

# New Interior Regulations Stymie Swindlers Of Aged

Swindlers who cheat elderly easterners out of their savings with land-selling frauds in the West will find it tougher to pull off their racket under terms of new regulations announced by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall.

The changes permit automatic rejection of applications for small tracts of federal land unless the land has been opened to application. The regulation removes one of the major selling points which illegitimate promoters have used to defraud victims. Secretary Udall said the change is the latest step taken by the department over the past 20 months to safeguard applicants for public lands.

"Now that Congress has turned the spotlight of publicity on a vicious racket in private lands in the West we hope the public will also wake up to the tricks some promoters are using to fool the public about federal public lands," Secretary Udall said.

Chairman Pat McNamara's special senate subcommittee on agricut is investigating widespread complaints of quacks and crooks preying on aged Americans. Charges of mail-order frauds in palming off useless private land were among the first accusations aired by the inquiry.

"No federal land is involved in these cases," Secretary Udall said, "but we want people to be aware there are also sharp dealers who charge sizable fees for filing useless applications for public land which the victims don't have any chance whatsoever of obtaining."

He said he believes the congressional inquiry will help to warn prospective customers of these pitfalls as well as those directly involved in the investigation of private sales.

"We have been issuing warning after warning," Secretary Udall said, "but Senator McNamara's subcommittee has done more to publicize the entire field of phony come-ons in western land than we have been able to accomplish. The exposes by the senators have alerted newspapers in the East where so many of the victims have lived."

Virtually all of the land fraud testimony before the senate subcommittee has concerned privately owned real estate whose owners are accused of misrepresenting it in mail-order sales advertisements.

Although federal land is not involved the publicity should prove very helpful in waking up prospective customers to the need to check carefully into any promoter's sale pitch about acquiring a bargain-rate retirement paradise on any type of land in the West, Secretary Udall said.

"The Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management has small tracts available for sale from time to time in the western public land states," Secretary Udall said. "They are parcels of up to five acres suitable for residential business or community sites. Promoters with an eye out for a fast buck have talked people into paying them for filing applications for the land."

"Thousands of gullible people have thought they were putting down payments on the lands when in fact they were only paying a promoter to do what they can do for themselves or have the government do for them free or for practically nothing."

"There have been floods of these applications and the innocent people who paid their hard-earned savings never had a chance to get the land because it never could qualify for the purposes spelled out by the law."

Secretary Udall said unscrupulous promoters use the same lies in describing federal land which they cannot sell as they use in describing private land which they can sell claiming that it has water and other utilities, easy access and has been laid out for occupancy whereas the land is usually raw desert miles from the nearest water and lacking in developments that would make it habitable.

Secretary Udall said the new order authorized the department's Bureau of Land Management to reject small tract applications out of hand if the land has not already been found to be valuable for such disposal. And even if the land has been so classified it will normally be sold at public auction so there will be no reason to file an application, he said.

As the senate subcommittee investigation has pointed out many of the violations are outside federal jurisdiction, Secretary Udall said. He added that he agreed completely with the witnesses who have emphasized that the most real estate operators are legitimate.

"I am sure they are as anxious as we are to stop the illegitimate operations," he said. "So are newspapers and magazines who are cracking down on misleading advertising schemes. The Better Business bureaus are doing a fine job too but all of us know that more publicity is needed and that is why the Senate inquiry is so helpful."

Secretary Udall said there is bipartisan support of efforts to modernize the antiquated public land laws.

"But there is no simple cure for crooked land promotion," he said. "The best defense is still the old one—let the buyer beware."

## Jacoby On Bridge

**NORTH** 24  
 ♠ 10 8 5 4 2  
 ♥ 7 5  
 ♦ 9 8 4  
 ♣ J 2

**WEST (D)** EAST  
 ♠ A 3  
 ♥ K 7 6 4 3  
 ♦ K Q 10 2  
 ♣ 4

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ K J 7 6  
 ♥ 2  
 ♦ A 6  
 ♣ A K Q 7 6 5

Both vulnerable.  
 West North East South  
 Pass Pass Pass Pass  
 Pass Pass Pass Pass  
 Opening lead—♦K

## Luck Seen In Spades

By OSWALD JACOBY  
 Written for  
 Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

The late P. Hal Sims claimed spades were his lucky suit. This was a sensible superstition. Spades should be everyone's lucky suit.

Hal had a definite allergy about being shut out of bidding his spade suits, but at the same time he was one of the first bridge players to realize that you should not open the bidding with a four card spade suit any time you could start proceedings with a minor. On the other hand, Hal was not afraid to bid a four card spade suit at a high level if it seemed that his partner was likely to have spades with him.

Hal held the South hand in a rubber bridge game and I was his fortunate partner. Obviously, East's jump to four hearts would not shut that fine South hand out of the bidding, but I rather fear that most players would make the apparently proper bid of five clubs. Not Hal!

He bid four spades! East surely was short in spades. Maybe West would also. In that case North would hold enough spades to make Hal's venture a success.

Of course, if West had doubled four spades the chances are that Hal would have run to his club suit, but West elected to pass and open the king of diamonds.

Hal had to lose the ace of spades and one trick in each red suit, but that left enough tricks for game and rubber.

## ♥-CARD Sense♦

Q—The bidding has been:  
 South West North East  
 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♥ Pass  
 2 ♠ Pass 3 ♣ Pass

You, South, hold:  
 ♠ A K 10 7 ♠ A 9 7 6 ♦ K Q 10 4 ♣ A

What do you do?  
 A—Bid three hearts. Four hearts is a close second choice.

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 You bid three hearts and your partner bids four clubs. What do you do now?

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