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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 12, 1998

Ms. Angela E. Oh  
Beck, De Corso, Daly, Barrera & Oh  
12th Floor  
601 West Fifth Street  
Los Angeles, California 90071-2025

Dear Angela:

Thank you for your letter about your activities with the race initiative. As you know, this effort is extremely important to me, and I deeply value your hard work to ensure that the initiative is successful.

Your contributions, along with those of the other Advisory Board members, have already made a real difference. I share your hope that those who are skeptical of our efforts will eventually come to appreciate the importance of the initiative.

Your excellent suggestion for establishing a more formal vehicle for Native American input is one that we addressed in 1994, when we created the White House Interagency Group on American Indians and Native Alaskans. Last summer, I requested an outline from the group of federal agency involvement and responsiveness to Native American concerns. I expect a final report next month. I intend to evaluate the process we have implemented and, where necessary, make changes to the process to ensure its effectiveness. I have also shared your suggestions with Bruce Reed, my Domestic Policy Advisor; Mickey Ibarra, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs; and Lynn Cutler, Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

I look forward to learning more from you as you meet and talk to Americans about our work. Thanks again.

Sincerely,



980113

January 12, 1998

Ms. Angela E. Oh  
Beck, De Corso, Daly, Barrera & Oh  
12th Floor  
601 West Fifth Street  
Los Angeles, California 90071-2025

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I look forward to learning more from you as you meet and talk to Americans about our work. Thanks again.

Sincerely,

**BILL CLINTON**

BC/KMB/RLM/RSM/DWB/ech-efr-efr  
(1.oh.a)

(Corres. #3794900)

cc: Bruce Reed, w/copy of inc.  
cc: Mickey Ibarra, WW  
cc: Lynn Cutler, Room 106  
cc: Sylvia Matthews, WW

980113

Xeroxed copy of personally signed original to NH through Todd Stern

CLEAR THRU TODD STERN  
PRESIDENT TO SIGN

azave  
proofed

Reuben  
1/2

Oh 1/2  
plus  
closed by Sylvia  
with  
BC & J per  
Sylvia

DRAFT OF BC LETTER

INITIALS: BC / kmb / *Rmw* 1/c

DOCUMENT TITLE: /slr/p/oh.a.kb

DRAFT DATE / LETTER DATE: Jan 05 1998 /

CORRESPONDENCE #: 3794900

CLEAR WITH:

WHCC:

CC: w/copy incoming Bruce  
Reed, WW  
Mickey Ibarra, WW  
Lynn Cutler, 106  
Sylvia Matthews, WW

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSED TO:

Ms. Angela E. Oh  
Beck, De Corso, Daly, Barrera, & Oh  
12th Floor  
601 West Fifth Street  
Los Angeles, California 90071-2025

APPROVAL/ENCLOSURES/SPECIAL INSTR:

Sylvia Matthews approved; she also cleared  
with Judith Winston and appropriate staff

Dear Angela:

Thank you for your recent letter about your activities with the Race  
Initiative. As you know, this ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> extremely important to me, and I deeply  
appreciate your hard work and active involvement in ensuring that our  
~~efforts are~~ successful. *initiative is*

Your work, <sup>along</sup> ~~together~~ with the contributions of the other Advisory Board  
members, has already made a real difference. I share your hope that  
those who are skeptical of our efforts will eventually come to appreciate  
the importance and value of the initiative.

In this regard, your excellent suggestion for establishing a more formal  
vehicle for Native American input is one that we addressed in 1994, when  
we created the White House interagency Group on American Indians and  
Native Alaskans. <sup>=</sup> *cap* last summer, I requested a report from the group  
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American concerns. I expect a final report next month. It is my  
intention to evaluate the process we have implemented and, where  
necessary, make necessary changes to the process to ensure its

JAN 6 1998

effectiveness. I have also shared your suggestions with Bruce Reed, my Domestic Policy Advisor; Mickey Ibarra, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs; and Lynn Cutler, Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Again, thank you for sharing your insights and suggestions. ~~As you meet~~  
~~with people throughout the country, I look forward to learning of your~~  
~~ongoing endeavors.~~ Your important <sup>efforts</sup> ~~work~~ now will help guarantee a future  
in which all of our people will truly be a part of One America.

*hearing*  
~~about~~ what you learn as you  
meet and talk to Americans about our work on this  
crucial issue.

BECK, DE CORSO, DALY, BARRERA & OH  
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

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GODFREY ISAAC  
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION  
OF COUNSEL

November 26, 1997

President William J. Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20502

Re: Status Report on Initiative on Race

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to thank you and to encourage you to trust your first instinct. I want you to know that my experience as an Advisor to your Initiative on Race has affirmed your expressed belief that the American people are looking for leadership, vision, and hope in confronting the question of race, racism, and the possibility of reconciliation among the diverse people who are a part of this great nation. You have definitely begun to fulfill this need.

Over the past several weeks I have met with community leaders, members of the business sector, religious leaders, local government officials, artists, philanthropists, professional groups all of whom are enthusiastic and supportive of the process created by the Initiative. My work on behalf of this Initiative has taken me across the country and across my own state of California. There is a sense of awe over the fact that you have seen fit to take this issue up at the level of the Executive Office. Perhaps this is the underlying feeling that the media has been misreporting as disbelief, cynicism or doubt. Real people (not academics and policy experts caught up in politics) view this endeavor as a wonderful thing and they also recognize the complexity of our situation. Despite the delicacy of the politics and the complexities, the public expresses to me a belief in the possibility of reaching new levels of understanding, a desire to work with the Initiative and a willingness to examine where our future options lie. I am working on a mechanism by which I can report my experiences and the suggestions and models I discover to the Initiative staff on a regular basis. There are innumerable promising practices to be documented in our communities.

I would like to share with you some views expressed at one very important meeting I had with the leaders of the American Indian/Alaska Native tribal leaders last week. Judith, Governor Winter and I were in New Mexico for the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the National Congress of

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*Need to see P. 2 by 12/10/97*  
*idea P. 2 by 12/10/97*  
*Peter Rundle please let me know now we are pursuing if you are not following up (with) talking to 2 you about the nation's idea please let me know.*

ENTIRE  
12-2-97

President William J. Clinton

November 26, 1997

Page 2

American Indians. There were hundreds of tribes present. We had a small meeting with about twenty representatives, some of whom you know.

First, you should be informed that there is a split in sentiment among American Indians about being represented on the Advisory Board. On the one hand, there is a feeling that a Native American person should have been asked to participate because, after all, these are the first people of this nation. One leader who you have met with on several prior occasions, Chairwoman of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, Deborah Doxtator articulated this view well. She has specifically asked that I deliver to you a concern that the failure to include an American Indian on the Advisory Board seems to be inconsistent with your own Executive Order, directing all federal agencies to ensure that consultation with American Indian tribes be a part of their protocol. On the other hand, there is a view that the absence of a Native American person is fine because of the unique political status held by the Indian nations. Specifically, unlike others, American Indians have sovereignty, a status not conferred upon other "minorities" in the United States. In essence, this view holds that the American Indian's political status is a large part of their racial identity.

No matter which view one holds, there is an overarching desire to see that the White House create an institutional or structural vehicle through which the input of Native Americans can be received. A suggestion put forward was to examine the Indian Opportunities Council instituted by President Johnson during his tenure at the White House. The Council was composed of tribal leaders who met regularly with members of the Cabinet to discuss a wide range of issues that affected the tribal nations. The Council provided a nation-to-nation vehicle that permitted policy discussions to be held at the highest level of governments. No President since Johnson has taken such Executive action. If you were to establish a Council such as the one described above, a major concern would certainly be addressed. More importantly, the goal of inclusion in this Initiative effort would be advanced.

In closing, I want you to know that I feel deeply gratified to have been invited to assist you in guiding the development of this historic Initiative. I believe that each and every member of this Advisory Board wishes to see success out of this endeavor. That is, as we continue to provide global leadership in trade, technology and international relations, that we move closer to becoming a society which expresses in its own institutions and policies, principles of equality and justice. I also believe that all of those who agreed to be a part of this effort knew in advance that the criticism and cynicism would be there. There are many people and organizations that have a singular interest in finding ways to present challenges to what you are trying to do. You know this, and we know this. However, the American people, that is the vast majority of people living, working and worshipping in our communities across the nation, are people who hold on to hope and who are constantly looking for leadership in creating a society in which the ideals of this nation can be brought to life. This direct effort to examine our experience with racial divides and

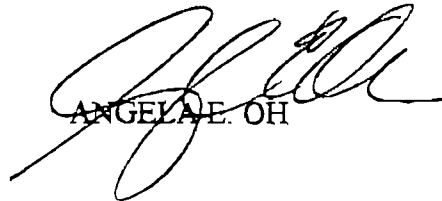
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President William J. Clinton  
November 26, 1997  
Page 3

to search for opportunities to create mutually beneficial relationships in the future is visionary, courageous and essential to the growth and development of the nation.

Thank you again for your leadership.

Respectfully,

  
ANGELAE OH