

# Dingell Bill Ires AFN Officials--

## Fish and Wildlife Subcommittee Measure Disturbing

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Legislation to withdraw 67 million acres of Alaskan land for wildlife refuges was introduced in Congress this week by Rep. John Dingell chairman of the Fish and Wildlife Subcommittee of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, and nine other representatives.

The bill, HR 13416, is in great conflict with selections intended by Alaskan Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts under the recent land claims settlement according to Don Wright, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

"We settled on 40 million acres less than three months ago. If HR 13416 is passed, many of our villages will be limited to single township selections. Our settlement would be substantially diminished," Wright said in a statement issued by AFN today.

"The Alaska Natives took a massive loss of historically occupied lands in December. Now the congressman from Michigan would like the rest of our land.

"Congressmen Dingell (Mich), Forsythe (N.J.), Downing (Va.), Stubblefield (Calif.), Jones (N.C.), Biagge (N.Y.), Griffin

(Miss), Anderson (Calif.), Tierman (R.I.), and Conte (Mass.) want to make sixty-seven million acres of Eskimo and Indian and Aleut land into national wildlife refuges.

"What refuges will Mr. Dingell create for Alaska Natives after he has stolen our land, we ask the

Congressman? Can the Congressman seriously suggest that Alaska Natives huddle in high rise apartments in one small township, going for Sunday strolls through the surrounding zoo. If he were not such a distinguished lawmaker, the Federation might be

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tempted to call Mr. Dingell a patronizing S.O.B.

"Mr. Dingell and the others, spurred on by conservationists, act out of ignorance. They want to "do it right the first time" in Alaska. Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts did things right the first time several thousand years ago. Our land has remained intact all these ages, except where it has been touched by representatives of Mr. Dingell's culture.

"It is an outrage, a terrifying prospect, that the Congressman should suggest that our land be taken away from us and placed under his "protection". Our title has been solidly established and Alaska Natives have seen what effective protection has been provided by such congressmen for most of this country.

"What has happened to the age of enlightenment of this country's dealings with American Natives? If we allow this HR 13416 to destroy our people, which we certainly will not do, there will be no room for the words "justice" and "honor" in our description of this country's history of Indian affairs.

"No words can convey the outrage which we feel. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement has been described as the most successfully lobbied piece of legislation in the history of Indian affairs. That was no accident."

Alaska Natives followed all the rules for prompting the Congress to act. AFN obtained the services of highly competent lawyers and lobbyists. It won support from many national organizations and from the American Indian people.

"Take our land. Take our life," Alaska Natives said to the Congress last year. That is not a Madison Avenue slogan or a gimmick phrase that movement fadists create" the AFN spokesman observed.

"Alaska Natives are not so passive and ever-smiling as the postcards show. We shall not quietly observe that act of stealth, HR 13416.

"Mr. Dingell and the conser-

vationists have not consulted with the Department of the Interior. They have not consulted with the Alaska delegation to Congress. What is most outrageous is that they have not consulted with the Native people of Alaska.

"HR 13416 demonstrated no forethought. Mr. Dingell is not perserving wildlife for generations of Americans; he is putting an end to life for generations of Alaska Natives.

"We demand the right to exercise dominion over what little land we retain. Alaska Native people are hospitable. We invite Mr. Dingell and his distinguished

colleagues to come to our land as honored guests. We invite the Congressman to observe the dignity of our way of life. This same dignity makes us the best ally of the animals of our land. It is a harmonious relationship.

If the Congressman is still intent on creating his reserves, then we make war. We believe, though, that firsthand observation can persuade him of the competent manner in which Alaska Natives exercise land management.

"When Alaskan Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts are handed eviction notices that is where we draw the line."