UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY 343-4306

For Release APRIL 10, 1965

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR PROPOSES LEGISLATION PROVIDING FOR DISTRIBUTION OF NEARLY $5 MILLION INDIAN JUDGMENT FUNDS

The Department of the Interior has submitted to Congress proposed legislation for disposition of nearly $5 million in judgment funds held in the United States Treasury for the Miami Indians of Oklahoma and Indiana. Three different awards are involved, resulting from decisions by the Indian Claims Commission.

Largest of the original judgments, netting $4,182,720 exclusive of attorneys' expenses, was appropriated by Congress in May 1963. Interest at the rate of 4 percent per year has meanwhile accrued. Funds will go to descendants of the Miami Tribe or Nation as it existed in 1818.

Today the former Nation consists of two separate and distinct groups: The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and the Miami Indians of Indiana. The judgment was based on a claim by the Indians that they were inadequately compensated for lands ceded to the United States in Ohio and Indiana nearly 150 years ago. The Department's proposal would authorize a per-capita distribution of the judgment, after payment of all expenses, to those meeting eligibility requirements.

In two additional judgments, the Commission awarded a net of $308,572 to the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and $56,356 to the Miami Indians of Indiana as settlement for lands in Kansas ceded to the Government in 1854. The money was appropriated by Congress in September 1961 and was deposited in the United States Treasury, at 4 percent interest, to the credit of these groups.

Legislation proposed by the Department provides that the governing body of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, subject to approval by the Secretary of the Interior, shall decide precisely how it will program the Tribe's judgment of approximately $308,000.

Since the Miami Tribe of Indiana, on the other hand, is not an organized body, the Department proposes a per-capita distribution of approximately $56,000 among Indian beneficiaries.

Should the Department's proposal become law, qualifications for appearing on the rolls to serve as a basis for distributions would be announced and published in the Federal Register.

x x x

P.N. 61870-65