Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida, which once sent all its messages by runner, soon will become landlord for a plant that will be the world's largest manufacturer of electronic connectors for the telecommunication industry.

The Tribe today took part in ceremonies for the new plant at its Hollywood, Fla., reservation. The facility will be operated by Amphenol Corporation of Chicago. The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs served as the liaison agency that brought the Seminole Tribe and the company together.

A 32,400 square foot plant building was constructed on the ten-acre tract of land leased by Amphenol from the Seminoles in an agreement signed last June. About one-half the initial work force of 200 will be comprised of local Indians, the company announced.

Deputy Commissioner Theodore W. Taylor, who represented the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the dedication, had high praise for the cooperation of American industry in creating new jobs for Indians.

Taylor said: “The Amphenol experience is becoming increasingly typical as Indians develop the courage and know-how to successfully penetrate the business world. The Seminoles have proved once more that they are in the forefront of this movement. Today, the Tribe and the Amphenol Company already are looking ahead. This ten-acre site will permit plenty of expansion when the present plant reaches full operating capacity.

“We have great hopes for industrial development of Indian areas,” the Deputy Commissioner added. “There are now nearly 100 American companies operating plants of various sizes on Indian reservations or in nearby communities and providing employment for 7,000 Indians in their home areas. This is extremely important for those Indians who, through inexperience or fear of the unknown, do not choose to move to unfamiliar surroundings to find work. While the Bureau is providing employment assistance for reservation dwellers who move away for training and better jobs, many prefer employment on or near their reservations.

“The Bureau of Indian Affairs,” said Taylor, “is grateful for the confidence Amphenol has shown in the Indian people by deciding to establish this plant on the Hollywood Reservation. I believe the Seminoles have shown extremely good judgment in choosing to do business with this sound and farsighted company.”