

Gov. Miller, Businessmen Are Opposed

The native land claims situation in Alaska is gathering momentum with the focal point at the Senate Interior Committee that has started to hammer a bill designed to resolve the land question in the state.

On a lesser degree, but a vociferous one, is another focal point in Alaska headed by Gov. Keith H. Miller with the backing of Alaska businessmen, consulting geologists, governor's advisors and his attorney general.

The Alaska group is backing the governor's latest stand, a most conservative proposal he has made as a plan for settlement for land claims. Miller's plan has widened the differences between the state and the Alaska Federation of Natives plan for land settlement.

As the governor's group met in Anchorage this week working to back the governor on his plan,

(Continued on page 6)

Opposition Develops...

(Continued from page 1)

an unexpected opposition developed relayed by amplified phone call from Sen. Ted Stevens in Washington, D.C.

Sen. Stevens told the group that if the controversy over the land solution plan in Alaska continues to rock the boat while the Senate Interior Committee is working to draft a native land claims settlement bill, that there was a potential economic disaster for the state.

The Anchorage Times and its columnist W.C. Arnold have been hammering at the AFN land solution proposal.

The Tundra Times last week commented in a front page editorial after pointing out the important development that the conscience of the nation had been breached by good effort in public relations, commented:

"In the light of this important development, the feverish accusations and attacks might tend to work against the State of Alaska, its officials, and those who scream and clamor for ruination if the aims of the AFN bill are implemented..."

In his telephone remarks, Sen. Stevens pointed out the widening chasm that has developed between himself and Sen. Mike Gravel and the AFN on one side and Gov. Miller and his administration on the other.

Stevens, a Republican, refrained from making a frontal attack on his fellow Republican, Gov. Keith Miller, on the opposition to the land settlement plan by the AFN.

Two Alaska attorneys for the native organizations, Clif Groh of Anchorage and Barry Jackson of Fairbanks, also talked to the Anchorage group over the phone. Both expressed regret over the differences of opinion.

Jackson said he was distressed over the disappearance of a united Alaskan front that existed when Walter J. Hickel was Alaska's governor. This unity, Jackson said, has disappeared since Gov. Miller took office. While governor, Hickel also said that that the state should pay \$50 million as the state's share in the settlement.

Gov. Miller's latest proposal calls for only 6 million acres of land for the natives while AFN calls for 40 million. Miller, however, supported the \$500 million figure for compensation for lands lost by Alaska's native people.

Sen. Stevens reiterated his opposition to 2 per cent overriding royalty but admitted that this AFN proposal has had some support among the senators in the Senate Interior Committee.