

Edmondson Gives Newspaper Unexpected Praise at Hearing

At the conclusion of the House Interior and Insular Affairs field hearings on native land claims in Anchorage Saturday, Rep. Ed Edmondson (D-Okla.) expressed his sympathy to Rep. Howard Pollock for having such a newspaper as the Anchorage Daily Times in his state.

Rep. Edmondson attacked an editorial, entitled "The Goldberg Bill," which appeared in the Anchorage Times Saturday. He labeled the editorial "journalism at its lowest level."

The assembled crowd of witnesses and observers gave resounding applause as Edmondson stated, "you don't have to read more than two or three lines . . .

to learn how very little respect the editorial writer has for the facts."

Edmondson said it was "gutter journalism" for the Anchorage Times to say it was against discrimination and at the same time entitle the editorial "The Goldberg Bill."

He contrasted the Anchorage Times' editorial with the Tundra Times' headline story of last week, which criticized the committee for preparing a poor schedule. Displaying the issue, Edmondson termed the story "straight-forward reporting."

The editorial in the daily evening newspaper, edited by Robert Atwood, claimed that

Natives would receive "hundreds of billions of dollars" through the proposed 2 per cent overriding royalty. Edmondson stated this charge was "simply untrue."

The proposals in the Alaska Federation of Natives' bill, arrived at in a series of meetings of the AFN board of directors, was consistently referred to as "Mr. Goldberg's proposals" or "this Goldberg Line."

The Anchorage Times also alleged the AFN bill would "seal off approximately 97 per cent of the entire area of Alaska."

The paper used such adjectives as "bombshell" and "shocking" and "real plum" as well as "bur-

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den" in describing the document.

The angry reaction of Congressman Edmondson was repeated by a number of native leaders. AFN president Emil Notti termed the editorial "ridiculous." Other native leaders described it as "out of line" or "condescending to the Native people."

"... that is what the congressional committee must realize,

and that is why this Goldberg Line that has been fed into the Alaska Native Federation bill is a threat to all the people of the 49th state," the Anchorage Times concluded.

Apparently at least one congressman did realize something from the editorial, and apparently it was not quite what the Anchorage Times expected.