

Recommended to Education Post-

NACIE Pushes Demmert for Dep. Educ. Commissioner

By MARGE BAUMAN

William G. Demmert, a Tlingit-Oglala Sioux Indian born and raised at Klawock, Alaska, has been recommended for appointment as Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education within the U.S. Department of Education.

The announcement came Sunday from Joseph Upicksoun of Barrow, chairman of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, who said Demmert was chosen from 23 applicants.

Demmert played a key role in writing the Indian Education Act, which established an Office of Indian Education within the Office of Education. The deputy commissioner chosen to head that office must be appointed by the Commissioner of Educa-

tion from a list submitted by the National Advisory Council



JOSEPH UPICKSOUN

on Indian Education.

Demmert last June became the first Native American to receive a doctorate degree in the administrative career program of Harvard Graduate School of Education. His thesis was written in conjunction with his job in Washington, D.C. helping to implement the Indian Education Act.

The son of Florence and Bill Demmert Sr., Demmert is married and lives with his wife and two children just outside Washington, D.C.

Demmert's name was introduced for nomination by a special subcommittee within the National Advisory Council on Indian Education and received

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the most votes at the council's meeting Oct. 24-25 at Billings, Mont., Upicksoun said.

The new appointment would put Demmert "way beyond the BIA; the entire Indian Nation was waiting to see who would be appointed," Upicksoun said.

"He will address that position to make certain that in the Indian world we have quality education, so that (Native) students would not be denied admission to any university; so they would be proud of who they are," Upicksoun said. "A happy child can learn fast."

Upicksoun said he felt the council subcommittee had made a choice based strictly on the qualifications of candidates as educators.

"They were not pressed by political groups. They addressed themselves to the qualifications of the individual himself and I am proud of the subcommittee for that," he said. "We couldn't all be on that committee, but you couldn't help but admire the work that they did," he said.

Also among those considered for the nomination was Maybelle Keating McGee, an elementary schoolteacher in Atlanta, Ga., of Irish-Athabascan ancestry.

Born and raised at Holikachuk, she graduated from Eklutna Vocational High School (now Mt. Edgecumbe) in 1946 and received a masters in education from Emory University in Atlanta in 1969.