UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★news release

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
For Release to PMs January 26 Ulsamer --343-9431

INDIAN CLAIMS AWARDS TOP $12 MILLION IN 1966

Five awards totaling more than $7.9 million were granted to seven American Indian groups in judgments by the Indian Claims Commission during 1966, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs reported today.

In addition, the year brought final settlement of a long-pending case that was filed in the United States Court of Claims by the Ute Indians of Utah and Colorado prior to establishment of the Indian Claims Commission in 1946. The Court of Claims awarded $4.4 million to the Utes.

The Indian Claims Commission is an independent tribunal which hears and determines the claims of tribes, bands and other identifiable groups of American Indians living in the United States. As of January 1, 1967, the Commission had granted 88 awards totaling more than $213 million. Five of the awards are awaiting the outcome of appeals pending in the Court of Claims. Congress has appropriated $190.6 million to pay all but three of the awards which have become final.

The majority of Indian claims filed with the Commission are for fair value of Indian lands ceded to the United States or taken by the Government in the past. Most of the funds received through judgments are now being invested by the tribes for projects to improve social and economic conditions among the Indian people.

Some typical projects include: Scholarships for the education of Indian youths; social services for reservation dwellers; construction of community centers and funding of community development projects; and tribal enterprises, including recreational tourism developments, to provide employment for tribal members and bring new sources of income to tribal coffers.

The awards granted in 1966 by the Indian Claims Commission were:

$4,431,622.18	Flathead Tribe, Montana
2,450,000.00	Confederated Tribes of Umatilla, Ore.
1,037,414.62	Creek Nation, Okla.
11,511.53	Kickapoo, Kan. and Okla.
11,394.67	Iowa Tribe, Kan., Neb., and Okla.

In the Court of Claims:

$4,479,498.52	Utes, of Utah and Colo.

# # #