Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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President Nixon's special message to the Congress on Indian Affairs is a "positive and historic statement that should do much to give the Indian people lives of dignity and self-determination." Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis R. Bruce said today.

Commissioner Bruce said the president, in his message of July 8, ensured that steps will be taken to increase Indian control of Indian affairs while reaffirming and strengthening the historic legal and moral obligations of the federal government.

"I am especially pleased by the President's support for anti-termination legislation, for creation of an Assistant Secretary for Indian and Territorial Affairs in the Department of the Interior and for the propos

"As President Nixon noted, these proposals can do much to give us a 'new national policy' and to 'strengthen the Indian's sense of autonomy without threatening his sense of community.'

"The Bureau of Indian Affairs, in support of ebb policy is evolving new plans better to "meet the needs of the Indian people.

“We are transforming the Bureau of Indian Affairs from a management to a service organization.”

“We are reaffirming the trust status of Indian Land.

“We are providing the tribes with the option of taking over any or all BIA program functions.

“Certainly, these are positive steps, long overdue, toward building a respectable life for the American Indian.

“President Nixon has pledged himself to this end.

“I am proud to join him in his efforts so that our ideas and plans of the future may become realities in the near future.”