

Encroachments Nix Highways

Alaska's Commissioner of Highways Robert L. Beardsley said that the State has been denied Federal Highway Admin-

stration participation for illegal encroachments on a portion of the State's federally-aided highway system, and that federal funds are being withheld as a result.

Land Freeze Extension

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the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee recommended an extension of the current land freeze.

Facing the very probable fact of seeing no claims legislation during this congress, due mostly to the absence of House Interior Committee Chairman Wayne Aspinall (D-Colo.) from the lame duck session, the Alaska Federation of Natives has lobbied for the extension (without modification) of the current freeze.

Secretary Hickel was in favor of a modification of the land freeze, which would file "hardship" cases, including a number of homesteads.

Many Native leaders began to feel their settlement chances might benefit by extension of the freeze and an easing off on requests for congressional action during the lame duck session where an unhappy Congress is trying desperately to accomplish needed legislation.

Native leaders feel that members of the House Interior Committee should not be placed under any pressure to move legislation during the lame duck session. They reason that House members are inclined to consider a minimal amount of legislation during the session and that over lobbying may jeopardize favorable sentiment for action early during the next congress.

Leaders who were in Washington last week included AFN President Don Wright, Executive Director Eben Hopson, State Senator-elect Willie Hensley and Arctic Slope Executive Director Charles Edwardson.

Mr. Hopson flew back to Anchorage before Thanksgiving and will remain there to attend an AFN board meeting on December 5.

Another factor in favor of a fresh start on claims legislation during the next congress is the sentiment among House Interior Committee members for agreeing to the full amount of land requested by Natives.

The committee has been polled on the subject of granting a large land base to Natives at least twice during the past two months.

The results show that the committee could approve the 40 million acre figure, although they may be hesitant to recommend simple fee title to Natives on very much of that acreage.

The AFN is encouraged by this evidence of support and is not greatly discouraged by the lack of action in the House.

Don Wright, who says that his primary objective for being in Washington is to familiarize himself with the claims effort here. As he becomes accustomed to the responsibilities of his new post, Eben Hopson is relied on heavily for much of the daily operation of the AFN.

Hopson, while in Washington, discussed the impact of what he thought had become a "third party" in the claims effort.

He warned that, although oil and pipeline interests may provide impetus for expedient action, their influence could result in legislation that would concentrate on creating a pipeline corridor to the detriment of a fair land claims settlement.

Hopson and Hensley did indicate that a major break for the Native position came about with the election of former Governor Egan.

Hensley said that, with the aid of the Egan administration, claims legislation could be passed

by March of next year.

"The new administration is going to change the whole atmosphere in Washington. The new Governor's position is that he agrees the state should participate in the settlement," Hopson added.

In preparing for a sustained effort in Washington, the leaders met with AFN attorney Ramsey Clark last week.

During the strategy sessions, they noted that a new element has arisen with a push by pipeline interests to get a legislative freeze through the House.

A legislative freeze could allow land for a pipeline corridor to which all aboriginal title would be extinguished.

Should the threat begin to materialize, the AFN will have to fight it, they state.

The AFN delegation is preparing to return to Alaska for a scheduled board meeting on December 5.

Armed with a land freeze extension from the acting Secretary and commitments from the Egan administration, the AFN would be able to draw plans for a final and successful drive for favorable land claims legislation early during the next congress.

The end of the land freeze would leave the entire issue in doubt, eliminating the AFN's foothold in Congress and postponing favorable action on land claims indefinitely.

St. Paul Island Conference . . .

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St. Paul for three and a half years as head of the Bureau of Fisheries operation there.

The St. Paul village council has invited people from the State Economic Development Association, Small Business Administration, Bureau of Fisheries and numerous state and federal agencies.

Some private industries are also sending representatives. Holmes and Narver, a company which contracts housing facilities and food operations at federal installations in the Aleutians, is in St. Paul seeking a source of employees.

Bering Sea Originals, a company which deals in hand crafted articles, is participating to discuss the possibility of a handicraft industry in St. Paul. Many villages are talented, but have never had ways to market their work profitably. Grumman Aerospace, which is doing economic development work with some of the villages, also planned last week to send a representative to St. Paul.

The meeting this week is an exploratory meeting, exposing those who attend to St. Paul Island and "picking their brains" on possibilities for development.

As part of the discussion of economics, the villages wish to explore various systems of incorporation for local government, tax bases, ways of getting federal loans and assistance and estimates of the economic picture for the future.

Peter Three Stars, BIA tribal operations officer, is attending the conference as advisor on tribal organization. He will discuss with the St. Paul Islanders various types of local government associations they can set up.

According to Mr. Taylor, news of the meeting has generated a great deal of response.

Last month, the state government sent a man to St. Paul

He said that roadside signs which constitute the encroachments are in the Central and Interior Highway Districts, and are being removed. He also stated that the Department has begun a Statewide program of removal of all encroachments which are in violation of State and/or federal law.

"Effective encroachment control," he said, "must be accomplished for the safety, convenience and pleasure of Alaskan highway users and to comply with Federal regulations concerning maintenance of the federal-aid highway system."

State regulations provide for removal of encroachments within a reasonable period of time, in a few cases where a major permanent structure does not interfere, allowance to remain under revocable permit.

Beardsley also noted that effective August 25 of this year, the 1970 Highway Beautification Act prohibited outdoor advertising signs from being erected or maintained within 660 feet of the nearest edge of the right of way and visible from the main-traveled way of the highway except official signs and signs located on business premises.

The Act also prohibits junk yards from being established or maintained within 1,000 feet of the right of way unless effectively screened from view.

to begin the food stamp program there and on St. George. The Public Health Service has sent people to the Pribiloff islands as well.

"We're looking forward to this being a real good meeting. We hope to get everyone aware of the problems and start seeking solutions from the village council's viewpoint, rather than a government viewpoint," Mr. Taylor said on Friday, prior to his departure.

Representatives at the conference, each of whom is being paid for by his or her own agency, were flown in by Reeve-Aleutian Airlines and are staying in the village hotel during the conference.

The airline diverted a flight to take the representatives in to St. Paul on Monday, a special consideration to allow them to spend less than a week on the island.

One topic of the meeting will be the village hotel, where the conferees are staying, and its possibilities for expansion. The village already operates tourist accommodations for seasonal government employees.

"The air line services have shown interest in expanding flights to St. Paul if tourism increased," said Mr. Taylor. Present service is on a once a week basis. During his time on St. Paul, Taylor was instrumental in helping the village council to take over operation of the village store, service station and part of the hotel.

As Bureau of Fisheries head on the island, Mr. Taylor trained local natives to take over fisheries operations.

Hopefully, this conference will find new means for economic development of the Pribiloff Islands, Mr. Taylor commented.

"We're trying to bring in every extra dollar we can to help the islanders get on their feet."

Reaction to Firing . . .

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the Tlingit-Haida.

Other Native leaders echoed this concern.

"It really doesn't matter who extends the land freeze," said Alaska Federation of Natives executive director Eben Hopson. "If there is no extension, we're in trouble. The major impact would be if the land freeze is not extended. This would take pressure off Congress and off the state."

"I think we're losing the only arm we have in Washington on Native Land claims," commented Ralph Perdue of the Fairbanks Native Association. "He (Hickel) is the only one who brought the Native Land Claims to life as Governor and as Secretary. He was the only man you could call day or night, without going through the red tape usually necessary to reach a cabinet member."

Mr. Perdue also feared what the effect of the firing might be on the changes Hickel sponsored in the BIA, changes which will bring it closer to the people.

Other Native leaders feel a new man might extend the land freeze without modification.

Joe Upicksoun of Barrow, president of the Arctic Slope Native Association, had mixed emotions on the firing.

"We're not concerned up here yet," he said, "because we had some idea Wally Hickel would attempt to legislate modification of the land freeze—which we weren't too happy about."

"As Alaskans, we're sorry that this one time we had an Alaskan aware of the problems of Native Alaskans in office, he got fired. Let's hope the new Secretary of the Interior will have more depth of understanding as far as Alaskan Natives are concerned," he said.

The major task of educating the new Secretary of the Interior," said John Borbridge on what the Tlingit-Haida planned to do. "Mr. Morton brings some fine credentials and will serve admirably as Secretary. The first thing we need in Alaska is to educate him on the vital priority issues, so they will continue without major changes in policy. These issues are, of course, land claims, the land freeze, and the turnover of functions to the Alaskan Native organizations."

Eskimo in Malaysia . . .

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the show was over Sept. 13, she decided to see a bit more before going back home.

"After all," she told me, "it was a bit late to start school anyway, and I decided I'd take my time getting back."

Jenny is a senior in elementary education at Alaska Methodist University. She expects to be graduated in May and wants to teach in a village next fall.

During the exposition in Osaka, the guides were kept busy 6 days a week and she saw very little of the country. When it was over, she made up for lost time—seeing everything she could during the next two weeks.

Next Jenny hopped on a ship, the S.S. President Cleveland, and headed to Hong Kong with a day's stopover in Taipei, Taiwan. In Hong Kong she went everywhere she could for two weeks, visiting Macao, Aberdeen, and every place that looked interesting.

By now a confirmed "sailor", she took passage on a Chinese ship to Singapore.

"It must have been a Communist ship," she surmised, "because there was a large picture of Mao on every deck." She didn't have time to worry about that because a typhoon trapped the ship in the harbor for five days and "I was never so seasick in my life."

By the time the ship reached Singapore Jenny was really feeling hungry for fresh fruits and juices and she spent a week there just drinking up the vitamins and shopping.

"There is so much to buy in Singapore and it's so clean that I just couldn't stop." By the time she spent all her money she was ready to take a bus to Kuala Lumpur, capital of Malaysia.

Further on in Penang, she met an Indonesian girl who was going up to Bangkok to look for a job and invited Jenny to come along.

So here we were on the train to Bangkok and Jenny was bubbling over with excitement about her travels.

"Travel has opened up a whole new world," she said, and now I want to travel more. I didn't know what I was missing.

Jenny often stays in youth hostels or student hotels and "this way I meet many people

when I travel," she said.

She was particularly enthusiastic about the Malaysian people who "are very friendly". She said they showed her many things she wouldn't see otherwise.

"Alaska is a magic word," she said. "To many people it is not a real world but rather a world of fantasy. They want to know if it really exists."

And Jenny tells them. "I'm very proud to be an Alaskan because Alaska gives a real good impression to people," she said.

Just as she and Peggy Hiebert (the other Alaskan hostess at Expo 70) "converted the four Japanese hostesses to Alaskans" at the Alaska pavilion in Osaka, everyone she meets in Malaysia wants to come to Alaska.

She has made many friends wherever she has gone and has a large address book full of names to take back with her.

Besides people, she met some animals at the zoo in Kuala Lumpur. It was the first zoo she had ever seen and was very excited about the elephants, giraffes, and monkeys.

She got even more excited about the Asian children. When the train stopped at a station in southern Thailand and she saw some very happy little children, she couldn't help saying, "These kids are so cute, I'd like to take one home with me."

When she started talking about home, Jenny got very enthusiastic. "I've been taking pictures like mad with my Instamatic—and sending postcards to relatives in Savoonga."

While in Japan she telephoned her mother in Nome.

"The call came in so clear it sounded as if it were in the next room," Jenny recalled.

Her mother asked "Where are you?" and Jenny burst out laughing. It was hard to believe she was so far away.

But Jenny will be heading home soon.

After a week in Bangkok she planned to fly to Hong Kong to pick up the rest of her baggage, then spend a week in Japan. She didn't rule out the possibility of a side trip to Indonesia or the Philippines.

"But I'll definitely be home by Thanksgiving," she said—and with good reason. Everyone knows there's no place like Nome for the holidays.