

To Make Things Easier—

UA Research Unit, AFN Want to Know Who Native Leaders Are

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"One of the main differences between native Alaskans between 1960 and 1968 is that now in whatever way an Alaskan native takes a stand, it is important to the state and to the nation," so states Emil Notti, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

The natives of Alaska have come a long way in the past few years especially in letting everyone know who they are and how they stand on important issues, such as the land claims. The land claims is a good example of this trend for people of Alaska are both involved in their rich history and their future.

One outcome is that the Alaskan native is having and will continue to have an active part in his future and his children's. The voice of the native is getting louder and the people are listening. But for its importance and the large number of people interested, no one really knows everything that is happening.

Travel and communication problems cause a lot of the difficulties. Just because people are so far apart it is hard to know what people are doing and what their ideas are. There are so many

questions. Who are the native village leaders in Alaska? Are they getting all the information they need to know what is happening? What are the problems of the villages which can be solved NOW and not years from now? Nobody knows all the answers to these questions.

To answer these and other questions, the Alaska Federation of Natives is working along with the Institute of Social, Economic, and Government Research at the University of Alaska to find out what are the recent things which have happened in the bush, and how the people feel about plans for land claims, jobs, and education.

Since it is impossible to go to every village and sit down and talk things over with each family, the next best thing, is to write each village and ask them some questions and give them some ideas.

To make things easier the Institute of Social, Economic, and Government Research working with the Alaska Federation of Natives sent out questionnaires to every village in the state of Alaska January 22, 1968. The replies are coming back and both the Institute and Emil Notti are surprised and happy with the replies. "For the first time we are getting to know every village (what every village is

like) in the bush, and who their leaders are, and what they think about the land claims issues," said Notti.

However, some villages haven't replied, and the Alaska Federation of Natives wants to make sure that if there is any village that didn't get a copy, to please write to the Alaska Federation of Natives, at Box 3408 Anchorage, Alaska 99501 and just ask for a questionnaire.

Although the questionnaires are important, there is another side to this writing and this is the letters that the villages and people in the village have sent. They are very interesting and give some good ideas. Keep them coming. For this is the beginning of knowing each other, and making sure that every village is kept up with the things that are happening in Alaska.

Future plans include sending your questionnaires to the associations and clubs in Alaska and doing personal interviewing of presidents and offices of associations and clubs which are participating in Alaska's future—their interests and ideas.