

*In Washington, D.C.—*

# Jim Thomas Opens PR Office

James W. Thomas, a Tlingit Indian, formerly of Yakutat, Alaska, has opened a public relations firm, Jim Thomas Associates, located in the National Press Building, Washington, D.C.

The enterprise was inaugurated by a well-attended reception held in the East Lounge of the National Press Club, of which he is a member.

Thomas stated, "It's a long overdue office in Washington."

The head of the new firm confessed, "It took a bit of daring to strike out on my own. The haven of a secure position is so much more comfortable, but the challenge of really accomplishing something for my people, the American Indians, is much more satisfying and relevant for me."

In two respects the firm is quite unique, according to Thomas. Unlike most consulting firms, Jim Thomas Associates will deal directly with the Indian, soliciting business from the tribes rather than emphasizing federal agencies and other con-

tracts.

Thomas asserted, "The client I want is the Indian tribe that really needs our services."

Secondly, this firm will operate on a strictly business basis whose goals are two-fold, "because, as long as we perform our duties well, we will continue to be retained. On the other hand, if we goof off on the job—our clients will disappear.

"There is simply no profit in goofing off and there are rewards in hard work, both for the tribe and the firm."

Guests of honor at the reception were members of the Yakima Tribal Council of Washington State, for whom Thomas has worked.

Among other guests were tribal chairmen and delegates from several U.S. tribes; Jack Anderson, noted "Washington 'Merry-Go-Round'" columnist, president of the National Press Club, Ver-

non Louviere; representatives of Senatorial and Congressional offices, as well as heads of various federal agencies who deal with Indian affairs and directors and staff of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and National Council on Indian Opportunity.

Thomas' background is rooted in public relations. Originally a radio station manager, Thomas was selected public relations director for the Alaska Federation of Natives.

He traveled extensively in their behalf; bringing public attention to the problem of unjust land and cash settlements, proposed by Congress for Alaska.

Later he was appointed director of public relations for the National Congress of American Indians in Washington and most recently, served as a consultant to the National Council on Indian Opportunity in the office of the Vice-President.