

BLUE SPRUCE APPOINTED CHAIRMAN

HEW Assistant Secretary for Human Development, Stanley B. Thomas, Jr., today announced the appointment of Dr. George Blue Spruce, Jr., as full-time Chairman of HEW's Intra-Departmental Council on Indian Affairs.

"Since its formation in April, 1975, the Council, under Dr. Blue Spruce's leadership, has become a major policy development vehicle in the Department, and it now requires a full-time Chairman to pilot its varied activities," Assistant Secretary

Thomas said.

Dr. Blue Spruce has been holding a dual post, as Director of the Office of Native American Programs and as Council Chairman. Dr. Blue Spruce will continue to report directly to Assistant Secretary Thomas, but he and the council staff will no longer be directly connected with the Office of Native American Programs.

The Council is composed of 25 key officials within the Department who reflect the authorities and concerns of most

of the HEW agencies. As Chairman of the Council, Dr. Blue Spruce is responsible for providing leadership in developing and proposing to the Secretary:

- A comprehensive Indian Policy for legislative, regulatory, and administrative application throughout the Department;

- A strategy for more effective delivery and coordination of Departmental resources to Indians;

- A series of strategies and recommendations on data

management activities, both within and outside HEW, that affect Indian people; and

- An improved communications system on Indian affairs within the Department, with other Federal agencies, and with Indian people.

Dr. Blue Spruce, a Pueblo Indian from the villages of San Juan and Laguna in New Mex. came to the Office of Native American Programs in 1974 from HEW's Health Resources Administration where he was Liaison Officer for Indian Concerns. He came to Washington in 1970 and held various positions in the National Institutes of Health, all primarily related to increasing the enrollment of American Indians and other minorities in the health professions.

After two years in the Navy as a dentist, Dr. Blue Spruce returned to his home town and operated a practice briefly. He then entered the U.S. Public Health Service in 1958 and served as a dental officer for the next eight years, primarily on Indian reservations in New Mexico, Montana and Nevada.

From 1968 to 1970, Dr. Blue Spruce visited most of the countries in South America as a dental consultant for the Pan

American Health Organization. He gave instruction in the use of dental auxiliaries and the fabrication of simplified equipment for dentistry in primitive areas.

Dr. Blue Spruce received his DDS degree from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, in 1956. He also holds an M.A. degree in Public Health from the University of California, Berkeley, 1967, and he graduated from the Federal Executive Institute in 1973.

He was named outstanding American Indian in 1972, and he received the 1975 Indian Achievement Award of the Indian Council Fire. He has presented and published numerous papers on the need for Indians and other minorities in the health professions and he is active in many organizations related to American Indian interests.

Dr. Blue Spruce and his wife, Darlene, live in Rockville, Md.