Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis R. Bruce announced today that he has offered the services and facilities of the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs to South Dakota officials who are battling the ravages of last wEH9kend's disastrous flood at Rapid City. Approximately 2100 Indian people live in Rapid City.

In telegrams to South Dakota Governor Richard F. Kneip and Donald G. Eddy, Director or the area's Office of emergency preparedness, Commissioner Bruce stated, "The Bureau of Indian Affairs wishes to offer its services in any way to help the people and the city of Rapid City in the unfortunate destruction on Friday and Saturday."

Twenty three Indians are believed to be among the dead and an estimated 200 Indian families are homeless or destitute as a result of the disaster.

In addition to the Bureau staff members from BIA's Aberdeen Area Office, the Indian people who live the area surrounding Rapid City have banded together to aid Indian families caught in the catastrophe.

Both Bureau employees and Indians are working in full cooperation with Federal, State and local Officials in Rapid City to clean up the damage and give aid to the sick and injured. BIA welcomes the presence in Rapid City of the Title VI Compliance Officer from the Office of Emergency Planning in Washington who is there to insure that all disaster relief is carried out on a non-discriminatory basis.