

LEADERS STRUGGLE FOR UNITY

Anger at Attorneys, Attorney Resignations, Pervade AFN Meeting

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ANCHORAGE, (Special)—Following the intensive struggle to maintain unity among native leaders, and with hopes renewed by a telegram from Justice Arthur Goldberg, the Alaska Federation of Natives concluded a session of meetings which lasted nearly one week.

In the telegram, dated May 19, and addressed to AFN President Emil Notti, Goldberg indicated that he may wish to reconsider serving as counsel for the organization during the settlement of the native land claims.

That telegram is printed in its entirety elsewhere in the Tundra Times.

Native leaders are now hopeful that a unified position on the land claims settlement can be achieved soon, having been given renewed optimism from the telegram sent by Goldberg.

After three days of discussion, AFN had resolved its stand on the resignation of former Justice Arthur Goldberg. When the question of whether to accept Goldberg's resignation was finally put to a vote, it failed on a split 10 to 10 vote.

Voting to accept the resignation were Cecil Barnes, Cordova Native Association; Moses Pauken, Association of Village Council Presidents; Frank Degnan, Unalakleet; Richard Frank, Fairbanks Native Association; Emil McCord, Tyonek Village; Shirley Tucker, Eklutna; Don Wright, Cook Inlet Native Association; Bill Paul, Alaska Native Brotherhood; Ray Christianson, Kuskokwim Valley Native Association; and Harvey Samuelson, Bristol Bay Native Association.

Voting to defeat the motion were Joe Upicksoun, Arctic Slope Native Association; Eben Hopson, AFN Second Vice President; John Borbridge, Tlingit and Haida Council; Flore Lekanof, Aleut League; Wilma Ketzler,

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Tanana Chiefs; Alice Brown, Kenai Native Association; Harry Carter, Kodiak Native Association; Margaret Nick, AFN Secretary; Emil Notti, AFN President; and Willie Hensley, Northwest Area Native Association.

A second motion was then considered which would ask Goldberg to reconsider his resignation. This passed in a 12 to 8 vote with Alice Brown, Wilma Ketzler, Flore Lekanof, Frank Degnan, John Borbridge, Cecil Barnes, Harry Carter, Eben Hopson, Joe Upicksoun, Willie Hensley, Margaret Nick, and Emil Notti voting in favor of the motion.

Voting against the motion were Harvey Samuelson, Ray Christianson, Bill Paul, Don Wright, Shirley Tucker, Emil McCord, Richard Frank, and Moses Pauken.

Native leaders, more unified now than the confusion of last week's meetings might have indicated, are angry at recent rumors and charges which threatened to bring about a major crisis within the leadership.

Much of this anger is directed at the attorneys who represent some of the regional native organizations.

One of these, Edgar Paul Boyke, who until his resignation

Monday represented the natives of the Kodiak area, recently charged that Justice Goldberg might receive as much as \$50 million in fees for representing AFN.

William Hensley, State Representative from Kotzebue and the voting delegate for the Northwest Area Native Association, responded to this charge.

"This is so absurd that it hardly needs comment," said Hensley. "Justice Goldberg has from the beginning divorced himself from any participation in setting the fee. In fact, I am quite certain that he was going to do this at considerable self-sacrifice."

Tlingit-Haida delegate John Borbridge was also disturbed at some of the confusion and rumors which have resulted.

"All that we have asked for," he said, "was the opportunity to assert our rights—and this has happened."

"Any form of paternalism, however deliberate, well-intentioned, or inadvertant, can only be in derogation of our desire for maximum self-determination and detract from our dignity and self-respect," Borbridge said.

Another native leader, Aleut League delegate Flore Lekanof, thought that the attorneys have hindered AFN efforts to resolve many of the more important issues.

"At meetings," Lekanof states, "attorneys sometimes talked so much that the native representatives didn't get a chance to speak." He also indicated that the lawyers might not work for the most desired settlement.

"The frame of mind is very important," Lekanof said. "The attorneys may be afraid to ask for too much."

One of the most angry responses was given by AFN President Notti to recent allegations that AFN may have been acting illegally and that it was not empowered to represent Alaskan natives.

"If AFN isn't representative, then the AFN Board isn't representative, and the regional organizations are not representative. The Board is elected by regional organizations which claim to represent their people," Notti said.

Despite rumors and charges, the consensus of opinion among native leaders reflects a desire to return to the matter of achieving a unified stand on settlement of native land claims.

Many feel that the most pressing need is to reinstate Justice Goldberg as AFN counsel. "I believe that a survey would show that the natives would overwhelmingly vote to retain Goldberg," Willie Hensley said. "I think that most people believe that we need him."

U.S. Representative Howard Pollock added strength to this position Monday in appealing for Justice Goldberg to reconsider

his resignation.

"In my humble estimation the Natives of Alaska desperately need the ability and prestige of a competent and dedicated attorney such as you, who has served his country in such prominence, competence and dignity," Pollock said.

The AFN leaders will meet again Saturday, more hopeful because of Goldberg's telegram. They now wish to achieve a unified position on settlement of the land claims, placing the highest priority on that matter.