

**RESOLUTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN**

May 20, 2001

WHEREAS, the Child Welfare League of America (hereinafter CWLA) is the nation's oldest and largest membership-based child welfare organization;

WHEREAS, between 1958 and 1961, CWLA contracted with the Bureau of Indian Adoption Project, and experiment in which 395 Indian children were removed from their tribes and cultures for adoption by non-Indian families;

WHEREAS, as facilitator of the Indian Adoption Project, CWLA funded certain of its private agencies to arrange the adoptions of Indian children by non-Indian families, such adoptions being designed to "save" Indian children from their own families, clans and tribes, and to alienate them from learning their native language;

WHEREAS, in 1972, a CWLA study of these non-Indian adoptions concluded that only Indians themselves could ultimately decide whether this adoption program should continue;

WHEREAS, in 1978, CWLA, testified against the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act, which was enacted to prevent the wholesale upheaval of Indian families by non-Indian adoptions of Indian families and tribes by protecting their most precious resource, Indian children;

WHEREAS, the current staff and Board of Directors of CWLA now seek to acknowledge CWLA's involvement and complicity in these actions and to express deep regret for its participation in any activities that were intended to break-up Indian families, promote assimilation and/or disregard Indian tribal governments;

WHEREAS, in the spirit of reconciliation and healing, CWLA now seeks to enter into a new era of partnership with and respect for Indian peoples and tribes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that CWLA hereby declares its support for the Indian Child Welfare Act (hereinafter "ICWA") and ICWA's goals of preserving and strengthening Indian families and promoting tribal decision-making;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA shall collaborate with Indian tribal governments, courts and national Indian organizations to promote the principles of ICWA and to implement its provisions;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA shall establish a national training program to educate its members agencies about ICWA and related issues; to encourage compliance with ICWA's provisions; and to support its member agencies in working with national Indian organizations and Indian tribes to learn more about issues concerning American Indians and Alaska Natives; including the unique status of Indian tribal governments;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA shall communicate with Indian tribal governments, the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), and other national Indian organizations about CWLA's activities and shall seek opportunities for partnerships and coordination where CWLA's activities may involve Indian children, families, communities or tribes, and where the best interests of all would be served by CWLA's involvement;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA shall seek additional resources to fund a "Native Children's Initiative" within CWLA that will include a permanent internal working group of CWLA staff charged with accomplishing the activities outlined in this Resolution, particularly as they relate to CWLA's strategic plan, and any other activities that will further the purpose and spirit of this Resolution, including the publication of materials designed to educate the child welfare field about Indian child welfare and related issues;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA hereby endorses the sentiments expressed in the Executive Director's speech of April 24, 2001, delivered at the NICWA national meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, the text of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA hereby expresses its most profound regret for its role in placing for adoption hundreds of Indian children in non-Indian homes, and for the incalculable personal loss suffered by those adult Indian adoptees who experienced a loss of family, clan, tribal affiliation, tribal history and heritage and native language;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that CWLA shall provide its Board of Directors with a periodic, but no less than annual report on the implementation of activities outlined in the Resolution and other CWLA activities concerning Indian children, their families, communities and tribes, including the long term strategies for institutionalizing these activities within CWLA.