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THE LAND IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO THE ALASKA INDIANS, ESKIMOS, & ALEUTS. THUS,

"THE ALASKA NATIVES ARE REQUESTING THAT THEY BE PERMITTED TO RETAIN 40 MILLION ACRES FOR BOTH SUBSISTENCE AND INVESTMENT PURPOSES.

MANY NATIVES WISH TO CONTINUE A RURAL WAY OF LIFE. IN A NATION WHERE INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND SELF-RELIANCE ARE HIGHLY VALUED, THIS PREFERENCE SHOULD BE GIVEN GREAT WEIGHT IN DETERMINING THE AMOUNT OF ACREAGE TO BE RETAINED.

MOREOVER, NO MATTER WHAT WEIGHT MAY BE GIVEN TO THIS PREFERENCE OR WHAT THE ULTIMATE SETTLEMENT MAY BE, THE FACT IS THAT THE MAJORITY OF NATIVES WILL BE IN THE VILLAGES FOR VERY MANY YEARS. MANY NATIVES - PARTICULARLY THE ELDERLY AND THOSE WITH VERY LITTLE EDUCATION - WOULD BE DESTITUTE AND MISERABLE IF, BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT LAND, THEY WERE FORCED TO MOVE FROM THEIR HOMES.

THUS, THE ALTERNATIVES TO ADEQUATE LANDS FOR SUBSISTENCE ARE (A) ENDANGERING THE FOOD SUPPLY AND AGGRAVATING THE POVERTY OF NATIVES WHO REMAIN IN THE VILLAGES, AND (B) FORCING MANY NATIVES INTO GHETTOS (EITHER IN CITIES OR ON RESERVATIONS).

ON THE OTHER HAND, IF ADEQUATE LANDS ARE RETAINED, THE NATIVES WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A MEANINGFUL CHOICE BETWEEN VILLAGE LIFE AND URBAN LIFE. THOSE WHO VOLUNTARILY CHOOSE URBAN LIFE (PRIMARILY THE YOUNG AND MORE EDUCATED) WILL DO SO WITHOUT BITTERNESS OR DESPERATION, AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE A SATISFACTORY TRANSITION. THEY WILL VIEW THEIR MOVE AS A POSITIVE CHOICE, AND NOT AS AN EXPULSION FROM THEIR LAND BY THE WHITE MEN.