

Udall Urged to Visit Alaska to See Desperate Native Conditions

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall has been urged by Senator Gruening to go to Alaska during August of this year and visit a number of Indian, Eskimo and Aleut villages so he will be personally acquainted with the desperate conditions existing for Alaska Natives before the budget for the Interior Department is drawn up for fiscal year 1968.

"Having visited these villages a number of times," Senator Gruening wrote to

Udall, "I am somewhat conditioned as to what to expect, yet upon my arrival I am always appaled at the conditions under which these intelligent, industrious and deserving Americans are forced to live, and greatly discouraged that so little is being accomplished in terms of real advances of their standard of living."

Referring to the budget, the senator said "I can assure you that an inspection of some of these villages

will be a revelation and will provide you with ample justification for any increased expenditures you might wish to request. It would also make possible an airing of the many problems emanating from the bureau's operations in Alaska."

The senator praised the secretary on his choice of Robert L. Bennett to head the Bureau of Indian Affairs and suggested that Bennett should accompany him to Alaska in August.