Media Contact: Ayres 343-9431
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Hale Secakuku, 63, Second Mesa, Ariz., a Hopi Indian, was given the first “Indian Small Businessman of the Year” award May 18 in the auditorium of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C.

The citation on the plaque given Mr. Secakuku read “For exemplifying the imagination, initiative, independence, and integrity by which the American small businessman makes a vital contribution to the Nation, the economy, and the free enterprise system.”

The award was made by Hal Cox, an Associate Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on behalf of Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis R. Bruce. Also on the auditorium platform and commenting on the honor were Senator Paul J. Fannin, Ariz., and Irving Schwartz, Assistant to the Administrator of the Small business administration. The award was a part of the Small Business Administration’s small Business week activities.

In making the award Cox pointed out that Secakuku’s first business was a grocery store started stop the second Mesa of the Hopi Reservation in 1934. When a new highway was completed at the foot of Second Mesa his business complex, consisting of a grocery store, general merchandise and curio shop, café, and gas station, was constructed in 1958. This was the first supermarket on the reservation. Mrs. Secakuku operates the first score, Mr. Secakuku the newer.

"Mr. Secakuku has, for 35 years, been a source of inspiration and leadership of his peopIe." Cox said “He has been a member of the Hopi Tribal Council since 1951. His new center is a focal point for Second Mesa and enhance the economy and social life of the community.” The business serves about 1,500 residents in the three villages of Second Mesa and surrounding areas and visitors to the reservation. It employs 11 workers, he said.

“The Secakuku business has been a source of credit for Hopi Indians and a meeting place for the Hopi people,’ Cox said. Secakuku’s curio shop buys and sells handmade Indian craft work, performing a service both to the Indian and the consumer.

Runner-up for the “Indian Small Businessman of the Year” was Fleming D, Begaye, Sr., a Navajo, Chinle, Ariz. Third place went to Ray C. Goetting, Caddo, Laguna, N. Max.

Honorable mentions for the award went to: Ray C. Goetting, Caddo, Laguna, N. Mex.; John Tucker, Seminole, Hollywood, Fla.; Jose Antonio Gutierrez, Santa Clara/Pojoaque, N. Mex.; Robert Gombi, Kiowa/Delaware, Norman, Okla.; Raymond D. Christianson, Eskimo, Bethel, Alaska; George Wippet, Jr., Blackfeet, Browning, Mont.; Oswald Bussell, Hoopa, Willow Creek, Calif.; Shirely M. and Warren C. LaDue, Chippewa, Waubun, Min.; Elmer Olne, Yakima, White Swan, Wash.

Certificates to these outstanding Indian small businessmen are being sent to the Area Offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for local presentation.