

led to believe that agreement between the native people and the State was essential before any proceedings could move ahead and that this agreement between the native people and the State would ease the matter of obtaining appropriate legislation during the present session of Congress. Wouldn't you have believed the same thing and acted under the same circumstances? That's exactly what we did do and the results were incorporated in S. 2906.

The Senate committee hearings followed. You have the record of those proceedings before you. You gentlemen are also conducting your own inquiry into the matter. We do not object to the procedural matters. We understand the necessity. We appreciate your efforts on our behalf. What we are unable to comprehend—and the State of Alaska does not comprehend, nor does its legislature, or the rest of its citizens—is that we have now come full cycle once again and are, as the land surveyors say, back to the point of beginning.

Alaska's native people do not ask for the moon. We have taken a reasonable and completely justifiable position. Our native people ask only that you gentlemen of the Congress now take up our struggle and reach, in your judgment, the most reasonable, equitable, and just settlement you find possible under the circumstances.

We do not look with any favor on long litigation through the courts. But we are prepared to take that step if it is necessary.

We, as do your many thousands of constituents, believe that you have the wisdom and belief in justice that can erase this problem once and for all. That is all that we ask.

Now, for the benefit of the committee I would like to introduce our other witnesses. Each has prepared testimony covering certain phases of our presentation. We shall be as brief as possible and, of course, will be available for questions as the committee desires.

Our attorneys, Mr. Clifford Groh and Mr. Barry Jackson, will present the legal background arguments.

Mr. Donald Wright, president of the Cook Inlet Native Association, has a presentation that will bring into perspective the land comparisons which you will find interesting. You know, in Alaska, when we talk about 40 million acres, and then you gentlemen relate that to the same amount of land in your home State, it seems like a lot to give up. But when you see it laid out on a comparative map, then the reasonableness and soundness of 40 million acres becomes plain.

Mr. John Borbridge, Jr., president of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska, will present testimony concerning the foundation of native land rights.

Mr. Flore Lekanof will cover the field of education. We know this cannot be done in the brief span of time of these hearings. But he will bring out some new points that we who are products of the present educational system have experienced.

Mr. Willie Hensley is a member of the State legislature and a recognized Eskimo leader. He will present the rural Alaska picture to the committee. For your information also, Mr. Hensley is president of the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, which is bringing light to some 67 native villages in Alaska.

Again, let me say on behalf of Alaska's native people that we sincerely appreciate the opportunity to present our case to the committee. Thank you.

I think our next witness would be Mr. Donald Wright.