

Boyko Proposes AFN, State Pool Strength

On the third and final day of the annual conference of the Alaska Federation of Natives last Saturday in Anchorage, State Attorney General Edgar Paul Boyko proposed to the federation that the group and the State pool their strength to work on land problems.

"We should pool the strength of the State and the native organizations," Boyko said.

The Attorney General said that the native bill, S-2020, "contains a great deal we can support." It wasn't true, he said, that the Interior Department bill, S-1964, has the support of the State.

"If the Interior bill passes, you probably would get 1867 dollars or \$7,200,000. That would be an insult to the natives. It should be more on the basis that if land is taken in 1968, it should be paid for in 1968 prices."

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Boyko Proposes Pooling . . .

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Boyko stated.

He went on to say that what lands were to be granted, the native people should take a large part of such grants. He said that when the Interior Department worked on its land bill, it worked in great secrecy.

"I am proposing that the State and the Alaska Federation of Natives cooperate on the draft of a new bill," Boyko continued. "With that kind of cooperation, we can come up with a more satisfactory bill."

He proposed that the bill should incorporate certain parts of S-2020 but that it should not include those the State does not agree with.

"If there was such a bill, we would like to provide sub-surface rights, even to large grants of land," Boyko said. "...The State needs land—the natives need lands. The State and the natives should go into partnership."

The Attorney General then proposed a creation of a commission that would have someone from the Interior Department, the State, and the Federation of Natives.

The commission would go

ahead and work on land problems and that it should be a 25-year program developed on a rational plan.

He said the native bill was bottled up at this moment in the Judiciary Committee. He called for an agreement on a bill and go to Washington with it.

"The State would fight for such a bill," Boyko said.

He added that "if the natives go against the State, we'll get absolutely nothing."

The Attorney General stated the Interior Department's land freeze was a device to perpetuate its future employment.

"The Interior Department is like the Smog Committee in Los Angeles," Boyko pointed out. "If they solve the smog problem, they wouldn't have a job."

Boyko touched on the rejection by the House of Representatives in Washington of the \$1 million for native housing in Alaska.

"The United States is characterized with side projects like the one in Vietnam that got the \$1 million needed for native housing. The way they are spending money over there, that \$1 million would not last five minutes," Boyko said.