



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

FILE COPY  
Surname:

*Dolores*  
*Aspinall*

Dear Mr. Aspinall:

Reference is made to your recent letter again calling to our attention the fact that we have not been able to establish a satisfactory tribal constitution and government of the Hopi tribe so as to properly develop the natural resources of the Hopi reservation. As you know, the statutory authority of the Secretary of the Interior concerning development of Indian resources generally provides that the Indians may make development leases subject to the approval of the Secretary. Under this authority it is necessary to have the cooperation of the Indian tribe or representatives of the tribe. The Hopi tribe is the only tribe in the United States that has refused to enter into contract arrangements for the development of its mineral resources. Through the years there have been times when, in our opinion, a slight majority of the Hopi people has favored development; however, most of the time it has appeared that a majority did not favor development.

The position of the Department in this situation has been extremely difficult. There have been those who urge that the Department try to find legal authority to force mineral development of the reservation while others have advocated patience and waiting until the Indians become ready for development.

The attached news reports from the Arizona papers, we believe, shows what can happen and is very likely to happen should an effort be made to drive the Hopi people into a decision concerning this matter.

The matter concerning the disputed area of the 1882 reservation is at its most critical stage. Consideration of H.R. 9529 has intensified the efforts of the anti-development group. It now appears that partitionment in kind in this situation will be very much the same as the usual partitionment case; that is, most of the owners will not agree on any point. As a matter of fact the traditionalists group on the Hopi reservation absolutely refuse to accept the decision in *Healing vs. Jones* and continue to claim all of the 1882 reservation. Under the circumstances a solution satisfactory to either the Hopis or the Navajos involved does not appear possible at this time.

**INTERIOR DEPT.**

APR 28 1964

*LM*  
Assistant Secretary

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TO SECRETARY  
APR 28 1964  
FOR SIGNATURE

LEGIS. COUNSEL  
SOLICITOR  
APR 22 1964

TO SECRETARY  
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You may be sure that this matter is receiving our very close attention and that we will make every effort to find a solution so that proper development can be carried out.

We are rather late in answering your letter and this is due in part to a very careful new look at the situation. It was just about the same time that the incidents reported in the Arizona newspapers occurred.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Wayne N. Aspinall  
Chairman, Committee on  
Interior and Insular Affairs  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C.

**Enclosures**

cc:

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