

Tozier, Fast - Int. 4306



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

For Release NOVEMBER 15, 1956

NAVAJO TRIBE GETS NEARLY \$3,250,000 MORE FOR OIL AND GAS LEASES

In the second of three bid openings this month, the Navajo Indians received total bonus bids of \$3,247,094.91 for oil and gas leases on 82,200 acres of tribally owned land in San Juan County, New Mexico, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today.

In a previous bid opening November 1 for leases on other lands in the "four corners" area of Arizona, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico the Navajos received 27,476,212.95 on approximately 102,000 acres of tribal land and 1,100 acres of "allotted" or individually owned land.

The second lot of bids was opened November 13 at the Indian Bureau's Window Rock (Arizona) agency office. Under the regulations which govern oil and gas leasing of Indian lands, the annual rentals are fixed at \$1.25 per acre and royalties on production at 12½ percent. The competition therefore comes in the bonuses which are offered for the leases. In the November 13 opening the highest bid per acre was \$207.97, and the average high bid was \$39.50. A third and final lot of bids on other Navajo lands is to be opened November 23.

The second opening brings the total paid in bonuses for oil and gas leases on Navajo and Ute lands in the "four corners" area to almost \$38,350,000 since July 1. This compares with the record-breaking total of approximately \$41,000,000 received in bonuses, rents and royalties on all Indian lands in the United States in the year ended June 30, 1956.

x x x

P.N. 7161