

# **SAVOONGA & GAMBELL TO VOTE**

## **... Reservation Or Corporation ?**

**NOME** — Villagers at Gambell and Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island will be able to choose now between inclusion under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act or reserve status, as verified in the Federal Register Oct. 20.

The U.S. Department of Interior has recognized for about one month now that St. Lawrence Island meets the qualifications of Section 19 (b) of the settlement act, said Alaska Legal Services attorney Bob Bundy.

Section 19 (b) provides that any village corporation or corporation may elect within two years after passage of the act to acquire title to the surface and subsurface estates in any reserve, set aside for use or benefit of its stockholders or members prior

to the state of enactment.

Section 19 (b) further provides that if two or more villages are located on such reserve the election must be made by all of the members or stockholders of the village corporations concerned.

Predictions are that residents of Gambell and Savoonga will vote to keep their land, which had been withdrawn for a reindeer station.

Second Alaska Judicial District Judge Ethan Windahl, then an attorney with Legal Services, argued on behalf of the villagers for their right to choose and Interior officials at length agreed with that argument.

Legal services attorneys Bundy and Mary Hale are plan-

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# ***Savoonga Votes . .***

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ning to meet with villagers within a few weeks, to explain legal steps now open to them.

But there appears to be not much doubt what course they will take.

"They would rather have their own island, their own island that they've always lived on," Bundy said.