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Secretary of the Interior Fred .A. Seaton announced today the Departments' approval of the November 1 action of the Navajo Tribal Council in appropriating $300,000 of tribal funds for use by the Tribe to induce new industrial plants to locate in the vicinity of the reservation. The added payrolls would provide increased job opportunities for tribal members, it was explained.

The Department has also approved the Tribal Council's proposal to use $44,000 in previously advanced Federal funds for the same purpose.

Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs W. Barton Greenwood said, "The Navajo Tribe is to be commended for this important step which will benefit its members for an indefinite time in providing payrolls in the vicinity of the reservation. Much progress has been made in the industrial development program and we anticipate a great deal of successful activity during the coming year."

Technically, the November 1 action of the Tribal Council, which was by a vote of 56-0, was in the form of an amendment of the Tribe's budget for the fiscal year which ends next June 30. A similar appropriation of $300,000 in tribal funds was included in the budget for the period which ended last June 30. It was used in providing rent free buildings and other economic inducements to industrial concerns.

So far two manufacturing plants have been established in the vicinity of the reservation as a direct result of this program. Navajo Furniture, Inc., a subsidiary of Baby Line Furniture of Los Angeles, opened a plant at Gallup, N. Mex., for the manufacture of juvenile furniture, shutters, and similar items November 15. Lear Navajo, an electronics plant affiliated with Lear, Inc., of Santa Monica, Calif., began operations at Flagstaff, Ariz., November 5. Each of these plants is expected to be employing about 100 Navajo workers after a year of operation.

The industrial activity in the Navajo area, although well advanced, is merely one part of a much broader program being sparked by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to encourage the establishment of manufacturing plants and the creation of new jobs near Indian reservations throughout the country. This work is headed up by Carl W. Beck, an Indian Bureau veteran and assistant to Commissioner Glen L. Emmons.

In addition to the two Navajo plants, three others have been established near Indian reservations in the past year under this Bureau program. Kingman Industries, Inc., a metal fabricating firm, has been operating at Kingman, Ariz., near the Hualapai Reservation since January 1956. Cherokee Leathercraft Co., a subsidiary of Saddlecraft, Inc., Knoxville, Tenn., was opened for the manufacture of leather goods on the Cherokee Reservation in North Carolina last May. Casa Grande Mills, a subsidiary of Parsons and Baker, Phoenixville, Pa., is scheduled to begin operation of a garment factory at Casa Grande, Ariz., near the Pima and Papago Reservations, next March.

The Kingman plant is providing employment for about 50 Indians and the Cherokee for approximately 40. After the Casa Grande factory opens in March, it is expected to provide jobs for 125 Indians almost

immediately and for 700 ultimately.

Negotiations are now being actively carried forward by the Indian Bureau with a number of industrial companies looking toward the establishment of additional plants near Indian population centers in Oklahoma, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming as well as Arizona and New Mexico.