



## For Immediate Release

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### **500 Individual's File lawsuit over Indian Termination**

On November 4, 2002 a Civil Rights Lawsuit was filed in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Titled "Felter, et al, -vs- Norton, et al," Case #1:02CV2156. By Oranna B. Felter, Calvin Hackford, Alvin Richardson Denver, Jens Dale Christensen and 500 other individually named persons.

This complaint charges that the United States Government, acting through the Department of the Interior, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs willfully, unlawfully and incorrectly implemented the "Ute Partition Act," a federal law enacted in 1954. This law purportedly "terminated" the federally recognized "Indian" status of each named plaintiff as members of the Uinta Band of the Northern Ute Indian Nation and branded them as Mixed Blood Indians.

The Ute Partition Act's original intention was that the Bands of the Northern Ute Indians, "the Uinta's, Uncompagre's, and Whiteriver's" would have federal recognition as Indians stripped from them. The Plaintiffs claim the through deft political maneuvering with members of Congress, officials of the Department of the Interior, and Bureau of Indian Affairs, that the Uinta, Uncompagre and Whiteriver full bloods were not terminated as intended which give them sole possession of the Uinta Band's Homelands, which the Uncompagre and Whiteriver Band's have no treaty rights with the United States Government regarding any land on the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation.

One glaring aspect of the extinguishment of the Plaintiff's status as federally recognized members of the Uinta Band of Utes is that the United States Congress enacted a law along racial blood lines, classifying the Plaintiffs as "Mixed Blood" Utes possessing no more than 50% Ute Indian Blood, while classifying the members of the Uncompagre and Whiteriver Bands, which were originally from the state of Colorado, as "full blood" Utes. Only through this forced "branding" of the plaintiff's as "Mixed Blood" was the Government able to successfully strip them of their tribal identities and turn over to others (non-Indians,) their homelands and billions of dollars of valuable assets consisting of timber and mineral rights once held in trust by the Government for the benefit of the Plaintiff's.

This lawsuit has been assigned to Judge Richard W. Roberts of the District Court of the District of Columbia and is currently under consideration.

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