Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Native Village of Tetlin, Alaska, has qualified to contract under the Tribal Government Development Program of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in order to strengthen its tribal government, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced today. The village may contract for up to $15,500.

Tetlin is the fourth Alaskan Native Village to qualify for Tribal Government Development Program money. The others are: Arctic Village-Venetie, Gambell and Savoonga.

These villages have qualified because they elected to retain their reserved lands and, therefore, are ineligible for benefits under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

"Alaska Native villages such as Tetlin are in particular need of a well run government in order to manage their lands," Commissioner Thompson indicated "A strong local government can help Native peoples undertake projects in their own behalf successfully."

The primary thrusts of the Tetlin contract are to establish a tribal office and create a record keeping system. To accomplish this an office manager and a secretary must be trained.

The village of Tetlin is recognized by the Federal Government under the Indian Reorganization Act. A resolution requesting consideration to come under the Tribal Government Development Program was signed by Bentley Mark, village vice president, and Jimmie Joe, village treasurer.

Seneca was elected President of the American Indian Law Students Association in 1970, and was also appointed by the Chancellor of New York State's university system to serve on a panel which was charged to assist in the long range development of the State university system by providing a philosophical base with respect to change and growth.

Seneca is married to the former Karen Ann Wilson, Boise, Idaho. They have four children, three sons and one daughter.