

# UDALL ANSWERS FOR LBJ

## Answers Pinkerton's Query to President On Native Land Problems

*(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the answer to a telegram sent by James G. Pinkerton, candidate for Secretary of State, to President Lyndon Johnson several weeks ago. Pinkerton who is seeking the Democratic nomination for Secretary of State, at that time urged action on native land claims and the creation of a native claims commission. The telegram is answered on behalf of the President by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall.)*

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Major James G. Pinkerton of Ketchikan, candidate for Secretary of State, today released the following letter addressed to him from Stewart L. Udall, Secretary of the Interior:

"Dear Mayor Pinkerton:  
The President has asked me  
to reply to your telegram of  
June 11 urging the appoint-

ment of an Alaska Native  
claims commission to adjudicate the land claims of the Alaska Natives.

"I have been personally concerned, as have the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Land Management, with the need for early and definitive action to set Alaska Native land claims at rest.

"All of us recognize the urgency of the problem and agree that the interests of the State of Alaska and of all of its citizens can only be adversely effected by delay.

"This is a matter in which Congress has reserved to itself the right to make final determinations. That this is so is apparent from the provision in the Act of May 17, 1884, 23 Statute 24, 26 protecting the possessory right of Alaskan Natives in lands used, occupied, or then claimed by them, and expressly providing that the terms under which such persons may acquire title to such lands is reserved for

(Continued on Page 7)

# Udall Answers .

(Continued from Page 1)

future legislation by Congress.

"The provision was not changed by the Statehood Act. See Section 4 of the Act of July 7, 1958, 72 Statute 339, as amended by Section 2A of the Act of June 25, 1959, 73 Statute 141.

"This Department will most certainly cooperate to the fullest extent with all interests in an endeavor to reach an equitable settlement of Alaska Native land claims.

"Sincerely yours, Stewart L. Udall, Secretary of the Interior."