

CARTER PICKS FORREST GERARD

Blackfoot is Nominated as the First Asst. Sec. for Indian Affairs

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At-Large Correspondent

Sources in Washington, D.C. confirmed Tuesday the White House has nominated Forrest J. Gerard as Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. Should Gerard be confirmed, he will be the first person to hold the position with the Department of the Interior. The position, formerly Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs was elevated to Assistant Secretary by the Carter Administration.

Gerard, a Blackfoot Indian from Montana, is currently a private consultant for several Indian tribes dealing primarily with legislative issues.

Stating he was "honored and pleased the nomination came through," Gerard said he had no illusion about the complexity or controversy involved in the position.

The nomination now goes before the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs who reportedly has a full calendar for the remainder of July. With a congressional recess scheduled for the month of August, Gerard says he does not expect confirmation hearings to begin before early September.

Declaring the position "the last major post to be filled" Gerard says he will begin his administration by concentrating on putting things together and laying plans for the future.

Gerard describes himself as being involved in public service since graduation from college, and he has worked for a number of government departments including the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Among his most recent accomplishments, Gerard served as staff director for the Indian Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.