

about 600 acres per man, woman, and child, and remember where the vast majority of that acreage is located.

Deducting the Federal reserves of all kinds, the lands already selected by the State and the land occupied by existing cities, towns, and villages, the Alaska native land interest is concentrated in a highly restricted area. And it isn't prime land at that. Couple this with the fact that in effect we are asking a blanket settlement, to coin a phrase, to end protests and litigation, we feel that is a reasonable amount of land on which to continue our already meager existence.

However, we must have funds for economic reasons that are all too apparent. They need not be discussed in detail in my presentation. This aspect will be covered in later testimony.

With respect to payment for lands I wish to make the following points.

The recent Court of Claims decision established the value of lands taken in southeastern Alaska at somewhere in the vicinity of 43 cents per acre. That land was taken considerably after the Treaty of Cession with Russia which the administration desires to use. We do not see the justice of this decision, nor the reasoning that went into it. However, be that as it may, the least that can be said is that would be the rock-bottom price for Alaska's remaining lands.

Some time ago, following Mr. Udall's latest proposal for settlement, the natives of Alaska offered to purchase the remaining lands at the price so established. We were not being facetious in our offer; we were deadly serious.

But we realize that a realistic value must be placed on the lands. The wealth underneath those lands is not known and it may not be known for many years to come. There have been some indications from recent explorations and discoveries of what some of those lands may yield with proper development, but the actual wealth can only be estimated. Perhaps we are, as some of our own critics have said, selling short, but we also realize that others have the knowledge and equipment with which to develop these lands more adequately than we can. That is not to say that we can't or couldn't do what others do—hire the expertise—but the fact remains that we are not now in a position to pursue this avenue. We are, however, in a position to protect our future generations by acquiring a reasonable share of our lands through this settlement. And we believe that a more liberal land value can be established. For example, it has been suggested that since the Department of the Interior is apparently immovable on the date of taking as 1867 we might possibly agree to that date. And we would be making a tremendous concession. If we move to that position, then it is reasonable to expect that Interior and the administration could agree that the open and unclaimed lands of the United States in 1867 were being sold every day for between \$1 and \$1.25 per acre. In fact they were.

It is not difficult to multiply the higher figure and see that the 365 million acres we are talking about come to a valuation of some \$456,250,000. Not very far from our \$500 million figure. The difference is interest over the past 100 years. This, we believe, is another negotiable matter.

You will note that there are only 175 native communities in the State of Alaska. Those are communities wherein more than 25 people are permanent residents and more than half of those are native people.