

SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

JUNEAU — The state has awarded contracts totaling \$3.6 million for construction of school and other public facilities in six Alaska communities, Governor William A. Egan said.

The contracts, administered by the Department of Public Works, went to:

Toombs & Co., Fairbanks, for a \$1.4 million elementary school at Nome.

Woodruff Construction Co., Anchorage, for a \$219,000 classroom and storage addition at Glennallen High School.

Linton Construction Co.,

Linwood, Wash., for a \$58,500 building to house sewage treatment facilities at Allakaket School.

Burgess Construction Co., Fairbanks, for a \$1,048,600 detention facility and upgrading of the existing facility at Fairbanks.

Polmateer Construction Co., Anchorage, for a \$93,000 addition to the Tok Health Center.

Interstate Co., Inc., Anchorage, for a \$764,050 highway complex shop building at Anchorage.

Outline of Claims History --

Author Lauds Laura Bergt's Contribution Toward Claims

By THOMAS RICHARDS, JR.
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SETTLEMENT PART NINE

OLONGAPO CITY, R.P.

Another Alaskan did an important job in advancing Alaska Native claims during 1971. For years, the Alaska Federation of Natives, and its lawyers and consultants, struggled with the

problem of bringing the settlement issue before the executive branch and encouraging the administration to give the Alaska claims serious consideration. The most substantial progress toward this end began in earnest with the appointment of Mrs. Laura Bergt to the National Council on Indian Opportunity. Her efforts proved more profitable than a dozen

expensive consultants courting White House aides. She worked hard to obtain the support of the other Indian members of the council, a task made difficult because of the distrust traditional Indian leaders had for the simple fee ownership sought by Alaska Natives. But, her extensive knowledge of the Alaska claims issue and her charming personality were a decided plus in her favor.

Mrs. Bergt's effectiveness as a member of NCIO was largely responsible for the support which Alaska received from that body and subsequent highly successful meetings between Vice President Agnew and Native leaders and, ultimately, for gaining the support of the President. An Army of consultants, lobbyists, and bureaucrats could never have done as well.

The third important factor contributing to favorable action during 1971 was the informal intelligence network at the disposal of the Alaska Federation of Natives. Friendships with key members of important committees and the expert services of lobbyist Claude Desautels kept Native interests well abreast of progress on the claims. One example of the effectiveness of Native intelligence occurred in August of 1971, following a meeting between Alaska Senators Mike Gravel and Ted Stevens, Congressman Nick Begich, and Governor William A. Egan in Washington. Senator Stevens assumed responsibility for having the minutes of that closed meeting typed and circulated among the others. The AFN was aware of the details of that meeting even before Stevens' secretary was able to type them and present them to the Senator. This example is representative of the ability of the AFN to remain apprised of committee action, draft proposals, and even confidential memorandums. The Natives remained more informed than anyone in Washington ever imagined. Native intelligence was a valuable advantage.

These three factors were the most instrumental in the 1971 Washington lobbying effort. But, the pure mechanics of congressional action during that last year of settlement deliberations is a fascinating example of the legislative process. And so are the deals struck by the parties involved and the effect of these agreements upon the resulting Act.

Humble Oil Grants UA

FAIRBANKS — The Humble Oil & Refining Co. has granted \$2,500 to the University of Alaska to use as it may determine.

Other unrestricted grants have been made to the university annually by the company over the past 10 years.

Additionally, the company has granted funds for special purposes. In recent years it has given \$25,000 to the Tundra Biome Program, \$10,000 to the Demonstration Art Tour, and \$10,000 to Student Orientation Services, which assists students from rural areas to make the transition to university life.

March of Dimes

Opera star Beverly Sills, a leader in the effort to prevent birth defects, is National Mothers' March Chairman of the Dimes.

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