

Wright Clarifies . . .

(Continued from page 1)

enacted which affect natives of Alaska. Among them is a responsibility to protect native property rights.

ALASKA LAND FREEZE

1. The "Land Freeze" was instituted by the Secretary of the Interior by virtue of his responsibility to administer the laws enacted by congress, protecting the rights of Alaska's natives. It has the effect of preserving the "Status Quo" until Congress resolves native interest in the land.

2. When Congress granted Statehood to Alaska, it failed to provide in the act language to permit the extinguishment of Indian title, compatible with state land selection provisions, or to provide for a method of compensation for this extinguishment of title.

3. No United States citizen may be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation. (Amendment No. 4 Constitution of the United States.)

4. Alaska natives are United States citizens within the full meaning of the term. They are not wards of the United States Government under the guardianship of the Secretary of the Interior Department. The secretary, however, is legally obligated to protect their property rights, and so he instituted the land freeze to protect this right.

5. (a) The B.I.A. maintains and operates segregated schools.

(b) Natives do not receive fee title to land under the Native Allotment Act.

The Tlingit-Haida Indians were granted permission to sue the United States for just compensation for 18 million acres taken from them in establishing the Tongass National Forest in Southeastern Alaska, by the Act of June 19, 1935.

The Tongass National Forest is estimated to contain 100 billion board feet of commercial timber, valued at 200 million dollars on a stumpage basis and having a productive potential in perpetuity exceeding 20 million dollars annually from forest products alone.

The United States Court of Claims found in favor of the Tlingit-Haida in 1968 and awarded less than 8 million dollars for this land after 34 years of litigation. The estimated true land value of Southeastern Alaska is approximately \$110.00 per acre or \$1,980,000,000.00; yet the court awarded 43¢ per acre or \$7,740,000.00 in this case.

The Secretary of the Interior had no part in determining this value. He came to Alaska, however, in November 1967, and proposed a possible method of compensation which would be more just to Alaska natives for final settlement of all Alaska, and so the "Outer Continental Shelf" concept came to be.

Governor Hickel, Secretary Udall, and 37 native leaders in joint cooperation drafted a compromise bill, S. 2906, based on a land settlement of 40 million acres of land in fee to be retained by native villages and associations, and adequate compensation to be derived from the Outer Continental Shelf for extinguishment of Indian title

to the remaining 320 million acres of land in Alaska in order not to impose a burden on either the Treasury of the State of Alaska or the United States Treasury.

The latest bill introduced in Congress, referred to as the "Administration Bill", reflects the report that the Bureau of the Budget was influenced by the court decision in the Tlingit-Haida case, in which the court awarded the Tlingit-Haidas 43¢ an acre. This award was used as a precedent to determine the value of land in Alaska for purposes of compensation. At present, there are five bills before Congress:

1. S. 1764—introduced June 12, 1967

Gruening by request—Interior Bill

2. S. 2020—introduced June 26, 1967

Gruening by request—AFN Bill

3. S. 2690—introduced November 21, 1967

Bartlett—AFN Bill referred to Interior & Insular Affairs Committee

4. S. 2906—introduced February 1, 1968

Gruening by request—Task Force Bill

5. Bureau of the Budget Bill or the Administration Bill

The natives of Alaska have firmed up their position on a just settlement of the land issue. All things being carefully considered, the Alaska natives will ask Congress to:

1. Recognize each village and community in Alaska and issue fee title to all village sites where land is available; with a provision for in lieu selection if land has been transferred to third parties, with full protection for third party interests. The total amount of land retained by native groups to be 40 million acres.

2. Accept as reasonable compensation approximately \$1.60 per acre for extinguishment of Indian title to all remaining land in Alaska, this amounting to five hundred million dollars.

3. Be permitted to manage this land and money through local native organizations on a (a) Statewide basis—AFN (b) Area-wide basis—Regional Associations, and (c) Village or community basis.

The native people of Alaska request the endorsement of this program from:

- (1) Secretary Udall
- (2) Governor Hickel
- (3) Alaska's Congressional Delegation

And respectfully request hearings to be scheduled in the near future by the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, and the appropriate subcommittees on Indian Affairs.

It is the native's understanding that the latest draft legislation introduced by the administration has cleared the Bureau of the Budget, and the proper procedure at this point is to present our amendments to that document.

We are presently scheduled to meet with Governor Hickel on May 24, 1968, and following that meeting, a meeting of native leaders, Governor Hickel and Secretary Udall prior to presenting our case to the congressional committees in Washington, D. C., hopefully in June or early

Two Girls Named Valedictorian and Salutatorian at Edgecumbe H. S.

Two girls, both 17 years old, have been named Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the Senior class at Mt. Edgecumbe School.

Barbara Jacko, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Jacko, is the Valedictorian. She is from Pedro Bay on Lake Iliamna and is the oldest in a family of nine. Barbara was voted as "always smiling" by the senior class and is known for her willingness to do her share in any project.

Next year Barbara plans to attend Alaska Methodist University but has not yet decided on her major.

She is Vice-President of the Hi-E Honor Society, Editor of the Yearbook, Taheta, on the Channel Light, school paper staff, and is a senior representative on the Student Council.

Barbara visited the State Legislature and was much impressed by the need for more information and education for the native people regarding the law-making process and how native affairs are handled.

She is a member of the Girls' Athletic Association, as sports and outdoor life appeal to her. Last summer she worked for the Canadian archeologist, Dr. Joan Townsend, on some Kenai Peninsula diggings and found the work fascinating.

Ragine Pilot, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Fabian Pilot of Koyukuk, is the Salutatorian of the senior class at Mt. Edgecumbe. Ragine won the "Know Your State" contest, sponsored by the Elks Club, also the Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow award.

She is a member of the Hi-E Honor Society and of Future Teachers.

Koyukuk on the Yukon River (between Nulato and Galena) is Ragine's hometown and where she attended elementary school. She spent her four high school years at Mt. Edgecumbe. In her family there are eight children of which she is the oldest.

Ft. Lewis College is the school Ragine plans to attend. She plans to become a teacher, but does not know yet what field of teaching she will want to enter.

Ragine's hobbies are

July, 1968.

In conclusion, May 1 express deep and sincere appreciation to Secretary Udall, Governor Hickel, our congressional delegation, the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs who held hearings in Anchorage last February and all actively participating citizens for work accomplished to date on this important matter.

The Alaska State Legislature has given the native people full support, and it is necessary that the native people continue to encourage Secretary Udall and Governor Hickel to assist us in convincing the Congress of the United States that Alaska's most important problem is a land claims settlement.

No one, from the beginning of time, has ever had security. When you leave your house you do not know what will happen on the other side of the door. Anything is possible. But we do not stay home on that account.

Eleanor Roosevelt



VALEDICTORIAN—Barbara Jacko of Pedro Bay, Valedictorian at Mt. Edgecumbe High School.

SALUTATORIAN—Ragine Pilot of Koyukuk, Salutatorian at Mt. Edgecumbe High School.

collecting old Indian beads and fossils. Favorite pastimes include reading and listening to the radio; two of her favorite studies are literature and Alaska History. After seeing the State

Legislature in session when she took the trip to Juneau under the "Know Your State" contest, Ragine said, "I feel that I know more about the government after seeing it in action."

Washington Report

Senator ERNEST GRUENING



Senator Bartlett and I have urged the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Public Works to appropriate the full \$8.2 million which the Army Corps of Engineers needs during Fiscal Year 1969 for Alaska flood control, navigation and related projects.

The amount we are asking for is \$2,427,000 above the Administration's budget request. Of course it won't be easy to get this extra money because funds badly needed for all domestic programs are being poured into the quicksand of Vietnam. As a matter of fact, the \$2.4 million in extra funds we are requesting is approximately the amount our country spends each hour on the Vietnam war.

If the Paris peace talks are successful, and I pray they will be, we again will have the resources to build our own economy. In the meantime, I think adequate appropriations for public works projects in Alaska are still justified.

The wealth and strength of our State are in our natural resources, and these must be fully developed. Since we are such a young State, we lag far behind the others in the type of development which public works funds make possible.

Once again this year I will have the pleasure of speaking at a number of high school commencements. This opportunity to meet with the young people of our State has always been a special joy for me.

I congratulate all of the boys and girls who will be graduating this year. There is

nothing I would like more than for all of them to go on to college and then stay in Alaska to help us with the exciting task of building our State.

I enjoyed meeting one of our fine high school seniors in my office recently. She was Patricia Ann Thomas of Juneau, the winner of the Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow contest. Patricia Ann won a \$1500 scholarship and a tour to Washington, D.C. and Williamsburg, Virginia.

The United States Department of Interior seems to be determined to continue its domination of the Alaskan Natives.

That is the only conclusion I can draw from Secretary Udall's high-handed rejection of the bill S. 2906, which would have finally settled the Native land claims problem.

The bill was drafted by a Task Force appointed by Governor Walter J. Hickel, composed of representatives of various Native groups. The sessions of the Task Force were attended by representatives of the Interior Department.

We held complete hearings on this bill in Anchorage, and the Secretary offered no objections at that time. The proposal was based on a suggestion made by the Secretary, and we had counted on him to support it. The Alaska legislature even passed a law to supplement S. 2906. Now, apparently, the Secretary wants us to start all over again. This is bound to mean an unfortunate and needless delay.

Ernest Gruening