NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Nedra Darling

202-208-3710

MEDIA ADVISORY

BIA to Celebrate Its 175th Anniversary

The Bureau of Indian Affairs will be celebrating its 175th Anniversary on September 8, 2000, with a day-long commemorative program at the Department of the Interior headquarters, 1849 'C' Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., in the Sydney R. Yates Auditorium. The anniversary's theme is "Reconciling the Past, Trusting the Future: A Renewed Commitment to Indian Tribes for the 21st Century."

The BIA was established by presidential action on March 11, 1824 under the War Department only to be transferred a few years later to the Interior Department. Its mission at that time and for decades after was to force assimilation onto American Indians and, later, Alaska Natives. In the 20th century, however, the Bureau's mission has gradually evolved into a working partnership with federally recognized Indian tribes within the government-to-government relationship they have with the federal government.

The anniversary event, which was to have been held in 1999 but was delayed until this year, will acknowledge the profound change the BIA has undergone since its inception. The program is open to the public and can be easily accessed via the department's 'C' Street (South) entrance. In addition, a dedication ceremony to name the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs' corridor the "Hall of Tribal Nations" will be held at 1:30 p.m.

WHO: Bureau of Indian Affairs

WHAT: 175th Anniversary Celebration

WHEN: September 8, 2000 at 10:00 a.m.

1:30 p.m. – "Hall of Tribal Nations" Dedication

(Main Interior Building, 4100 Corridor)

WHERE: Sydney R. Yates Auditorium, U.S. Department of the Interior,

1849 ‘C’ Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

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