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Significant advances in Indian education and a broadening of economic opportunities for tribal members were achieved in the fiscal year which ended last June 30, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Glenn L. Emmons reported to Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton. The report is included in the Department's annual report for Fiscal 1956 released today.

In education Commissioner Emmons reported a seven percent increase in Navajo school enrollment bringing the total up to a record level of 25,287 students as contrasted with about 14,000 in 1953. In five other tribal areas a “pilot” program of adult education was launched to provide the people with literacy in English and other basic training.

On the economic front good progress was achieved in further development of reservation resources, attraction of new industry to the periphery of reservations, and provision of relocation services to Indian workers and families seeking job opportunities in metropolitan areas.

Resource development was pushed through continued extension of Indian irrigation projects, additional expansion of soil and moisture conservation work, and other similar activities. Sales and local sawmill use of Indian timber were sharply stepped up in the calendar year 1955 bringing in a total income of nearly $12,000,000 for the Indian owners or nearly a third higher than in 1954. Combined Indian income from oil and gas reached an all-time high of more than $41,000,000.

A program to foster the establishment of manufacturing or processing plants on the periphery of reservations was set up under an Assistant to the Commissioner and numerous contacts were made with industrial firms throughout the country. By June 30, plants of this type were either operating or definitely in process at Kingman, Ariz., near the Hualapai Reservation; Cherokee, N. C., near the Cherokee Reservation; and Gallup, N. Mex., near the Navajo Reservation.

The number of individuals who applied for and received relocation assistance increased to 5,316 as compared with 3,461 the preceding year. The 1956 total included 1,051 family groups, 732 unattached men and 373 unattached women.