

Willie Hensley Appointed by The President

Early this year, President Lyndon Johnson in an executive order established the National Council on Indian Opportunity under the chairmanship of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey.

The 14-member council includes six presidential cabinet officers, director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, five lower state Indian leaders, and one Eskimo from Alaska.

The member from Alaska appointed by the President is Rep. William L. (Willie) Hensley of Kotzebue.

The council was scheduled to have its first meeting on June 5 in Albuquerque, New Mexico but the assassination of Sen. Robert Kennedy on June 4 disrupted the meeting when Vice President Humphrey and some of the cabinet members were asked by the President to remain in Washington.

Some of the members of the council who had already arrived at Albuquerque, including Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, held an informal meeting, however. Udall took charge of the informal meeting.

When asked what he thought of his appointment to the council by the President, Hensley said, "I think it's really quite an honor."

Willie Hensley said that a meeting will be scheduled to take place in Washington, D. C. soon.

The council members are: Vice President Humphrey, chairman, Interior Sec. Udall; Sec. Wilbur S. Cohen, Department of Health, Education and Welfare; Acting Director Bertrand Harding, OEO; Sec. Robert C. Weaver, Department of Housing and Urban Development;

Sec. C. R. Smith, Department of Commerce; Sec. W. Willard Wirtz, Department of Labor; and Sec. Orville L. Freeman, Department of Agriculture.

The following are Indian members: Mrs. Fred R. Harris, founder of Oklohamans for Indian Opportunity, Comanche; Wendell Chino, president of the National Congress of American Indians;

Raymond Nakai, chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council; Cato Valandra, chairman of the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council; William Hensley, member of the State Legislature of Alaska; and Roger Jourdain, chairman of the Red Lake Tribal Council.

President Johnson in his executive order laid down the following functions of the council:

(a) Encourage full use of federal programs to benefit the Indian population, adapting them where necessary to be available to Indians on reservations in a meaningful way;

(b) Encourage interagency coordination and cooperation in carrying out federal programs as they relate to Indians.

(c) Appraise the impact and progress of federal programs for Indians.

(d) Suggest ways to improve such programs.