

46 MILLION GROUP BACKS AFN

Nat'l Church Council Votes Unanimously Backing Native Claims

Emil Notti, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives calling Tundra Times from Detroit, Mich. said simply, "I have good news for you."

Notti said that the National Council of Churches in its Triennial General Assembly in Detroit, Mich., gave unanimous support to a resolution calling for a prompt and equitable settlement of the Alaska Native Land Claims issue now pending before the United States Congress.

The resolution was introduced by Dr. Frederick P. McGinnis, president of the Alaska Methodist University in Anchorage, and who was Alaska's lone delegate to the 3,000-man attendance at the National Council's general assembly.

The action taken placed a combined influence in strength of the 46 million members of the National Council of Churches of the United States of America squarely behind the struggle of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

The national council represents 33 member communes of Protestants, Orthodox, Anglican

traditions and has a combined membership of 46 million persons.

Emil Notti addressed the 3,000 persons gathered for the plenary session and in his remarks called upon the national council for support of the AFN in efforts to secure an equitable settlement.

Notti noted that the Alaska land claims issue was the last chance for the United States government to write an honorable chapter in its history of dealing with the aboriginal peoples of this nation.

"We are a lot happier today than we were yesterday," said Jim Thomas, public relations director for the AFN in Anchorage. "It was great that the Na-

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Council of Churches Backs AFN . . .

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tional Council of Churches gave Emil a chance to give an address even though its schedule was tight."

The Triennial General Assembly adopted the following resolution with specific reference to the legislation by Congress favored by AFN:

WHEREAS numerous member communes of the National Council of Churches have worked tirelessly for almost a century and the Orthodox Church has worked for over two centuries to assist the aboriginal people of Alaska to achieve basic economic and social justice under the law,

WHEREAS the natives of Alaska, Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut, have struggled valiantly against insuperable odds to a-

chieve a measure of equality and that social and economic justice can come to them only by the principle of self determination, compensation for land taken and lost to them, and ownership of land occupied and used by them from time immemorial,

WHEREAS the State of Alaska Council of Churches and numerous member communes have passed actions and resolutions supporting and encouraging the Alaska Native people and the land claims to areas rightfully theirs, stressing both the moral basis and the legal basis for the claims,

WHEREAS the United States Congress has the responsibility to settle the land claims by legislation, and has acknowledged such responsibility by prior ac-

tions and determination,

WHEREAS a just, equitable, generous and early settlement of these land claims, including the principle of revenue sharing, is required to meet the minimum requirements of social and economic justice for the 56,000 Alaska Natives so long deprived of many of their basic human rights through delayed justice and failure of the Congress to settle these claims,

WHEREAS the legislation introduced in the United States Congress for a settlement deemed adequate, appropriate, and just by the Alaska Federation of Natives groups would meet many of the needs and requirements of the Natives of Alaska in terms of health, education, welfare, education, employment and development through self determination,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the general assembly of the National Council of Churches support the early, equitable and just settlement to be provided by afore mentioned pending legislation, and urge member communes and their members to make known their support to their senators and representatives in the U.S. Congress.