

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Miller moved and asked unanimous consent that the House adjourn until 10:00 a.m., January 10, 1977. There being no objection, the House adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Irene Cashen
Chief Clerk

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SPEECH BY CONGRESSMAN DON YOUNG TO JOINT SESSION
OF ALASKA LEGISLATURE
January 9, 1978

President Rader, Speaker Malone, good friends, thank you for inviting me to speak today. Having been a member of the Alaska Legislature, it is always a pleasure to walk these halls once again and to talk to old friends.

This is not an ordinary state legislature. The actions you take here have an effect all the way from Nome to Wall Street. This is due to the fact that Alaska's vast resources have once again become the object of much attention by the nation and the world. Not only are people interested in our oil and gas, minerals, fish and timber, but they are also very much interested in our scenic resources. Our duty, as representatives of the people, is to resolve the differences between these interests.

Many of you have heard me talk, and yes, preach on the D-2 issue for a long time now. Four years ago, I had the feeling that section 17 (D-2) of the Settlement Act might cause us problems with our landlord in far off Washington, D.C. Now we all know what it is like dealing with an overbearing, cumbersome government. We are not alone in this - the people of the Lower 48 are feeling the pains of over-regulation as well.

It is like the Alaskan who visited Washington, D.C. and asked the cab driver to take him on a tour of the town. As they passed the National Archives, the visitor noticed an inscription on the building which says: "What is past, is prologue." He looked a little puzzled, so the cabbie explained: "That is bureaucrat talk for --you ain't seen nothin' yet!"

What is past is prologue, but I would like to briefly cover the progress we have made on D-2. On January 4, 1977, the first day of the 95th Congress, Congressman Udall introduced HR 39, which put 147 million acres of Alaska into instant wilderness classification. That told us what priority the Chairman of the Interior Committee gave the D-2 land issue.

For awhile, he began to pick up co-sponsors for his bill, and got 75 --- until we spread the word on the possible consequences of such an extreme measure.

Next, rather than referring HR 39 to the Public Lands Subcommittee, where it would have been voted down, Udall decided to create a new subcommittee to handle Alaska lands.

From a legislative standpoint then, we almost started at ground zero because of Udall's maneuvering. John Seiberling of course is the Subcommittee Chairman and I am the Ranking Minority Member. Being Ranking Minority Member has its rights, which I have used and will continue to use. I can assure you that for the past year at least, the D-2 issue has occupied nearly all my waking hours. Let me change that; my wife says I even talk about it in my sleep.

Hearings were first held in Washington, D.C. and then across the nation in Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Seattle, and finally, Alaska.

Hearings in the Lower 48 (with the exception of Seattle) were pro-HR 39. This was simply because this legislation is the dream of organized preservationists. They turned out many witnesses to testify in favor of making enormous areas in Alaska into parks. Ninety percent of them had never been to Alaska. As we began to hear from people who knew more about Alaska, we began to get more balance to the testimony.

The hearings were a good educational process for the members of the Subcommittee. You could see their attitudes change as the hearings progressed. The best educational experience for the Members was the four weeks we spent in Alaska. Not only was the testimony good, because they heard from people who lived on the land and know it well, but just as important, the Congressmen had the opportunity to see first hand, the land encompassed in HR 39.

Udall and Seiberling, subsequent to the hearings, began talking about a special definition of wilderness for Alaska, access across Federal lands, subsistence hunting, and other changes most Alaskans want. Some, but by no means all, of these changes have been included in the Subcommittee Print of the bill.

We have, with the help of all Alaskans, made significant progress in bringing some balance to the extreme position HR 39 represents. We have come a long way since January, when Mr. Udall thought a bill would pass the House by June. Regarding the timetable for D-2, I would like to make a point:

It is only to the advantage of the extreme preservationists to quickly push a bill through the House and Senate. If that were to happen, which it will not, they would be guaranteed instant wilderness by legislation. Even the December 1978 date is not sacro-sanct. If we do not meet that deadline, the only thing that will happen is that the D-2 lands will revert to D-1 lands and come under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. Under certain conditions, that would not be bad at all.

Another point of importance -- I hope that no one buys the line that we could make one-third of Alaska into a park and then change the land status if a particular need arises. Once that land is classified, it would take a national disaster to gain access to park lands. I say that we should plan for multiple use now, and not wait until it is too late.

I cannot tell you how critical this issue is to the future growth of Alaska. Seiberling and the pro-39ers say the State will have 103 million acres and the Natives will have 44 million acres to do with as they wish. But what good is that land if we cannot use it?

We cannot ship our oil, minerals, and agricultural products if we are not allowed to build roads or pipelines across Federal lands. Fisheries enhancement will not take place if we are not allowed to construct hatcheries and spawning channels. We must remember that 129 million acres, one-third of our state, will be in Wilderness or Wilderness-study classification. This means no roads, no pipelines, no buildings, no Alaskan way of life. Our Permanent Fund, which depends on continued development of our oil reserves, will not be replenished. How can we develop our renewable resource industry if we do not have the money to do so?

Even more important is the denial of Alaska's right to manage its own resources. Under HR 39, our land, our fish and our wildlife will be managed by a bureaucracy located 5000 miles away in Washington. We are still suffering from this sort of non-management that occurred when Alaska was a Territory -- do we honestly want to return to Territorial status and shrug off that long, hard fight for Statehood?

The latest issue of Reader's Digest Magazine asked the question: whose interests should come first, 400,000 Alaskans or 216 million other Americans? The answer supplied was that it is now time to think in terms of the national interest. But is it in the national interest to deny the American people the vast wealth of Alaska's natural resources? By setting aside the most scenic areas, the best wildlife areas, and allowing for multiple use of the remaining areas, we can fully meet the needs of all Americans. And let me remind our friends in the Lower 48 that Alaska is a vital part of the United States.

Some of our Native leaders in Alaska have endorsed HR 39 because they feel that they will be treated more fairly by Federal Management than they have been by the State. I would like to remind them of the recent federal actions in regard to the ban on subsistence whaling. This is only a small sample of how federal management works. A bureaucrat sitting in a warm office in Washington cannot understand the needs of a whaler in Point Hope, a fisherman along the Yukon, or a caribou hunter in Anaktuvak. In most cases, he won't even try to understand, but will happily strangle the subsistence hunter in regulations and red tape. This, too, must be made clear.

The D-2 lands issue is bigger than all of us and this means it goes beyond the political differences we may have. I do not believe the people of Alaska will stand for anyone using this issue as a political football.

What should the role of the Alaska State Legislature be in the D-2 issue? First and foremost is support for the Alaska delegation in Washington. I do not mean total support, because there will always be differences of opinion. But let's resolve those among ourselves before a presentation

is made to Congress. We may be outnumbered population-wise, but if we stick together, I have found that Congress to a great degree, will honor the wishes of the individuals most affected by legislative action. However, as the famous quote goes -- if we do not hang together, we will hang separately.

Next, we must make the 216 million other Americans aware of what is at stake here. Some start has been made in this regard by the D-2 Steering Council. They are now working on a film strip which can be shown to interested organizations. This is not enough.

As an Alaskan taxpayer, I have no objection to the expenditure of 5 million dollars -- or even 10 million, if necessary -- to keep Alaska out of the hands of the Federal Government. This may sound like a lot, but consider the alternative: enactment of HR 39 and the loss of 12 billion dollars worth of minerals, billions of barrels of oil, and untold amounts of agriculture and fisheries products. More important, we will lose forever the Alaskan way of life that we all cherish. I am one of the leading advocates in Congress of reduced spending -- but now is not the time to be penny wise and not have any sense.

I ask that these dollars be appropriated by the legislature as the first order of business in this session and that it immediately be signed into law by the governor. I ask that the money be spent in the following manner:

1. Institute a nation-wide mass media public education campaign conducted on a grass-roots level. This must be used to bring the facts surrounding the D-2 issue to the rest of America.
2. Organize an Alaskan speakers group who can speak across the nation to people of all walks of life. This should be composed of trappers, fishermen, miners, bankers, conservationists, and any others who live in, and have first-hand knowledge of, the State of Alaska.
3. Extend an official invitation from the Alaska Legislature to all 100 members of the U.S. Senate and their wives to visit the State at our expense. We have already seen the benefits of having the members of the Subcommittee on Alaska Lands come to our state; it is now time for the Senate to learn what D-2 is all about.
4. Extend that same invitation to those members of the House of Representatives who have not yet visited Alaska, so we can keep all parties informed.
5. Do not spend these funds on junkets or activities what will cause additional in-house expenses. We must show our commitment to achieving a solution to the D-2 problem, and not just show our ability to spend money.

I am doing everything in my power to produce a reasonable D-2 bill. It is up to you as State Legislators to do the same.

This is my assessment of the present situation. You may or may not follow my recommendations. But the worst that could happen, would be to do nothing. If that should happen and the people do not like the results of the D-2 legislation.....I hope everyone can say they did their best.

Above all, we must look to the future. Regardless of the outcome of the D-2 battle, plans must be made to keep Alaska alive. There will come a time when the oil and gas will run out, or when future development may cause excessive environmental damage. I have been accused by some of being the champion of the developers, of being a rapist who seeks to deflower this virgin land with bulldozers and oil wells. My contention is now, and always has been, that properly managed development can take place without destroying Alaska. The first Chief Forester of the U.S., once said that "conservation is development." I say we should engage in conservation, not preservation.

In the past few years, we have seen the pendulum swing from a development-oriented attitude to a preservation-oriented attitude. Big business has learned that it must toe the line and begin to be aware of the environmental consequences of its actions. It is time for the preservationists to be aware of the social and economic consequences of their actions. Pendulum politics must stop. Otherwise, we will swing back and forth forever and never go anywhere. We must learn to meet in the middle and work together for wisely managed growth, with proper recognition of both usable resources and scenic resources. Some Alaskan environmental groups have realized this and, while we do not always agree, I must commend them for having the courage to take a closer look at what they are advocating.

It is time to make our decisions on knowledge, not on emotions. I hope that you will join with me in providing that knowledge.

Thank you.