

Young seeks money for lost Aleut church properties

Congressman Don Young has introduced legislation to compensate the Aleut people of Alaska for church property which was lost, damaged or destroyed during interments during World War II.

"Many Americans are aware of the sad chapter in U.S. history during World War II when Japanese-American were stripped of their property and interned for the duration of the war," Young said. "Few Americans, however, are aware that the Aleut people of the Aleutian chain in Alaska were similarly treated.

"Upon their return home, the survivors found their homes and buildings destroyed, and their

Russian Orthodox churches burned to the ground. Their sacred icons had been destroyed, lost or stolen."

Young said Congress approved legislation in 1988 to partially compensate Japanese-Americans and Aleuts for damages caused by the interment. The Secretary of Interior subsequently conducted a report which determined the cost of replacing lost or destroyed church property to be \$4.7 million.

"Although Congress authorized \$1.4 million in the 1988 Act, the study indicates the actual losses to be significantly more and this legislation represents the new figure," said Young.