

# Belli Sues Oil Men \$1 Billion on Behalf of Nondalton Indians

San Francisco lawyer Melvin Belli last weekend filed a \$1 billion law suit in the U.S. District Court in San Francisco against eight oil companies on behalf of Nondalton-Lime Hills Indians.

The action was jointly filed by Belli and James Tallman of Anchorage, Alaska.

Apparently anticipating that there will be about \$1 billion worth of oil production in the Cook Inlet area, the two lawyers are essentially charging trespass by the oil companies and seek

compensation for damages resulting from the oil production.

The suit is against the following companies: Standard Oil Co. of California, Shell Oil Co., Union Oil Co. of California, Texaco Inc., Atlantic Richfield Co., Mobil Oil Corp., Marathon Oil Co., and Pan American Petroleum Corp.

Tallman told the press in San Francisco that the suit was based on the fact that he filed a native protest claim to the 20 million acres of land with the Bureau of

Land Management in January of 1967.

He said the claim is roughly bounded by the mid-Inlet line on the east, a line that passes just north of Augustine Island on the south and west to the mouth of Susitna River.

Tallman said the claim area has 1,500 to 2,500 natives. Although the suit is on behalf of Athabascan Indians, the suit covers the Eskimos, Aleuts and Indians.