

than among Indians anywhere. Increased acculturation, the absence of employment opportunities, and the ever-decreasing availability of subsistence opportunities have contributed to a growing dependence on welfare. Exposure to the white man's way of life has generated in the Native needs he had never known, without adequate means for their satisfaction.

In the valuation process there are a number of variables:

- (1) The extent of the Natives' aboriginal title.
- (2) The date or dates as of which the valuation should be made.
- (3) The actual value of the lands on those dates.

A rough approximation of value can be derived from the Tlingit and Haida award of the Court of Claims. The Court held that the Indians had established aboriginal Indian title to virtually the entire Alaskan archipelago by their exclusive use and occupancy of that area from time immemorial. Based on the standards adopted by the Court of Claims, it is possible that the various Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut groups could establish aboriginal title to practically all of the remaining area of Alaska, roughly 350 million acres. This land would be worth over \$150 million at the Tlingit and Haida valuation which averaged 43 cents an acre.

We believe that in line with the principles outlined by the President that a settlement involving up to 50,000 acres per village that will total some 8 to 10 million acres, plus the payment of \$3,000 per person of \$180 million, whichever is the lesser, is an equitable and just settlement for these claims. In addition, we are aware that the State of Alaska has recently passed legislation providing for payment to the Natives annually of 5 percent of the revenues derived from lands selected by the State under the Alaska Statehood Act, up to a maximum of \$50 million. While we are concerned that this action has been made contingent upon this Department's lifting the "freeze" on the patenting of State selections that conflict with Native claims, we are very pleased that the State has evidenced a desire to join with the Federal Government in contributing to an equitable resolution of this problem. It is our hope that the State will see fit to amend its legislation to provide that a larger portion of its annual contributions be channeled to the Native Economic Improvement Corporation proposed in our bill in order that it may be used for projects that will provide continuing income to Alaska's Natives.

Accordingly, the enclosed proposed bill, we believe, would adequately provide an equitable settlement to the Natives.

Also, enclosed is a brief explanation of its major provisions.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that this legislative proposal is in accord with the President's program.

Sincerely yours,

STEWART L. UDALL,
Secretary of the Interior.

A BILL To provide for the settlement of certain land claims of Alaska Natives, and for other purposes

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1968."

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 2. For the purposes of this Act, the term—

- (a) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior;
- (b) "Native" means an Alaska Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut of at least one-fourth degree Alaska Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut blood, or a combination thereof; and
- (c) "Native group" means any tribe, band, clan, village, community, or association in Alaska composed of twenty-five or more eligible Natives and approved by the Secretary.

DECLARATION OF POLICY

SEC. 3. Congress finds and declares that there is an immediate need for a fair and just settlement of all claims by Natives of Alaska by providing (a) a grant to each Native group of title to their village sites that are now being used by said group and to additional lands in the vicinity of the villages that will be needed for reasonable community expansion to fulfill future economic and social requirements, (b) a reasonable payment to Native groups for the purpose of