

## ***Other Voices—***

# **Seminole Similarity**

Tucked away inside a Fairbanks paper of 11 June, 1967, was an item of more than passing importance to all Alaskan Natives. The AP story from Washington, D.C. was treated with little interest by the non-native press of Fairbanks because it bears out the point that justice cannot be denied the Native American in the assertion of his native rights and that the present laws of the land uphold him when he declares his land is his and it cannot be taken from him arbitrarily.

The parallel that exists between the Seminole tribe originally inhabiting Florida and the Natives of Alaska is similarly striking. Florida was purchased by treaty of the United States with Spain. The native people inhabiting Florida were not recognized as having any right to the land at the time of the Florida Purchase Treaty.

When the settlers began infringement upon their lands without regard for their inalienable right of occupancy, they took up arms in defense of their homeland. In a bloody war against superior weaponry, they were defeated and forcibly removed from Florida by the Army. That so-called civilized people have acted in such a manner to deprive these people of their land, and such action even having been condoned by the then President Andrew Jackson, does NOT, according to the present Court of Claims ruling, make it necessarily legal under our law.

This brief article should give all Alaska Natives heart to maintain the present stand for their claims because the decision means that **EVEN AFTER HAVING BEEN DEFEATED IN BATTLE, THE SEMINOLE RIGHTS CONTINUED UNIMPAIRED.**

If we continue to stand firm in our purpose and intent, we shall see, in Alaska, compensation for the land already taken, and **FULL TIME** passing to the native people where the land **HAS NOT YET BEEN TAKEN.**

The subtle purpose of the Interior Department bill, the State bill and any similar piece of legislation is to **CONSUMATE THE TAKING OF ALL REMAINING LANDS** presently reserved to the native people and pay a **TOKEN COMPENSATION** for the taking. This bill and any similar legislation should **NOT, BE ALLOWED TO PASS IN CONGRESS** or we will have forever been separated from that which rightfully still remains in our possession.

The present offers of a little land around villages is like the bait in a trap. If we reach out for this seeming innocent offer, we will be losing much more than we gain.

**—HUGH NICHOLLS**

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