

**The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “Association on American Indian Affairs” of the Bradley H. Patterson Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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When I signed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act in January, 1975, I described that legislation as a "milestone for Indian people." During my Congressional career and my two years as President, I have tried to make Indian self-determination effective and successful.

I recognize the special relationship of trust that Indian tribes have with the United States, and I have often emphasized that support of self-determination includes oppositon to any deterioration of this relationship.

Because of the many needs on Indian reservations--for economic development, improved health care, increased educational oppor- tunities, better roads, liveable housing--I have urged the strength- ening of tribal governments. In this new era of Indian self- determination, the elected leadership of Indian tribes is the key to successful achievement of the goals of America's first citizens.

History has demonstrated that the Federal government's domination cannot meet the needs nor solve the problems of our Indian citizens. Paternalism of the past in Indian affairs is a proven failure. Consequently, I have sought to make available to Indian tribes the resources and technical assistance needed for them to solve their own problems and achieve their own goals.

I have backed up policies and promises with money:

In the past six years the budget of the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been increased by almost 300 percent and the Indian health budget has grown by almost 400 percent. The Department of Commerce is targeting \$27.7 million for Indian economic planning and economic development in 1977. The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act administered by the Department of Labor, allocates significant funds to Indian people: before the CETA was enacted (in FY 1973) manpower allocations for Indians totaled \$17.3 million; today Indian manpower funds total \$75 million, including \$52.6 million going directly to 157 Indian prime sponsors. The Office of Education's special funds for Indian education have risen from \$18 million in FY 1973 to \$42 million today.

I have asked Cabinet agencies to give particular attention to many special concerns of the Indian people. Among these is the need for reform to protect Indian family life. Too many Indian children are separated from their parents and improved social services are needed to alleviate this problem.



The Administration is encouraging Indian Tribal Councils to adopt their own juvenile and family protection codes and has supported the National Indian Judges Association in a three-year training program to enable tribal judges to handle more effectively divorce, child custody, and welfare cases.

It is definitely the Administration's policy to reduce the numbers of younger Indian children who are at boarding schools for long periods of time. In fact, total elementary age enrollment in these schools is down by 6,000, while most of the rest are Navajo children who go home on weekends. But closing all the boarding schools would fly in the face of the strong desires of the affected tribes themselves and would in fact remove what is the only educational resource for some Indian children.

I have directed the Departments of Interior and Justice to give high priority to the protection of Indian natural resources rights, especially water rights. We are defending 23 water rights cases, 13 hunting and fishing cases and 21 land rights cases. We have won milestone decisions for Indian rights in a number of these proceedings.

I am still awaiting Congressional action on my proposal to create an Indian Trust Counsel Authority which would be able to intervene in any court as a Federal Government advocate for Indian natural resources rights.

There has been an enormous surge in Indian education these past several years. More than 16,000 Indian students with Federal grants now attend college and university campuses to gain the professional skills needed in their communities.

We have halted the erosion of the tribal land base and restorations have been achieved of Blue Lake, Mt. Adams, and the Menominee lands, while the historic Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act has become law.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has been transformed from a non-Indian organization providing services and running programs for Indians to a predominantly Indian organization which works with Indian communities to help them meet their program and service needs. New Indian service sections have been established in many other agencies such as HEW, HUD, Commerce, Agriculture, Labor, and Justice.



The Indian Financing Act is being implemented and having a marked effect on economic development on the reservations. Revenue sharing reaches Indian tribal governments directly; education monies are granted or contracted so as to strengthen the role of Indian parent advisory groups in having a say in the education of their children.

Funds under the National Indian Education Act, for instance, have now reached 1,200 school districts and 235 grantees.

The policy of Indian self-determination has led to increased responsibilities and roles for tribal governing bodies through the contracting of erstwhile Federal programs and in other ways. This policy must continue and expand to the point that the Indian communities are truly controlling their own destinies.

The successful implementation of Indian self-determination lays the groundwork for Indian communities to effect solutions to numerous chronic problems which have long afflicted the reservations.

Finally, I have urged my White House Staff and government agencies to meet Indian people with open doors and sensitivity. These officials are in daily contact with national Indian leadership organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians, the National Tribal Chairmen's Association, the United Indian Planners Association, the Americans for Indian Opportunity and a dozen others that assist their memberships toward better opportunities.

As I said when I met with a group of Indian leaders in the White House on July 16, "Together we can write a new chapter in the history of this land that we all serve and this land that we all share."

## PRESIDENT FORD'S POLICIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLE

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Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc.



432 Park Avenue South  
New York, N. Y. 10016

MU 9-8720

Oliver La Farge, *President*  
(1932-1963)

Alfonso Ortiz, Ph.D., *President*

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Arthur Lazarus, Jr., Richard Schifter, *General Counsel*

August 26, 1976

President Gerald R. Ford  
President Ford Committee  
1828 "L" Street, Northwest  
Suite 250  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Att: Mr. Rob Quartel

Dear President Ford:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors and the 50,000 members of the Association on American Indian Affairs. The Association, founded in 1923, is a private, non-profit, national citizens' organization that assists American Indian and Alaska Native communities in their efforts to achieve full economic, social and civil equality, and to defend their rights.

In past years the Association has published in its newsletter, Indian Affairs, statements of major presidential candidates regarding their stand on issues of vital concern in the field of Indian affairs. We would like to do so again this year for an issue of our newsletter to be published October 1, and I am writing to solicit your views on three matters of urgent concern. (We are also soliciting a statement from Governor Carter, to be presented alongside your own.)

The three matters of paramount concern are:

1. Child Welfare. There is an urgent need for reform in child-welfare programs conducted or funded by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In 1974 the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs held oversight hearings that detailed widespread abusive child-welfare practices that are in major part the responsibility of the federal government. There is also an urgent need for federal legislation to protect the rights of Indian parents



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and their children from arbitrary and abusive acts of state and local welfare officials.



Approximately 25 per cent of all Indian children are separated from their parents and placed in foster homes, adoptive homes, special institutions, or federal boarding schools. These placements are often unlawful and unwarranted. Additionally, Indian communities lack essential social services that could reduce the incidence of family breakdown.

Question: Will your Administration recommend legislation and adopt administrative reforms to protect and strengthen American Indian family life?

2. Indian Water Rights. The federal government, as trustee for Indian land, water and other natural resources has too often failed to discharge its lawful responsibilities with adequate concern for the lawful rights and welfare of American Indian tribes.- In particular, the Pimas and other affected central Arizona tribes have been peacefully struggling for a century to obtain recognition of their lawful water rights. A just Congressional settlement of the water rights of the five central Arizona tribes would finally end a century of dishonor caused by the Interior Department's failure to protect the tribes' lawful water rights. It would also end the human tragedy reflected in the tribes' high rates of unemployment, alcoholism and family disintegration, grossly substandard housing, poor nutrition, sickness and shortened life expectancy.

S. 3298, the Central Arizona Indian Tribal Water Rights Act of 1976, was introduced in the Senate on April 13, 1976 by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, and is co-sponsored by Senator Walter Mondale, Senator Ernest F. Hollings, and Senator Philip A. Hart. It would provide the 30,000 tribal members with the water they need for their survival and to which they are legally entitled. No action is expected this year.

Question: Will your Administration support legislation incorporating a negotiated settlement to restore to the central Arizona tribes sufficient water to satisfy their lawful water rights?

3. Self-Determination. American Indian tribes have long sought the same rights of local self-government enjoyed by other American communities. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the U.S. Indian Health Service operate an enormous system of on-reservation social and economic programs that extend into all areas of Indian life. The BIA alone employs more than 13,000

people to administer those services. The tribes have had little to say about the design of these programs and little to do in conducting them.

The Ninety-Third Congress enacted into law the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638), mandating that the federal government permit Indian tribes to administer their own federal programs if they desire to do so. The Act contains a Congressional directive to the Secretary of Interior and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to contract with tribal organizations to plan, conduct, and administer BIA and IHS programs upon tribal request.

Question: Do you foresee the continuation of the opportunities for Indian self-government made possible by the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act; and do you foresee contracting leading towards an increasing role for Indian tribal governments as a permanent partner of federal and state governments?

A statement by you addressing itself to these issues would be welcomed by the Association's membership and, indeed, by all concerned with federal Indian policy. You may wish to integrate your answers to these questions into a general philosophical statement of your approach to Indian affairs.

If you could send us a statement of not more than 1,000 words by September 15, we would be able to publish it by October 1.

Your time, effort, and consideration in attending to this request are deeply appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,



Steven Unger  
Editor

P.S. A photograph of yourself suitable for reproduction alongside your statement would also be most valuable. Also, enclosed is a sample issue of our Newsletter.

SU:jc  
Enc.

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**MEMORANDUM  
OF CALL**

TO: Brad

YOU WERE CALLED BY—  YOU WERE VISITED BY—  
Bunny Rosenfeld  
OF (Organization) PFE-

PLEASE CALL →  PHONE NO. 457-1951  
CODE/EXT.  WILL CALL AGAIN  IS WAITING TO SEE YOU or ✓  
 RETURNED YOUR CALL  WISHES AN APPOINTMENT

MESSAGE

? from Dean  
Am. Indian  
Affairs



RECEIVED BY	DATE	TIME
<u>m</u>	<u>9/13</u>	<u>12</u>

STANDARD FORM 63  
REVISED AUGUST 1967  
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

gpo : 1969-o-48-16-80841-1 229-820 63-108



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Child Welfare  
Water Rights  
S 3298

Self-Det



Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>  
1<sup>00</sup> P.M.

MEMO

TO: BRAD PATTERSON  
OLD EOB  
ROOM NO. 134

FROM: BUNNY ROSENFELD  
RESEARCH 10th floor  
PFC

RE: questionnaire from ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN  
INDIAN AFFAIRS, INC.

Thanks for researching piece on Native  
Americans. Enclosed is original letter.  
Please return as soon as possible with  
the information. FYI": letterhead must be  
sent out from PFC.

Many thanks

*Bunny*

Bunny Rosenfeld



DRAFT FOR PFC LETTERHEAD

Dear Mr. Unger:

Thank you for your letter of August 26 to the President inviting him to contribute a 1000-word piece for the Indian Affairs newsletter of the Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc.

We are pleased to respond to your invitation on behalf of the President and enclose the contribution requested. It includes material which we believe is responsive to the questions included in your letter.

Also enclosed is a picture of the President, as you requested.

We would appreciate receiving a few copies of the Newsletter when it appears.

Sincerely yours,

Rob Quartel



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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 15, 1976

NOTE TO FRED SLIGHT

If there is still time, please add this sentence to the big paragraph ending on the middle of page 2 of the Indian piece I gave you last night:

"The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's program for helping Indian tribes has gone from \$97,185 in FY 1969 to \$5.7 millions in FY 1976."

(This doesn't have to be cleared; I just got it from the LEAA computer.)

Fred, if any of the folks with whom you are clearing that piece have major changes to make, I wish to be informed.

  


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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

9/17/76

TO: BRAD PATTERSON

FROM: FRED SLIGHT

The attached article was sent to the Association of American Indian Affairs today, and I am enclosing this for your information.

