Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced today the appointment of Martin E. Seneca, Jr., 32, to be Director of Trust Responsibilities, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C., effective May 12, 1974. His post is the second of five directorships - top jobs within the bureau of Indian Affairs - to be filled.

"As Director of Trust Responsibilities, Seneca will head the Central Office functions related to the Bureau's programs in the development and management of programs relative to the bureau's trust and legal responsibilities including the protection of the rights of Indians in their trust property and tl1ose rights affecting trust property that are afforded by tribal sovereignty," Thompson said.

Seneca is an enrolled member of the Seneca Nation of New York. He holds a Master’s degree in public administration From Brigham Young University and a doctorate in law from Harvard University and is presently Associate Professor of Law at tile University of Utah.

He accepted that post following a year as a White House Fellow in which he served as special assistant to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He also has been an associate attorney in the Washington firm of Wilkinson, Cragun and Harker.

In 1970, Seneca received a two-year Presidential appointment as a member of the National Council on Indian Opportunity in the Office of the Vice President. NCIO is composed of eight outstanding American Indian leaders and eight members of the President's cabinet.

From May 1969 to September 1969 he was a project developer of the Seneca Nation of Indians, New York. From June 1966 to September 1967 he was technical assistant, Utah University Bureau of Indian Services which had an Office of Economic Opportunity grant to provide training and technical assistance to Indian tribes of the Northwest.

In high school Seneca represented the American Indians at the First International Youth Conference sponsored by UNICEF.

"His academic preparation for the administrative and legal fields together with his experience in working with Indian people and Government agencies at all levels gives Seneca the unique qualifications needed to administer the Office of Trust Responsibilities, “ Thompson said.