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America's attention has been focused on the irresponsible violence at Wounded Knee. The future of Indian self-determination can only be set back when unrepresentative groups disregard the law.

Instead of leading to solutions and the conditions for a new era of Indian self-determination, violence leads only to more violence, and more suffering.

Human injustice cannot be eliminated without the conditions for equity --and full moral responsibility cannot be met without full legal authority.

At the same time, however, we share the belief of America's elected Indian leaders that many Indian needs must be met with legislation, with funding, and assistance --and not through negotiation at gunpoint.

The Administration has today retransmitted seven key Indian affairs bills to the Congress. Each of these bills was submitted to the 92nd Congress. All of them were originally set forth in the President's Message to the Congress on Indian Affairs on July 8, 1970.

In the two and a half years since then, however, no final Congressional action was taken. With today's proposed legislation America's Indians are for the first time in over a century on the threshold of “a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and decision.”