Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Forrest Gerard announced today the appointment of George V. Goodwin and Rick C. Lavis as Deputy Assistant Secretaries for Indian Affairs.

Gerard said that organizational changes in the Bureau of Indian Affairs to create the double deputy positions were recently approved.

Goodwin has been functioning as an Acting Deputy and Lavis as a consultant in the Assistant Secretary's Office. Goodwin, a member of the White Earth Chippewa Tribe, was formerly BIA Area Director at Minneapolis. A graduate of Bemidji State College in Minnesota, Goodwin was Executive Director of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and, earlier, worked with other groups in the state in community action programs.

Lavis was from 1971 to 1976 legislative assistant and administrative assistant to Arizona's Senator Paul Fannin. In this position he worked closely with Gerard, then a professional member of a Senate committee staff in the development of the important Indian-related legislation of this decade --including the Indian Self-Determination Act, Indian Health Care Improvement Act and the Indian Education Act. An Arizona State University graduate, Lavis was honored by the National Congress of American Indians at its fourth annual awards dinner: as a key legislative staff member.

Under the revised BIA organizational plan, Goodwin will have primary responsibility for management and administrative functions of the Bureau and Lavis will be responsible for program operations.

Goodwin will have under his direct supervision. The Office of Administration, which includes financial management, personnel, automatic data processing, contract and grants administration and other management services. He will also supervise the Bureau's Public Information staff, Intergovernmental Relations staff and Correspondence staff.

Lavis will have under him the Bureau's four program offices; Trust Responsibilities, Tribal Resources Development, Indian Services and Indian Education Programs. The Congressional and Legislative Affairs staff and the Indian Self-Determination staff will also be under his supervision.

In the absence of the Assistant Secretary, Goodwin will perform his functions Lavis will act in this capacity when both the Assistant Secretary and Goodwin are absent. Goodwin, 35, was born in White Earth, Minnesota. He did post-graduate studies at the University of New Mexico and the University of North Dakota. He is a member and former officer of the National Congress of American Indian; and has been active in the American Indian Management Institute, Native American Rights Fund and the State of Minnesota Advisory Commission on Economic Development.

Goodwin initiated major developmental changes in the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe in his term as Executive Director. When he began the tribe had four employees and a budget of $90,000. In 1975, when he left the tribe had 85 employees in 17 programs with a budget exceeding $4 million.

Lavis, 37, is a native of Mount Kisco, New York. He majored in political science at Arizona University

and did course work toward a law degree at the University of Arizona, where he also served as a teaching assistant. Before joining Senator Paul Fannin's staff he was Director of Development and Alumni Affairs for the Orme School at Mayer, Arizona. In the fall of 1976 he became Legislative Representative in Washington for the El Paso Natural Gas Company.