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September 6, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR:

STEVE KURZMAN
Assistant Secretary, of Legislation
Health, Education and Welfare

SUBJECT:

Social Services Legislation and
Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

Following up my telephone call of today, I would appreciate the opportunity to sit down with you, Bill Merrill, Jim Dwight, Stan Thomas and others there, plus Ted Krensko of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to explore whether, in the pending legislation concerning new social services programs, we should not include authorization for federally recognized Indian tribes to be direct sponsors or recipients, rather than have these new programs filter to tribes via States and counties. (We should probably exclude AFDC here, since these State-tribal relationships seem to be working satisfactorily.)

As you know, in the recent years, following the thrust of the July 8, 1970 Message, the Administration has moved in one case after another to espouse the idea that federally recognized Indian tribes should at least be eligible to be prime sponsors or direct recipients of important federal programs which benefit Indians. Beginning with the signing of the General Revenue-Sharing Act and more recently with the new CETA measure, community development, surplus government property and the Intergovernmental Personnel Act, we are making sure that such legislation has written into it at least the authority for the elected tribal governments of federally recognized tribes, as responsible governmental units in their own right, to step in and take over such programs directly, rather than compete or stand hat in hand at State capitals. This revised position of ours is greatly strengthened by the practically unanimous conviction on the part of Indian leaders themselves that they prefer this route, and that they consider themselves responsible governmental units not in any way subordinate to State officers, plans or planning boards. Of course all of BIA, plus HEW's own ONAP function according to this principle, and I know that the Administration on Aging is considering including this kind of new provision in its reauthorization legislation coming up.

Could we have a session sometime soon among the people mentioned to explore this further?

Bradley H. Patterson, Jr.

cc: Commissioner Thompson
Ted Krensko

