

Aug. 23 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 p.m. on August 22 at a private residence in Martha's Vineyard, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 23.

## Memorandum on Law Enforcement in Indian Country August 25, 1997

*Memorandum for the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior*

*Subject:* Law Enforcement in Indian Country

I am proud of my Administration's progress in reducing violent crime and improving public safety for our Nation's citizens. Our efforts are making an important difference. Nationwide, the violent crime rate has dropped approximately 17 percent since 1992, and the homicide rate has declined about 22 percent.

Unfortunately, during the same time period life has become more violent for the 1.2 million Indian citizens who live on or near reservations. Homicide rates, for example, have increased to levels that often surpass those in large American cities. Numbers alone, however, cannot convey the tragic impact of such violence on Indian families and their communities.

This and other information you have provided to me make clear that we need to refocus on this growing problem. While some tribal governments have developed strong law enforcement programs, many others have encountered significant difficulty in doing so. Many Indian citizens receive police, investigative, and detention services that lag far behind even this country's poorest jurisdictions.

The Federal Government has taken steps to address this problem. My Administration has sought increased Department of the Interior funding and tribal control of law enforcement

programs on Indian lands. This year, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) established an Office of Indian Country Investigations in its Violent Crimes Section, allocating additional agents to Indian Country. The FBI also initiated a nationwide outreach training program for Indian Country law enforcement officers. We have created additional tribal liaison positions in the United States Attorney's Offices in Indian Country, intended to improve our ability to bring offenders to justice. Through our Community Oriented Policing Services Program, we have assisted tribal law enforcement agencies in hiring officers in Indian Country.

Yet, law enforcement in Indian Country remains a serious problem. For these reasons, consistent with the spirit of my 1994 memorandum on government-to-government relations and tribal self governance, I hereby request that you work with tribal leaders to analyze law enforcement problems on Indian lands. By December 31, 1997, you should provide options to me for improving public safety and criminal justice in Indian Country. To the extent that these options might affect the Departments' budgets, they should be included in your fiscal year 1999 budget submissions and should be consistent with the funding targets of the Bipartisan Balanced Budget Agreement.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

## Message on the Observance of Labor Day, 1997 August 29, 1997

Warm greetings to all Americans as we commemorate our nation's 103rd Labor Day holiday.

This year, we have cause to celebrate on behalf of the men and women who toil to help secure our country's economic well-being, because on this Labor Day the minimum wage

increases to \$5.15 per hour. This raise will help nearly 10 million hard-working Americans build a better future. Thomas Jefferson once said, "In matters of principle, stand like a rock." This increase in the minimum wage affirms our commitment to "stand like a rock" for our working