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Appointment of Turner Bear, Checotah, Oklahoma, as Principal Chief of the Oklahoma Creek Indian Tribe for a two-year term, beginning immediately, was announced today by Secretary of the Interior Fred, A. Seaton.

Mr. Bear is a full-blood Creek Indian who has taken an active interest in tribal affairs and is now a member of the Creek Indian Council. He succeeds Roley Buck who has served as Principal Chief since 1955.

Under a 1906 law the President was empowered to appoint a Principal Chief periodically for each of the so-called "Five Civilized Tribes" of Oklahoma -- Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole and Creek. In 1951 this appointing authority was delegated to the Secretary of the Interior.

The primary function of the Principal Chief is to represent the tribe on public occasions and in the execution of documents relating to tribal property.