

boom from development on land that is still in Indian title and no benefits accrue to the native groups.

Thus, we feel that Congress has a perfect opportunity to grant to the Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts of Alaska sufficient land for development and use, and compensation for the lands not retained. This will afford us an opportunity to lift ourselves from a century of neglect by the Federal Government, which prides itself on its record of aboriginal protection.

I, personally, feel that there are several interrelated goals you must keep in mind in the consideration of the Alaska land bills before you:

1. The dissolution of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska over a period of time, and the assumption of these responsibilities by the native groups—this is contingent on a generous settlement.
2. The maximizing of native control over their finances and resources and diminution of the Secretary of Interior's power over natives.
3. The creation of a program of native leadership development in education, business, and politics.

This subcommittee should know that this land issue has been kept under the rug since Alaska's purchase from Russia in 1867. By a supreme effort of organization, the Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts of Alaska brought the issue to the forefront, and we now lay it before you for consideration and action next session.

The task force which I chaired recognizes certain basic objectives in a land settlement:

1. We feel that lengthy litigation should be prevented in the courts. The entire State will suffer if compensation for land takings is not soon paid to the native groups.

2. The task force desires a simplification of the administrative process. The powers of the Secretary of the Interior should be limited and controls over land, if necessary, be located in Alaska with native representation.

3. We feel that the benefits of the land settlement should be spread broadly among the natives, but the concept of private property be preserved.

4. Surface use of land must be assured, as we will not revert to a cash economy overnight.

In closing, I make a final plea—I want this subcommittee to aid the Alaska Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts, to help us to build our own future. We want eventually to become free citizens without a Bureau to protect us. At this stage, we feel the freeze established by the Secretary of Interior is necessary, though it is to a degree a belated effort to aid us. In itself, it is not enough, but it is presently protecting our use and occupancy until Congress acts. We feel that our demands are reasonable and we are now taking the established route of seeking a solution to Alaska's biggest problem. Most Alaskans generally recognize our present Indian title to most of Alaska, and we call on you to translate this impasse into legislation which will allow us to build a State free from vast gaps in economic conditions between native and white. The future of Alaska will be indeed dark if the situation is allowed to persist.

(The attachment follows:)