

Tlingit Indian Becomes Juneau Area Director

Clarence Antioquia, a 34-year-old Tlingit Indian, became the 14th Area Director and the second Alaska Native to hold the top BIA post in Alaska. He was sworn into office by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson in a formal ceremony held in Juneau on May 30, 1974.

Antioquia succeeds Morris Thompson who left the post of area director to become commissioner in December 1973. Thompson, an Athabascan Indian, was the first Alaska Native to be appointed area director, and now he is the first Alaska Native to hold the position of commissioner.

During the swearing-in ceremonies Commissioner Thompson said, "I am pleased that the bureau and Alaska Natives have a man of Mr. Antioquia's caliber for this important post. As matters connected with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and the Alaska pipeline come

more to the foreground, the already considerable responsibilities of the Juneau post are magnified. Area Director Antioquia will be responsible for the planning and formulation of major policy and programs for Alaska Natives and will be my principal advisor on these matters," he continued.

Following the oath of office Area Director Antioquia stated, "Being appointed area director is the achievement of a personal career goal. In my opinion, now is the best time to be area director in Alaska. It's the best time because not only is our bureau involved with Native problems, but other federal agencies and the state government are also deeply involved. On a broader scale, the U.S. Congress, the state legislature, and even private citizens are concerned and involved. All this is very encouraging. However, the most encouraging fact is that Alaska Natives, themselves, are not only involved, but, in most cases, have assumed the leadership roles."

In accepting the leadership role for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska, the new area director pointed out, "BIA is going to be playing a role of advocacy for and responsiveness to Alaska Natives. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act has

created strong leadership capability within the Native community. They are fully competent to direct their own affairs and determine what is best. We, as a responsive agency, and in concert with other state and federal agencies, will play a vital role in responding to the social, economic and educational needs of Alaska Natives."

Clarence Antioquia was born in Sitka, Alaska, where he lived and graduated from high school, then attended Sheldon Jackson Junior College. He has worked for the federal government for 15 years. During his eight and one-half years with the Bureau of Indian Affairs he has received three outstanding performance awards. He is married to the former Patricia Myrick, also an Alaska Native, from Kake, Alaska. They have three children: Deanne, 11; Melanie, 8; and Todd, 5.

As Juneau area director, Clarence Antioquia has full responsibility for administering the total range of bureau programs and activities in Alaska. He directs the annual budget of over 40 million dollars and 1,200 employees, of whom 56 per cent are Alaska Natives. On-going programs, which serve 60 to 65 thousand Alaska Natives, include



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education, social services, employment assistance, housing, and tribal operations. Under his direction and jurisdiction are 53 day schools, two boarding schools, five agency offices, and the North Star, a ten ton supply ship.