Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Ronald L. Esquerra, an enrolled member of the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, has been appointed Director of the bureau of Indian Affair's Albuquerque Area, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced today.

Esquerra, 31, has been Executive Assistant to Commissioner Thompson the past two years. He will report Albuquerque in mid-June. He succeeds Walter O. Olson retired in 1974.

"Ron has been my right hand," Thompson said. "I know he has the ability to handle the important responsibilities of the Albuquerque Area. He has proven his competence."

The Albuquerque Area includes most of New Mexico and Colorado.

Before caning to the Bureau, Esquerra was the Indian Field Officer in Phoenix, Ariz., for the Office of Minority Business Enterprise. In this capacity he managed Federal contracts and provided program assistance to Indian contractors in Arizona, California, New "Mexico and Nevada. He had previously worked in the Economic Development Administration as Deputy Special Assistant for Indian Affairs to the Assistant Secretary.

As a Ford Foundation leadership Development Fellow in 1970-71, Esquerra worked in numerous Federal, State, and tribal Indian programs. While completing graduate work at Arizona State University, he was also Administrative Assistant to the Director of the Arizona State Indian Community Action Program.

Esquerra majored in business management at Brigham Young University where he graduated with honors in 1966. After a two-year in military service he earned a Master's in business administration at Arizona State.

He is perhaps the only Indian to complete the certification program of the American Mortgage Bankers Association at Northwestern University in Evanston, ill.

Esquerra grew up on the Colorado River Indian Reservation. In 1973 he was listed in the publication outstanding Young Americans.