Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson today named Dr. Clennon E. Sockey, 48, a Choctaw Indian of Oklahoma, to be Director of Indian Education Programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"Indian education is the largest program in the Bureau," Commissioner Thompson said. "Almost one-third of the total Bureau budget and one-third of the Bureau's employees are involved in education or school-related activities. Dr. Sockey will bring to its direction a unique background in education, experience, and Indian heritage."

Sockey attended a public elementary school with a large Indian enrollment and Bacone High School, Bacone, Okla., a private school also with a large Indian enrollment. He earned a bachelors, masters, and doctorate degree from the University of Oklahoma - the latter in 1972.

Sockey began his career as classroom teacher at Spiro, Okla., in 1952. He became high school principal in 1956 at Keota, Okla., and teacher-advisor at Riverside School, Anadarko, Okla., a Bureau of Indian Affairs school, in 1956. In 1958 he became a department head (academic) at Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kans., now Haskell Indian Junior College, also a Bureau school.

He left the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1961 to become secondary administrator of the unified School District of Fontana, Calif., a public school system.

In that capacity he is a member of the District committee established to negotiate contractual proposals with employees and one that designed a teacher evaluation system required by the state legislature. He has also been a member of the secondary curriculum committee that reviews curriculum offerings and makes recommendations for revisions. In addition, he served on the committee to devise and implement a budgeting plan for the Fontana District.

He served in the U. S. Marine Corps from 1943 to 1946.