

So, although you look to the executive department charged with recommending legislative proposals for your consideration, you cannot help but wonder, as we Alaskans have, and as our lower 48 brethren often have, why it has taken a century for this matter to be brought to a head.

The primrose path of promises and the byways of chicanery and deceit have come up against a stone wall—the irresistible force has finally met the immovable object. Not an immovable force in that we are unwilling or unable to compromise for the good of all concerned. We have waited patiently and we have learned. Now after 100 years of frustration, and waiting with great patience, which is, as most of you with Indian constituents know, a fine art practiced by our people, we are ready. We are ready, to sit down with our nonnative neighbors, as we did for more than 6 months in preparing S. 2906, as we did in bringing together the many divergent and diverse groups of native people in Alaska for a common purpose and goal.

We are pleased to note the Congress, in both Houses and on both sides of the political aisle, has not taken any firm position with respect to a final solution of the just claims of Alaska's native people. We note that Congress has on more than one occasion directed the executive department to leave the solution to the Congress. And here it rests today, gentlemen. Here it is. As one of your former colleagues who later became a great President used to say: "The buck stops here." Your Senate colleagues came to Alaska and held hearings on those proposals that were before that body in February 1968. Those same Senate proposals have their House counterparts. They are: H.R. 17129, H.R. 15049, H.R. 11213, and H.R. 11164.

So we now have plenty of proposals.

At the Anchorage, Alaska, hearings conducted by Senator Jackson, we were able to present the testimony of many native leaders. It was significant testimony. We must apologize that, due to the costs involved and the fact that subsistence fishing is now in progress at home, we were unable to repeat that testimony for this committee. However, we respectfully urge you and your committee staff to read the printed record. It is contained in the document entitled "Alaska Native Land Claims"—hearings before the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs on S. 2906 and S. 1964, S. 2690, and S. 2020, related bills. The hearings were held on February 8, 9, and 10, 1968, at Anchorage.

You might well ask: What objections do Alaska's native people have to the administration proposals at this time? First of all let me say that basically we are of the position that (1) 40 million acres of land is not unreasonable nor is it unjustifiable and (2) \$500 million as compensation is not excessive for reasons that I will now point out. As you will see from Mr. Wright's presentation, this acreage is spread out over an area comparable to 19 of our eastern seaboard States and nearly five of our Middle Western States.

Our population, native population that is, is estimated at some 53,000 by the Interior Department. We believe, based on the results of the present roll-taking for the Tlingit-Haidas, that the actual native population of Alaska, both resident within and without the State—and remember all Alaskan natives will be eligible for sharing in any settlement—is closer to 65,000. On a per capita basis that breaks down to