

88-49-36

Senator Ted Stevens, Gordon Jackson talks about implementing recommendations from the Bush Conference

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

Series: Potlatch series

1975?

Song by Chet Atkins

Unidentified person talked about plans by Senator Ted Stevens to combine the many bills pertaining to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act into one omnibus clarification bill. He asked Senator Stevens to summarize which measures the bill will comprise. Senator Stevens said the Senate decided there should be an omnibus bill to settle the remaining issues of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act including a clarification of the intent of Congress to prevent any further litigation based upon the concept of aboriginal title. In the bill he introduced is a provision to extend the enrollment deadline to allow all eligible Natives to enroll for benefits under the Act. Secondly it directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish an escrow fund for revenues received by the Department of the Interior for activities on federal lands already selected by the Natives. This would give the revenues to the Native people once the title is finally delivered to them. A third provision would require the federal government pay interest on these monies while they are held in the fund awaiting the transfer title. They also have a provision to extend the federal state land use planning commission until June 30, 1979. Another provision would allow village corporations within the same region to merge with their regional corporation or with each other to bring about more operational efficiency. Another provision states the issuance of stock in any merger consolidation would be exempt from the registration requirements of the SEC Act of 1933 until 1991 which is a time when the stock would be transferable. They are seeking authorization for 205,000 dollars in grants for Juneau, Kodiak and Sitka to help those areas with land selection under the ANCSA. He said Sealaska in SE Alaska should be permitted to acquire 200,000 acres within Tongass National Forest which is adjacent to lands they are entitled to under the Act. This is necessary for them for full entitlement. The bill will reaffirm Congressional intent to terminate all litigation concerning the aboriginal claims in Alaska and permit everyone to start with clear title under the Alaska Statehood Act and under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Song by Joan Baez

Gordon Jackson, Alaska Federation of Natives Executive Director for Human Resources, talked about himself, his job and three new positions for administering Bush justice. Gordon Jackson said he was from Kake. He attended school at Sheldon Jackson School and attended junior college and one year of college in Spokane, Washington. He graduated from the University of Alaska in 1970. Two years ago he applied for a Johnson O'Malley program director position. Previously the program was contracted to the state. The state decided to provide more Native input into the development of the program. They created a

review committee. The committee established a director to administer. He was hired in 1973. As executive vice president he is directly responsive to a human resource committee composed of representatives of each nonprofit regional corporation in the state of Alaska. They develop policies for him to carry out. They are charged with the responsibility of seeking solutions to Alaska Native problems in the areas of education, health, social services, manpower, and justice. In addition he also is the supervisor for most of the programs within AFN such as Johnson O'Malley, Alaska Student Higher Education Program, manpower, health affairs and soon justice. About a year ago a second Bush justice conference was held in Minto. It was realized during the conference that there was no follow up after the first Bush justice conference was held. They created a Bush justice implementation committee. They were charged with the responsibility of follow up. The committee operated under Alaska Legal Services initially, but decided it should be under the AFN Human Resources Committee. They began to seek funding for a follow-up staff which was composed of a director, field worker and administrative assistant. They applied to the Law Enforcement Assistance Agency for funding and received approval. For several months they worked on modifying the program. The Law Enforcement Assistance Agency just recently announced a grant of 60,000 dollars to fund the staff. There are many recommendations for the staff to follow up on. He talked about the almost nonexistence of justice in the Bush. The staff will seek a system where justice in the Bush will be a reality. Jackson explains why the AFN has involved itself seeking justice in the Bush. Jackson said it is a priority established by the AFN Human Resources committee to follow up on the recommendations. Jeff Kennedy said isn't Bush justice a responsibility of the state. Jackson said it is a responsibility of the state but they aren't doing an adequate job. The first and second Bush justice conference came out with recommendations. Because it isn't happening they needed a staff with a plan of action and activities to implement recommendations such as the expansion of the traditional districts and legal assistance for rural communities. There is now a bill to be signed by the governor for rural legal assistance. A lot of communities don't have the money to hire an attorney. Justice is a statewide issue. Jackson talked about funding for the staff positions. He commented on the achievements of the Bush justice conferences. The first conference was held at Alyeska. Alaska Legal Services did not record many accomplishments. At the second Bush conference held in Minto it was decided that there was not adequate follow up. He talked about his committee's recommendations which were translated into legislation. Jackson said there should be another Bush conference. He said they need to assess what kinds of accomplishments were made and to point out more weaknesses and needs. It is a good idea to evaluate needs annually. He said not all of the activities are in the area of justice. They are involved with education in unorganized boroughs. They held a conference in Fairbanks to assess the delivery systems of education. He talked about bills which would dissolve state operated schools and move into regional education attendance areas. They would like the school boards to be elected and not appointed as in the state operated school systems. The regional education attendance areas would have the same powers to hire and fire, determining curriculum and the power to budget as any of the municipal school districts has.

This past year the committee has taken needs and translated them into state legislation. They have been successful. They have submitted legislation for education and justice.

Jeff Kennedy plays a recording from Cody Bear Paw.

An announcement about the Institute of American Indian Arts and their program.