

OCTOBER MEETING POSSIBLE

CINA Sends Out Queries for Meet In Anchorage

A statewide meeting of Alaska Native leaders may be coming soon—to coordinate actions of different Native organizations and to discuss vital issues facing the Alaska Eskimo and Indian today.

Suggestions for date of the conference have been for early October.

In late August the Cook Inlet Native Association sent out queries regarding a possible meet in Anchorage, and offering to host delegates with food and lodging thrown in.

The Anchorage query was followed by an editorial men-

tion in the last issue of the Tundra Times, in that, "There is a great deal of common ground among some of these Native groups. Perhaps a conference of the organizations might be a good idea, say in October."

Emil Notti, president of the Cook Inlet group, said: "I would like to see a meeting of Native association leaders on a statewide basis. We are aware, I am sure, of each other and some of the things that we are separately trying to do in our areas. There are certain things that are of con-

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cern to all of us, regardless of what parts of the state we live in."

"Some of these are land, education and employment. I am sure there are others."

The Anchorage group sent queries to William Hensley in Kotzebue, Harry John in Copper Center, Tony Lewis in Bethel, John Sackett in Huslia, Frank See in Hoonah, Sam Taalak in Barrow, Jerome Trigg in Nome, Amos Wallace in Juneau and Jules Wright in Fairbanks.

Of the meeting itself, Notti suggested October also, and said that if the meeting took place, the Cook Inlet group "could provide food and lodging for those attending."

The conference suggestion is bringing response from associations in the state.

Hugh Nicholls, executive director of the Arctic Slope Native Association, said that his group fully supports the idea of the inter-Association meet and plans to send delegates.

Only two statewide meetings of Native leaders have been held in recent years. A meeting of Eskimo village leaders at Barrow in November, 1961 saw the birth of the

idea of Tundra Times.

In 1964, Eskimo and Indian leaders met in Fairbanks. The meeting saw delegates from Nome, Fort Yukon, Southeastern's Alaska Native Brotherhood, Tanana Chiefs Conference, as well as the Fairbanks Native Association.

Many now feel the time is ripe for a statewide meeting of organized Native groups. Two new, aggressive organizations are on the scene today—the Arctic Slope group and the Northwest Association.

Problems in Native land claims and rural education are coming to a head, also.

Native land claims now cover more than 60% of the total land area of Alaska. Village people are becoming conscious of their land and the use of it.

Education problems are apparent—lack of space in BIA schools had kept village youngsters home and out of school for years. This year the situation is critical. At least 200 youngsters are out of school this year, with a good possibility of many more.