

Carter's invitation

There are some questions as to just why President Carter has asked Alaska's Native leaders and some other state officials to meet with him in the White House Thursday afternoon.

There are also questions concerning just what he might want to say. Is his purpose to lobby for the support he needs to get across his views of what should happen with Alaska lands? Or, is he genuinely interested in the views of those he has invited, those who are so directly concerned with the direction the government might take on the various bills now being considered by Congress?

As far as we know, no other group has received similar invitations, either to this event or to others. Those other groups also are directly affected by the pending Alaska lands legislation. And some of them have been vociferous in trying to get their points of view across.

Whether one agrees with those views or not, they should be at least listened to, as long as they are presented with more intellectual and substantive weight instead of the emotionalism we have seen recently.

Whatever the motives of Mr. Carter, and whatever the message he will attempt to deliver, there seems to be a suggestion that is at least implied in the telegraphed message sent to Native leaders this past weekend

That message would seem to be that that group has worked so quietly and so effectively that the President of the United States has decided he'd better get together with them — to talk to them and to listen to what they have to say.

If it's that kind of work that draws the attention of the administration, maybe some of the groups that have been devoting most of their time to screaming and howling and stirring up needless dust might take the hint that civil, reasoned discourse, whether in the political context or not, is more effective in getting the attention of the person or persons they need to talk to than is the trading of insults and unsubstantiated complaints.