industry where businesses have prospered but that employment has not gained proportionately.

Tussing made a broad hint that some of the \$900 million should be spent and that he got the idea that many wanted to spend only the interest.

He said that if it was done in that manner, "you're wasting capital because it's worth less the longer you keep it. It will be taking from the poor us and giving it to the rich—those in the future."

Tussing also pointed out that "the state needs continuous flow consultants" to study the needs for Alaska future. He said that because of Alaska's unique position in the Arctic, the state could become a renown center for northern studies that could include oceanography, fisheries and other related types of Arctic research.

He also pointed out that the state was in a good position to develop extension programs for the outlying areas. He added that

the people of the North Slope (Eskimos) be given their share of the state's oil lease sale income.

Just give them their share of the whole thing. Give them \$1,000 per person share," suggested Tussing.

On the latter portion of the initial day's morning session of the seminar, the conferees were divided into four groups John Osman called, Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. The groups then sat down to discuss such matters as:

- Whether to spend some of the principal of the \$900 million or its interest.

- Education and research in education.

- Economic development's sake.

- Whether to have an independent board or trustees to guide expenditures or give that to the state legislature.

- Native land claims.

In the Alpha section of the seminar conducted by James Mitchell, the group leaned toward research on matters such as education system of the state and education in the rural areas.

During the course of the three-day seminar, many other needs of Alaska were mentioned among them airports, communications, and housing.

On the final day of the conference, a participant stated, "There are plenty of details, but the basic point is—we're going to invest in Alaska—its people and its physical aspects."

The next seminar will be on November 23-26 in Anchorage. Two other will take place on December 7-10 and December 14-17, also in Anchorage.