

'LAND USES SHALL NOT BE DISTURBED'

"You indicate a belief that this Department should proceed with the disposition of public lands, notwithstanding native claims and protests, without waiting for Congress to consider the pending legislation."

Reliable sources in Washington, D. C. said that the foregoing quote came from Secretary of the Interior

Stewart L. Udall's letter to Governor Walter J. Hickel of Alaska in answer to the Governor's letter (to Udall) on June 22.

"In the face of the federal guarantee that the Alaska natives shall not be disturbed in their use and occupation of lands, I could not, in good conscience, allow title to pass into other's

hands except in clearly meritorious cases as explained below," Udall reportedly said further.

The Secretary mentioned land bills now pending in Congress and hopes that their enactment will immediately provide the Interior Department with authorizations and directions.

"During the interim period,

however, there will be some situations in which it will be possible to proceed, and we will do so wherever we can," Udall continued.

He said that when there is specific showing that construction of a road, school, airport, or other public facilities being held up, "we will make every effort

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UDALL . . .

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to give an ad hoc consideration."

Regarding mining locations, homestead locations filed and where a claimant has done everything necessary to comply with the law, but hasn't received patent because of the slowness of Bureau of Land Management surveys, these cases will be given favorable consideration.

Udall said this won't be true where "intensive native use" as defined in the Interior Department's Regulation 43 CFR—"or in a case where protest received against the proposal of issuing a particular patent."