

Johnson Appoints McKeldin To Indian Claims Position

By NATHAN MILLER

[Washington Bureau of The Sun]

Washington, Nov. 14—President Johnson gave a recess appointment today to former Mayor Theodore R. McKeldin as a member of the Indian Claims Commission.

Mr. McKeldin will hold the \$28,000-a-year appointment as one of the five commissioners who are scheduled to terminate their business September 10, 1972.

The recess appointment is effective immediately but is subject to Senate confirmation. If the Senate does not confirm the appointment between the time it convenes and President-elect Nixon's inauguration, Mr. Nixon can appoint someone else to the post.

Mr. McKeldin said in Baltimore that he was "certainly very gratified to receive this appointment. I consider it a great honor."

"I intend to work very hard at the job and give it the best I can," Mr. McKeldin said. "I am only generally familiar with (the commission's) operations, but I expect to learn a lot more very soon."

John T. Vance, chairman of the commission, said the body, which handles Indian claims against the federal government, meets on a full-time basis.

Although Mr. McKeldin was twice elected mayor of Baltimore and governor of Maryland as a Republican, he has been friendly with President Johnson and supported him for re-election in 1964.

FBI Checks

The appointment ended several months of speculation about what sort of federal job the former mayor was in line for. As early as July, FBI agents were engaged in the in-depth security check that precedes White House appointments.

The 67-year-old Mr. McKeldin, who stepped down as mayor last year, has been engaged in the private practice of law. He is on the advisory commission to the Office of Economic Opportunity and chairman of the Baltimore Urban Coalition.

He will succeed T. Harold Scott, whose term expired in June. Mr. Johnson renominated him but the Senate did not act on the appointment before adjournment.

Angered Republicans

Mr. McKeldin's support of President Johnson instead of Barry M. Goldwater, the 1964

Republican presidential nominee, angered many Maryland Republicans and they denied him a seat in the state's delegation to the 1968 GOP convention.

The Indian Claims Commission was formed in 1946 to handle claims against the Federal Government. Formerly Indians had to receive authorization from Congress before going to the Federal Court of Claims to bring action against the government.



INDIAN CHIEF—Theodore R. McKeldin, former mayor and governor, examines a peace pipe-smoking Indian. He was appointed yesterday to the Federal Indian Claims Commission.