Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Department of the Interior acted today to exempt certain lands owned by the Agua Caliente Indians of California from the effects of a new zoning ordinance adopted by the Palm Springs, California city council.

The Indians, whose reservation lands include considerable Palm Springs real estate now leased or contracted to others, had objected to certain points in the ordinance before it was adopted on June 10. They contended that the measure was too restrictive for future development of their property.

Interior's action in the case came in the form of a notice scheduled for publication in the Federal Register this week. It specifically exempts the Indian-owned lands from the application of three zoning categories in the new city ordinance--categories R-4, R-4-VP and C-1AA.

The Department's authority to exempt Indian lands from local and State ordinances was clarified in a notice published in the Federal Register on June 9, amending a regulation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (25 CFR 1.4). Exemption from local laws is permitted under this clarifying order if the Department determines that such laws are discriminatory or unreasonably detrimental to Indian interests.